

Knowledge is POWER

WHAT'S ON THAT POWER POLE?

More than 83,100 poles help Walton EMC distribute electricity along a highway of power lines stretching 7,390 miles — roughly the equivalent of a round trip between Monroe and the North Pole. Here's a quick guide to the components commonly found on the power poles you see throughout the co-op's 1,373-square-mile service area.

PRIMARY WIRES carry 14,400 volts of electricity from a substation. That voltage is more than 100 times higher than the voltage that runs through your home's electrical outlets.

CROSSARM holds power lines, maintaining required clearance between lines.

GUY WIRE is connected to an anchor in the ground to help stabilize pole.

SECONDARY SERVICE DROP (TAP) carries 120/240 volts of electricity to customer-owner's meter. It has two "hot" wires from the transformer and a bare "neutral" wire that's connected to the ground wire.

POLE TAG (not pictured) identifies Walton EMC as the owner of the pole. The tag is a triangle with a "W" printed on it.

INSULATORS prevent energized wires from contacting each other or the pole.

SURGE ARRESTORS help protect the transformer when lightning strikes.

TRANSFORMER converts higher voltage electricity carried by primary wires to lower voltage for delivery to co-op customer-owners.

NEUTRAL WIRE is used with primary wires, allowing electricity to flow back to the substation and help the system grounding.

GROUND WIRE runs the length of the pole — connects to the neutral wire to complete the circuit inside the transformer. It also helps reduce lightning over voltage and provides a safe path to the ground.

POLE is 40 feet tall and weighs about a half-ton. It is sunk 6 feet into the ground.

TELECOMMUNICATION LINES for cable, telephone and broadband are the lowest wires on the pole.

Never nail signs or other items to Walton EMC power poles. These create a safety hazard for lineworkers.

JAN 2025

Walton EMC

realite



RATED #1 BY CUSTOMERS FOR BRAND APPEAL AMONG RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

For J.D. Power 2024 award information, visit [jdpower.com/awards](https://www.jdpower.com/awards)

12 WAYS TO *save*

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR ENERGY COSTS IN 2025

Have you already broken that new year's resolution to cut down on the cookies and lose a few pounds? Don't fret. Research indicates that just 8% of those who make a resolution will keep it. Walton EMC offers a better idea: Ditch the resolutions in favor of an easy to-do list. Accomplishing just one simple task each month can help you take control of your energy costs — no resolution required.

JAN SIMPLIFY billing. If the peaks of winter and summer electric bills are tough on your budget, sign up for Walton EMC's **Levelized Billing** plan and pay nearly the same amount on your residential electric bill each month.

FEB FOCUS on filters. Set a monthly reminder to inspect and clean or replace air filters regularly to optimize heat pump and HVAC efficiency.

MAR TAP the app. Put the myWaltonEMC app on your phone to gain access to energy-tracking features and data for controlling power use.

APR COOL it. Adjusting a water heater's temperature setting to **120 degrees Fahrenheit** (or lower) can reduce its power use by 6%–10%.

MAY BEAT the peak. Help Walton EMC manage electricity use during peak demand periods to keep power rates affordable. Use a timer to **spread out the use of major appliances and devices** rather than running them at the same time.

JUNE POCKET a rebate. Selecting energy efficient and environmentally wise residential equipment can earn hundreds in rebates from Walton EMC.

JULY LOSE the lint. Clean your clothes dryer's lint filter after each use. A dirty lint trap can reduce a dryer's energy efficiency up to 75%.

AUG ACCOMPLISH an audit. Before making fall maintenance plans, watch Walton EMC's home energy video (bit.ly/wemc_energyaudit) to learn about projects that improve energy efficiency.

SEP GET smart. Upgrade to a smart thermostat to save up to 10% on heating costs. These thermostats can schedule your home's heating system to turn down automatically when you're asleep or away.

OCT SLAY the vampires. Plug electronics into smart power strips to reduce stand-by energy use, which can account for 20% of your monthly electric bill.

NOV CLEAN the coils. Before holiday cooking begins, schedule a thorough fridge cleaning, including the coils. Clean coils can reduce a fridge's energy use by up to 30%.

DEC WRAP up. Invest in an inexpensive insulated blanket to wrap an electric water heater located in an unheated area, such as a garage.* This could save about 7%–16% in water heating costs.

*Not recommended for natural gas water heaters.



Ditch the resolutions in favor of an easy to-do list.

SCAN FOR THE REALITE ONLINE



Step 1
Point your phone camera at the QR code.

Step 2
Tap the screen to access Walton EMC news online.

Walton EMC
waltonemc.com

REALITE JAN 2025 VOLUME 75, NO. 1

quick guide

IF YOUR POWER IS OUT
770.267.2505
[waltonemc.com](https://www.waltonemc.com) > Report an Outage

WHEN WE'RE AVAILABLE
Power Outages and Emergencies > 24/7
Contact Center > M–F, 7A–7P
Business Offices > M–F, 8A–5P

find us

Monroe 842 US Hwy. 78
Snellville 3645 Lenora Church Rd.
Watkinsville 2061-D Hog Mountain Rd.

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©2025 Walton EMC is a customer-owned power company. That means our cooperative focuses on service, not profit. We serve more than 135,000 accounts in Athens-Clarke, Barrow, DeKalb, Greene, Gwinnett, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Rockdale and Walton Counties.

Our subsidiaries supply natural gas and security services.

Wired up

FFA MEMBERS PUT ELECTRICAL SKILLS TO THE TEST

FFA members from six area high schools put their wiring skills to the test at the Sub-Region FFA-EMC Electrification Career Development Event (CDE) held at Walton EMC's Monroe headquarters.

Student competitors demonstrated their knowledge and technical skills during the event that serves as a preliminary to the region competition. Regional winners qualify for the state finals and a chance to pocket a \$1,000 scholarship provided by Georgia's electric cooperatives.

The contest begins with an electrical wiring problem. Participants translate a wiring diagram, select the necessary wiring materials for the problem and then install a complete electric circuit.

Upon construction of the circuit, students answer problem-solving exercises based on their understanding of the National Electric Code. The students end with a demonstration before a panel of judges explaining the steps to complete an electrical wiring task.

Georgia's electric cooperatives partner with the Georgia Department of Education to sponsor and host FFA Electrification CDEs across the state. The sub-region competition in Monroe includes students representing high schools from the service areas of Walton, Rayle and Snapping Shoals EMCs.

Walton EMC has sponsored the contest since it began in the 1960s, said Jennifer Broun, the co-op's community and youth representative. She and other Walton EMC employees coordinate the sub-region contest and serve as judges.

"This event is complex, challenging and requires many hours of preparation by the students," she said. "But in the end, each has learned a valuable, practical skill, and we hope some may use it as a springboard to a career with an electric co-op like Walton EMC."

Leyton Morris, Morgan County High School FFA member, wires his way to a second-place finish in the wiring contest sponsored by Walton EMC.



Mason Cuendet, who represented Social Circle High School at the contest, discusses his electrical wiring problem with FFA advisor Ben Brand. Students who participate in the wiring contest often go on to careers as electricians, engineers, home builders, heating and air contractors, farmers and even EMC employees.



Hunter Hammond, Oconee County High School FFA, tackles the wiring problem. Competitors work on portable panels built by Walton EMC's maintenance department.



Winners in the Sub-Region FFA-EMC Electrification CDE are, from left, Caden Berggren, Oglethorpe High School FFA, first place; Leyton Morris, Morgan County High School FFA, second place; and Hunter Hammond, Oconee County High School FFA, third place.

Resolve to give life

WALTON EMC HOSTING BLOOD DRIVES IN 2025

A decades-old tradition will continue as Walton EMC customer-owners and employees again roll up their sleeves to give life during Red Cross blood drives at the co-op's main office in Monroe.

Since Georgia Northeast Red Cross began keeping donation records in 2003, the co-op drives have collected 2,395 pints of usable blood. A single drive typically yields 29 to 32 pints of usable blood, which is desperately needed, said Laurie Treadwell, Walton EMC personnel specialist and blood drive coordinator.

"The Red Cross has a critical need for blood donors, especially those with O types," she said, noting that the co-op's 2024 drives collected 51 units of the universal O blood. "Every gift of blood can help up to three people."

While many blood donors are regular drive participants, newcomers are encouraged and welcomed, Treadwell said. The co-op's 2024 drives included five first-time donors.

Potential donors can visit the Red Cross website to sign up for a nearby drive. To check appointment availability for upcoming Walton EMC drives, contact Treadwell at ltreadwell@waltonemc.com.

2025 BLOOD DRIVES

Walton EMC Office, Monroe

February 13

April 17

June 19

Future dates TBD

MORE INFO:

Laurie Treadwell,
ltreadwell@waltonemc.com

Do we owe you money?

Does Walton EMC owe you unclaimed membership fees or security deposits? The co-op's Unclaimed Funds search feature at waltonemc.com provides an easy way for any customer-owner to find out.

Simply click on **My Account**, and then select Unclaimed Funds.

To search, just enter your first and last name. If your name is listed, follow the instructions provided to contact Walton EMC and claim your money.

Have questions? Call 770-267-2505 to speak to a customer care representative available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Jennifer Broun, Walton EMC community and youth representative