

DO YOUR HOMEWORK BEFORE Going Tankless

You're probably familiar with a standard electric water heater.

It's basically a large water tank with a couple of heating elements built in to keep the water inside hot. Whenever you open a hot water faucet, the water heater supplies your request.

But is there a way not to have all that hot water sitting around when you don't need it? A way to heat water only when it's needed?

Yes, tankless water heaters can do that. And they might seem like a good idea on the surface, but there are a few things you ought to know first.

1 TANKLESS WATER HEATERS ARE EXPENSIVE.

Tankless electric water heaters cost more than a comparable tank water heater. In addition, the electrical wiring to connect the unit may cost more than the tankless water heater itself.

"Tankless water heaters require huge amounts of power at one time," says Tim Morris, Walton EMC vice president of engineering and operations. "That's because they're trying to raise the temperature of 65-degree ground water to 120 degrees or more in an instant."

That translates to a big wire feeding the tankless water heater. It's a trickle-down effect. The large wire requires a larger branch circuit breaker in your electrical panel. That means the electric panel, its main breaker, the service entrance wire and/or transformer has to be beefed up. It adds up quickly.

"And if you're talking about an existing home where the electrician has to tear out the old electrical system and then install the upgraded wiring, it's even more expensive," says Morris.

According to Consumer Reports, the time to recoup your investment can be longer than the tankless water heater's warranty. "If you have a warranty of 12 to 15 years, which is typical, it doesn't make financial sense to replace a tank water heater with a tankless," said a plumber interviewed by the publication.

All this could possibly affect the charge you incur for underground electric service in a new home.

2 TANKLESS WATER HEATERS HAVE LIMITED HOT WATER CAPACITY.

Two people want to take a shower at once? They may be out of luck.

With tankless water heaters, every time another hot water faucet is opened, the temperature of the water at every faucet goes down. What if the washing machine is running too? Uh-oh.

With a heat-as-you-go system, there is only so much hot water the unit can supply in an instant. On the other hand, standard water heaters have a large reserve – or in other words, a buffer – they can use to meet the demand of several users at once.

One tankless manufacturer's product literature lists the maximum number of showers at once as 1.7. That means somebody is in for a cool shower.

3 TANKLESS WATER HEATERS MAY NOT BE FUTURE PROOF.

The power used at once – called electrical demand – of tankless water heaters is off the chart.

For comparison, the demand of the average central air conditioner or standard water heater is around 5 kilowatts. The demand of an electric oven is 8 kilowatts. The demand of a tankless water heater can be as much as 36 kilowatts, or more than four times that of an oven!

In the future, utilities may change residential rate structures to take electrical demand into account when calculating your bill. If you have a tankless electric water heater, watch out!

The wise choice for electric home water heating continues to be the traditional tanked water heater. Quiet, economical and easy to install, the tanked electric water heater is a proven solution for today's homeowner.



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Light Up FOR THE Holidays

The 2020 yuletide season could be a breakout year for outdoor decorating, predict trend watchers.

"I think we'll see more homes with festive lighting displays," said Greg Brooks, Walton EMC's community and public relations director. "It's an ideal way to express the holiday spirit since we can't invite as many friends and neighbors into our homes this year."

With today's energy-efficient holiday light options, Walton EMC customer-owners can take their decorating to new heights – without worrying about their electric bill doing the same. Frank Skinner, director of marketing for Alpharetta-based Christmas Lights, Etc. (christmaslightsetc.com) offers these tips to help you light up for the holidays.

LOAD UP ON LEDS

Energy efficiency is the main attraction of LED holiday lights, said Skinner. "They consume 80 to 90 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs, which means people can more easily create much larger light displays now without the electrical challenges that come with incandescent lights."

Beyond superior energy efficiency, LED holiday lights are also substantially longer-lasting than their incandescent counterparts. Quality LED lights work for up to 100,000 hours, versus 3,000 hours for incandescent lights.

The sturdy construction of LED lights is another point in their economic favor. Many are made with durable acrylic lenses, not glass, making them much more resistant to breakage.

According to energy.gov, LED holiday lights are also easier to install. Up to 25 strings of LEDs can be connected end-to-end without overloading a wall socket.

BE WEATHER WISE

Moisture and electricity don't mix, so invest in lights that are rated for outdoor use. Also, buy accessories that keep your products looking good and well conditioned, like hanging clips and stakes. Resist the urge to affix lights to the roof with a staple gun, which can damage the light string.

—continued inside

Festive lighting displays
are an ideal way to express
the holiday spirit!



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Our subsidiaries supply natural gas and security services.

Light Up FOR THE Holidays

—continued from front

MAP IT OUT

There are plenty of outdoor decoration products to help you realize your creative vision, whether it's simple or grandiose. Once you've settled on a look, map out what goes where. This will help you gather the equipment and supplies you'll need. Don't forget to identify the locations of exterior electrical outlets as you make your plan.

LIMIT LIGHT TIME

Put your lights on a timer to save money on your electric bill. Schedule lights to run no more than 5 hours daily.

SHARE THE JOY

Once your outdoor decorations are up, share the joy of the season with others. Walton EMC is conducting its Merry and Bright poll to find homes and businesses within the co-op's service area that are decorated with Christmas lights, lawn ornaments and dazzling displays of holiday cheer. Visit the co-op's Facebook page ([facebook.com/waltonemc](https://www.facebook.com/waltonemc)) to nominate your handiwork or that of a neighbor. Then, stay tuned to the results of the 2020 lighting poll that will be announced in December.

Whether it's a small, traditional display or a yard full of dazzling decorations, outdoor décor is on trend for the 2020 holiday season. Photo courtesy Christmas Lights, Etc.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Linemen respond to back-to-back storms

Our neighbors to the west are having a rough time.

Walton EMC crews first made the trip to Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative in Jennings, Louisiana, after Hurricane Laura devastated that area.

"Usually when you go on a storm, you either repair or replace what was existing," said Line Crew Supervisor Wesley Payton. "On this one, there was nothing left. It was a complete system rebuild. Everything was gone."

"The level of devastation is like nothing I'd ever seen. There was at least 30 miles of transmission [line] structure that was on the ground," said Payton. Transmission lines are the lines on huge steel towers that bring power from power plants to the local utilities.

Payton said his crews set around 205 new poles and strung 3 1/2 miles of three-phase wire by the time they left for home.

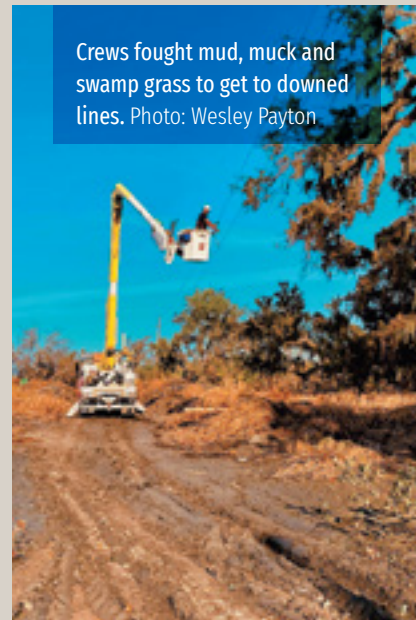
As Payton's crews were making their way back, more crews were headed to Baldwin EMC in Summerdale, Alabama, to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Sally.

"They were prepared," said Greg Pannell, right-of-way coordinator. "There was more help there than I've ever seen."

Pannell said that measures were in place to stay safe with the COVID-19 virus threat, like housing being occupied at half the usual capacity.

"Out of all the storms I've worked, I've never had a daily safety briefing as thorough as theirs. Their safety director prayed over us before we left out. I really appreciated that," said Pannell.

The crews worked primarily near the Perdido River on the Alabama – Florida state line.



Crews fought mud, muck and swamp grass to get to downed lines. Photo: Wesley Payton



A convoy of Walton EMC crews head to Alabama in the area east of Mobile Bay to assist Baldwin EMC after Hurricane Sally. Photo: Greg Pannell



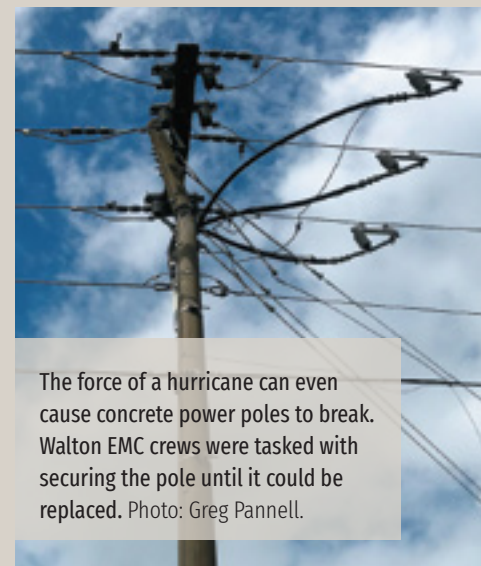
Walton EMC crews rebuilt miles of lines with new poles after existing lines were swept away by Hurricane Laura. Photo: Shooter Brooks



Walton EMC employees assisting with Hurricane Sally power restoration include Luke Davis, Matthew Boone, Jacob Lewis, Dustin Richardson, Jonathan Brooks, Greg Pannell, Bradley McCallister, Tommy Ledford, Matt Britt, Tyler Gray, Reed Gogan, Jason Higgins, Jeff Cooper and Jacob McNary.



High water and storm debris from Hurricane Laura weren't the only hazards crews faced while assisting Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative in Jennings, La.



The force of a hurricane can even cause concrete power poles to break. Walton EMC crews were tasked with securing the pole until it could be replaced. Photo: Greg Pannell.



Walton EMC employees assisting with Hurricane Laura power restoration include Josh Wolaver, Shooter Brooks, John Spence, Paul Nichols, James Daniel, Caleb Tallant, Josh Callaway, Eric Ellington, Ben Powell and Wesley Payton.

WEMC Communicators Awarded for Excellence

The goal, and reason Walton EMC communicators Greg Brooks and Savannah Chandler come to work every day, is to keep you informed and educated. That goes right along with one of the Cooperative Principles Walton EMC ascribes to – a pledge to provide information and education to customer-owners.

The pair was recently awarded for their excellence at the Cooperative Communicators Association's annual communications contest. The competition included all types of cooperative businesses of all sizes from across the nation.

Camp Walt, a promotional video for Walton Gas, placed third in the Promotional Video, Less than 3 Minutes category.

Two news releases, one covering the animal grazing program at a solar facility and the other covering the annual capital credit refund, received second and third respectively in the News Release category.

More than 484 entries were submitted to the contest for 2020. Due to COVID, the ceremony and associated institute were held virtually.

