

# BEACON

## Comments from the CEO



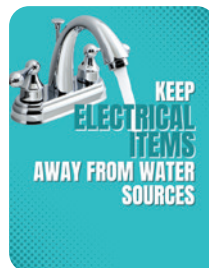
Todd Payne  
President/CEO  
Amicalola EMC

### Powering our community safely: Amicalola EMC supports Electrical Safety Month

May is recognized as National Electrical Safety Month, a time to raise awareness about the importance of using electricity safely at home, at work and in our communities. Electricity powers nearly every aspect of modern life, and while it brings comfort and convenience, it must always be treated with care.

At Amicalola EMC, safety is one of our top priorities. Our line crews work year-round to maintain the electric system and keep power flowing reliably to our members. While we take every precaution to ensure a safe and dependable system, electrical safety is a shared responsibility.

There are several simple steps members can take to reduce electrical hazards at home. Start by checking cords and outlets regularly. Replace any cords that are frayed or damaged and avoid overloading outlets or power strips. If you notice outlets that are warm to the touch or breakers that trip frequently, it may be time



to contact a licensed electrician.

Water and electricity are a dangerous combination, so always keep electrical devices away from sinks, bathtubs and pools. Installing ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in kitchens, bathrooms and outdoor areas adds an important layer of protection.

As warmer weather arrives, many of us begin tackling outdoor projects. Always be aware of overhead power lines when using ladders, cleaning gutters or trimming trees. Keep tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines and never attempt to trim trees growing near them.

If you plan to dig for a project such as planting trees, installing a fence or building a deck, be sure to contact Georgia 811 before you begin. This free service will mark underground utilities and help prevent accidental damage to buried power lines.

Finally, remember to stay far away from downed power lines. Always assume a downed line is energized and dangerous and report it immediately.

By practicing these simple safety steps during National Electrical Safety Month and throughout the year, we can help keep our families and communities safe.

### Holiday office closure

Our offices will be closed on Monday, May 25,  
in observance of Memorial Day.

# Amicalola EMC hosts 2026 Youth Awards Banquet



\$146,000 in scholarships was awarded to high school students across the Amicalola EMC service area. Pictured are the 2026 scholarship recipients with the Amicalola Electric Membership Corp. Board of Directors.

**O**n March 17, more than 350 people gathered at Chattahoochee Technical College in Jasper to celebrate the achievements of local students from across the service area. The annual event brought together students, parents, school representatives and members of the Amicalola EMC Board of Directors and staff for an evening dedicated to recognizing academic success and leadership.

During the program, a total of \$146,000 in college scholarships was awarded to students from our service area, including 142 seniors and four Washington Youth Tour delegates each receiving \$1,000!

The 2026 Washington Youth Tour delegates include Caleigh Hofgard (Pickens County), Jack Swafford (Dawson County), Zander Shute (Gilmer County) and Adleigh Wingate (Gilmer County). Scheduled for June 12–19, 2026, the tour will provide these students with the opportunity to meet peers from across the country,



This year's Washington Youth Tour winners at our annual Youth Awards Banquet, from left: Adleigh Wingate, Caleigh Hoffard and Jack Swafford. They are shown here with Amicalola EMC President/CEO Todd Payne. (Zander Shute is not pictured.)

build leadership skills and experience the history of our nation's capital.

The evening also featured a delicious meal catered by Shade Tree BBQ,

desserts from Kali's Kakes and floral arrangements provided by Southern Belle Florist, helping create a festive atmosphere for the celebration.

# Trimming for reliability: How we protect your power

**A**micalola EMC continues to invest in innovative solutions to improve reliability for our members, including the use of helicopter tree trimming in targeted areas across our service territory.

By using a helicopter equipped with specialized aerial saw blades, crews can safely trim overhanging limbs across rugged or remote terrain that would be difficult to access with traditional equipment. This proactive maintenance helps prevent tree-related outages, which remain one of the leading causes of power interruptions, especially during storms and severe weather.

Last August, Amicalola EMC contracted Avid Aviation Inc. to conduct aerial trimming in some hard-to-reach locations across our service territory. Work began in Gilmer County along Flat Branch Road and Highway 52 East and then progressed to Cherokee County, including parts of Pleasant Arbor Road, Salacoa Road, Little Refuge Road and Highway 140.

Aerial trimming allows work to be completed more quickly and with greater precision, reducing the overall impact on the environment while improving the long-term reliability of the electric system. Right-of-way maintenance, while critical, can also be very costly. To manage these costs responsibly, Amicalola EMC follows a five-year trimming cycle—dividing the work so we can complete necessary maintenance while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Projects like this reflect Amicalola EMC's ongoing commitment to using smart, forward-thinking solutions to strengthen our system and better serve our members. By proactively addressing potential problems, we are helping ensure reliable service for our members.



HAPPY  
*Mother's Day*  
FROM AMICALOLA EMC!  
*Sunday, May 10*

# Retirements

**C**ongratulations to Mary Fowler and Vickie Shackelford on their retirement. Thank you for your years of dedicated service to the members of Amicalola EMC.



**Mary Fowler**  
50 years of service



**Vickie Shackelford**  
27 years of service

## Claim your share of the co-op!

**A**s an Amicalola EMC member, you own a piece of the cooperative. That means part of your investment—through your monthly bill—can come back to you as **capital credits**. It's just one of the perks of membership!

Former members may have **unclaimed capital credits** if we don't have your current address. Call **706-253-5200** or stop by your local office to check.

*After a mandatory five-year waiting period, any unclaimed capital credits refunds are distributed in accordance with Georgia's unclaimed property laws O.C.G.A. §44-12-236.*



## Amicalola EMC rates remain lower than state average

**T**he 2026 Winter Rate Survey released by the Georgia Public Service Commission shows that Amicalola EMC members continue to pay less for their electricity. The survey shows that Amicalola EMC is lower than the local investor-owned utility and is also lower than the state average. The graph depicts the price for 2,000 kilowatt-hours (kwh) of electricity.

