

# Power with Purpose

For the people. By the people.

While this phrase is certainly an apt description of our democratic nation, it also represents Walton EMC, our consumer-owned, democratically controlled electric cooperative.

Members are what our co-op is all about. Without us, Walton EMC has no purpose. Meeting our needs – as well as our wants – is what this co-op is designed to do.

I am among the nine elected members of the Walton EMC Board of Directors. We are tasked with setting the strategic direction of the co-op and ensuring it stays on course.

Grassroots, bottom-up governance ensures the co-op's more than 125,000 residential, commercial, institutional and industrial customer-owners are represented in all decisions. This is one of the many benefits of being an electric cooperative customer-owner.

The co-op's financial health, service to members, energy sustainability and community investment are among the goals your co-op board prioritized in 2024. I'm pleased to report on some of the results.



**MICHAEL LOWDER**  
Board Chair



Apprentice lineman Bryce Watson competes at the 2025 Georgia Lineman's Rodeo.



Total returned in 2024:

**\$9 million**

Customer-owners with accounts  
in these years will get a refund:

**2001, 2023**

Capital credits refunded  
since 1936:

**\$152 million**



Much of the customer  
satisfaction credit goes  
to the co-op's **274**  
**employees who work**  
**daily to provide service**  
**quality and proactive**  
**customer interactions.**

## MAINTAINING FINANCIAL HEALTH

Continuing Walton EMC's legacy as a safe, modern and resilient electric utility is among the board's chief priorities. This responsibility must be balanced with maintaining the co-op's strong financial position.

I am pleased to report that your co-op leadership and management worked in tandem to successfully continue keeping rates as low as possible while ensuring operational costs were covered in 2024.

One of the tangible benefits of ongoing financial strength of our not-for-profit electric cooperative is receiving capital credits. After reducing debt, saving for emergencies and investing in infrastructure and other improvements, your board can approve the distribution of capital credits.

In 2024, we authorized \$9 million in capital credit refunds. These refunds went to those who received electric service from Walton EMC in 2001 and 2023. Including the most recent distribution, Walton EMC has refunded \$152 million in capital credits to customer-owners since the cooperative was founded in 1936.

## CELEBRATING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Your board was especially proud of the news that Walton EMC was named "#1 in Brand Appeal" by J.D.Power, the global leader in analyzing consumer insights. This exceptional honor speaks volumes about your cooperative's successful efforts to align with members' expectations and values.

J.D.Power researchers asked a random sample of customer-owners to rate the co-op in brand appeal, including company reputation, marketing execution and customer trust. Among electric cooperatives, Walton EMC earned the highest scores in all three of the categories measured.

Being exceptional in brand appeal is a critical marker for Walton EMC. It means you are experiencing the engagement and connection you want and expect from the co-op. Just as important, it proves our co-op is succeeding in being aligned with the brand traits you most value. I can't think of a higher honor than that for a customer-owned utility.

Achieving this level of customer satisfaction is no accident. Much of the credit goes to the co-op's 274 employees who work daily to provide service quality and proactive customer interactions. On behalf of the board and all the co-op customer-owners we represent, I want to thank this talented, experienced team for the incredible job they do on our behalf.

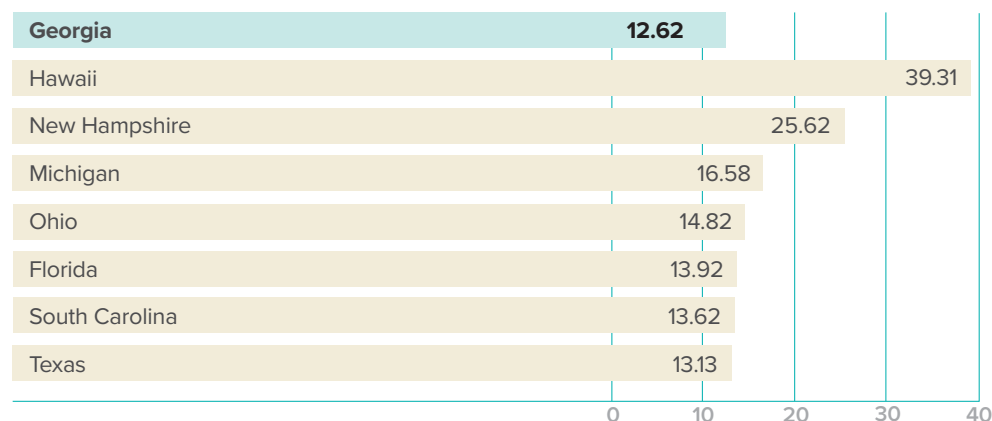


**Walton EMC is a leader among Southeast electricity utilities** in electricity generated from **renewable sun power.**

## SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY

A few months ago, you might have read an article in the Realite, the co-op's member newsletter, where David Gattie, an energy policy expert at the University of Georgia, was quoted as saying Georgia is the envy of the nation due, in large part, to our far-sighted investments in diversified energy generation to meet existing and expanding electricity needs.

## Georgia vs. The Rest A sampling of U.S. electric co-op residential rates

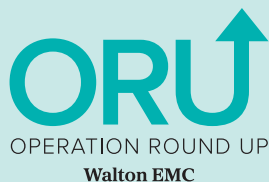


Your cooperative's support of the expansion of the Vogtle Nuclear Power Plant is key to this proactive approach. Walton EMC members are now receiving safe, reliable, emission-free nuclear energy from the newly opened units 3 and 4. These are the first new nuclear units to be constructed in the U.S. in the last 30 years, and Plant Vogtle is now the largest generator of clean energy in the country.

Though it was a long time coming, and there were many bumps in the road, Plant Vogtle is an important example of Walton EMC's commitment to power with purpose. Access to nuclear energy is a strategic and vital resource for every member of our cooperative and for every Georgian. Working alongside other power distributors in the state, we can generate consistent power that has minimal impact on the environment for the next 70 years.

Your board is also supportive of a diverse portfolio of energy that includes solar power. Walton EMC is a leader among Southeast electricity utilities in electricity generated from renewable sun power. I'm especially proud of our Cooperative Solar program that provides access to solar electricity for those members who want to purchase renewable energy. That includes those who might be otherwise excluded from owning or installing their own solar electricity generation.

Last year, 1,777 Walton EMC members were subscribed to Cooperative Solar and we have room for more. If you have an interest in renewable energy, I urge you to contact the co-op or visit the Walton EMC website to learn more about this worthwhile renewable energy program available to co-op members.



A Walton EMC  
**Operation Round Up**  
grant is helping  
**Harmony Perez of**  
**Lilburn regain her**  
**independence** after  
suffering rare spinal  
strokes last year.  
Pictured with the co-op  
customer-owner are  
her children, Riley, 11,  
and Maya, 8, and  
husband Chris.

## INVESTING IN COMMUNITY

Our commitment to power with purpose also includes the obligation to improve and care for the communities we serve. Walton EMC's support of our home communities is core to our cooperative identity and remains among our most important investments.

In 2024, Walton EMC continued to prioritize community engagement with the full support of your board. Supporting local initiatives, funding youth development opportunities and contributing to the sustainability of our communities through taxes are some of the ways we accomplished this.

More than 74,000 Walton EMC customer-owners voluntarily participated in Operation Roundup last year. Our combined donations of nearly \$678,000 provided financial assistance to food banks, youth programs, community enrichment programming, service organizations, economic development, wellness initiatives, cultural experiences and educational opportunities in counties served by Walton EMC.

Your cooperative also distributed \$367,044 in School EmPOWERment education grants that provide teachers with tools to stimulate classroom learning. Students in 55 public and private schools, are reaping the benefits of this worthy investment. Since this program began nine years ago, Walton EMC has invested more than \$3 million into area classrooms. The money comes from unclaimed co-op refunds. No grant money comes from members' power bills.

The co-op's commitment to youth development also included the awarding of \$156,000 in post-high school scholarships to 60 seniors from Walton EMC customer-owner families. Since 2008, the Walton Electric Trust has awarded 836 scholarships totaling over \$3.7 million to aspiring students. Trust scholarships are funded by unclaimed capital credit refunds that are placed into a special endowment.

This is my second year to chair your member-led Walton EMC Board of Directors. It is a privilege to lead this governing body that is committed to staying the course. We remain committed to delivering power with purpose to better life for the people and communities served by the cooperative.