

EMERGENCY HEAT: USE IT IN AN...EMERGENCY

If your home has a heat pump, you may have noticed a thermostat setting labeled “emergency heat.”

“The emergency heat setting is for just what it says – a backup heating source when a heat pump malfunctions,” says Pete Ervin, member services specialist. “Using this setting when it’s not needed can cause a large spike in your electric bill.”

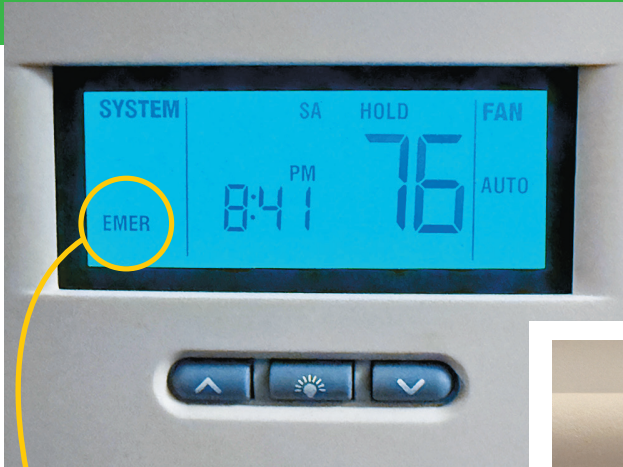
Working normally, heat pumps use refrigerant to transfer heat. Emergency heat typically relies on electric resistance heating elements found in the system’s air handler. In a few cases, it may be fueled by a gas furnace.

Electric resistance heating is less efficient and more expensive than using your heat pump’s primary refrigerant-based heating method.

“Never switch your heat pump to emergency or auxiliary heat if it’s working properly,” says Ervin. “Doing so disables the heat pump’s refrigerant system and uses only the electric resistance elements.”

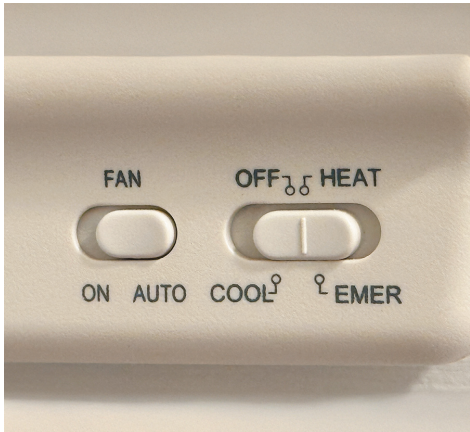
FINAL TIP:

Check thermostat settings regularly to make sure emergency heat isn’t accidentally engaged.



The correct winter setting for heat pumps is heat, not emergency heat.

Check your heat pump thermostat regularly to ensure it hasn’t been inadvertently switched to the emergency heating mode.



WHEN TO MANUALLY SWITCH TO EMERGENCY HEAT

If your heat pump isn’t keeping the house warm, check the outside unit. If it’s not running, switch to emergency heat and call an HVAC contractor immediately.

WHEN EMERGENCY HEAT SHOULD OPERATE

Emergency heat, also known as auxiliary heat, may operate in certain instances:

- 1. In extremely cold conditions**, the heat pump may need auxiliary heat to meet heating demands. If the heat pump is properly sized, this should be rare.
- 2. During defrost mode**, auxiliary heat operates to maintain indoor warmth while frost is cleared from the outdoor unit.

In these cases, your unit will automatically activate auxiliary heat.

KNOW YOUR benefits

You benefit from belonging to a cooperative

October is Cooperative Month and a great time to celebrate being a Walton EMC member.

Getting your power from a member-owned cooperative comes with these benefits:

- **Lower Rates**
Your co-op operates on a not-for-profit basis. We set our rates to cover costs, not produce a return. Walton EMC is consistently below the state and national average when it comes to what you pay for power.
- **Capital Credits**
Our not-for-profit philosophy also means we return excess revenue to our members through capital credit refunds. Those refunds total \$152 million through last December.
- **Member Ownership and Control**
As a Walton EMC customer, you are also an owner. Every June, you can vote for our board of directors – fellow members who represent your interests in running the cooperative.



2025 NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

- **Community Focus and Local Investment**
We live and work in your community and care about our neighbors. Through programs like Operation Round Up, School EmPOWERment Grants and donations of money and time, your co-op has invested millions of dollars and thousands of hours of manpower locally.

Walton EMC has paid millions of dollars in taxes to our local communities, supporting schools, social services and infrastructure while requiring few government services in return.
- **Innovation**
Walton EMC has a history of leadership in technology and renewable energy. We were among the first co-ops to remotely control our substations, establish a website and offer locally produced solar power to our members.
- **Greater Accountability**
We are accountable to our members, not distant investors. Members influence policies and rates, ensuring the co-op aligns with community needs.

Learn more about our cooperative philosophy at waltonemc.com.



GET THE REALITE ONLINE

- Step 1** Point your phone camera at the QR code.
- Step 2** Tap the screen to access Walton EMC news online.

quick guide

IF YOUR POWER IS OUT
770.267.2505
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.

Web waltonemc.com
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our leaders

President and CEO Ron Marshall
Senior VP Corporate Services Russell DeLong
Senior VP Walton Energy and External Affairs Jim Bottone
VP Engineering and Operations Tim Morris
VP Power Supply Hudson Kingery
VP Finance Darlene Butler
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Board Vice Chair Jason Sidwell
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A Look Back

On Oct. 3, 1936, Walton EMC was chartered to give rural northeastern Georgians access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity. Today, our consumer-owned utility is one of the nation's largest electric cooperatives. Here's a look back at nine decades of progress:

1930s Ninety miles of line are built to connect the co-op's first 360 members. The home of Lindsey Powers of Walton County's Turkey Mountain community is the first to be energized in 1937.

1940s Electric grid expansion explodes in the post-war era, resulting in 5,000 members by 1949.

1950s The expanded service area connects 8,000 members in 10 counties.

1960s Branch offices open in Snellville and Watkinsville.

1970s & 1980s Membership reaches 55,000. To meet growing demand, Walton EMC helps form Oglethorpe Power Corporation, an electric generation and transmission cooperative.

1990s Member-funded Operation Round Up begins in 1997 and exceeds \$9 million in donations by 2024. Subsidiary EMC Security opens in 1998.

2000s Subsidiary Walton Gas begins marketing natural gas in 2002.

2010s The prestigious J.D. Power award is received for ranking highest in customer satisfaction among U.S. residential electricity providers.

Walton EMC leads all utilities in the Southeast in solar energy production.

2020s By 2024, total refunds to Walton EMC members – a perk of cooperative membership – reaches \$152 million.

DEFENSEstrategy

Walton EMC protects assets and members' data against cyberattacks

As the co-op's director of information services, Andy Hill leads a team that works behind the scenes battling villains known as cybercriminals – those who use computers and the internet to disrupt electric grid reliability and harm the personal security of customer-owners.

Cyber incidents pose a serious threat to Walton EMC's operations, Hill said, explaining why cybersecurity is a priority in the co-op's commitment to safety.

"As our technology becomes smarter, faster and more integrated, cybercriminals are keeping pace and evolving their tactics to exploit every vulnerability," he said. "My job is to ensure Walton EMC is always one step ahead of the bad guys."

A combination of advanced tools, best practices and human intervention are used to protect co-op systems that support the electric grid, manage the flow of electricity and respond to outages. Field equipment like smart meters and automated switches also require protection to ensure accurate billing and prevent service misuse. Communication networks that support daily operations and emergency response are equally important.

"A successful cyberattack could disrupt power distribution, damage infrastructure and compromise billing or customer service systems – resulting in outages, costly repairs and potentially higher rates," Hill said. "Additionally, a breach could expose members' personal data and payment information, putting them at risk for identity theft, fraud and phishing scams."

Members' data is safeguarded with multiple layers of protection to filter and block harmful emails and offer 24/7 detection and real-time response services. Walton EMC adheres to strong corporate security policies based on standards that provide a proven framework for protecting sensitive information, Hill added.

Co-op employees regularly participate in training to stay sharp on protection practices. "We're continuously reviewing and updating our safety measures to stay ahead of new threats," Hill said.

But cybersecurity doesn't end with employee efforts. "Every Walton EMC customer-owner plays a role by staying alert, using strong passwords and protecting their account information to help safeguard both the cooperative and themselves," Hill said.

During National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, Hill urges Walton EMC customer-owners to take proactive steps (listed below) to protect against online threats.

WE'RE INVESTING
energy IN WHAT
MATTERS MOST: YOUR
PERSONAL SECURITY.



STAY SAFE ONLINE

- **Use strong, unique passwords.** Create passwords that are long, complex and different for every account. Use a password manager to securely keep track of all your passwords. Avoid reusing passwords across sites.
- **Enable multi-factor authentication (MFA).** Opt in for MFA wherever possible, especially for financial, email and social media accounts.
- **Be cautious.** Always think before clicking. Don't open emails, click unfamiliar links or download attachments from unknown senders.

- **Update regularly.** Ensure device operating systems, apps, antivirus and other software are kept up to date.
- **Limit personal information sharing.** Be mindful of what you post on social media. Details like your birthdate, location or travel plans can be used by cybercriminals. Always use privacy settings to control who can see your information. Avoid storing sensitive personal or financial data on unsecured devices or cloud platforms.

WE'RE CONTINUOUSLY
REVIEWING AND
UPDATING OUR SAFETY
MEASURES TO STAY
AHEAD OF NEW THREATS.

—Andy Hill, Walton EMC Director
of Information Services

Kick off the holidays with Walton EMC

In what has become a seasonal tradition, area experts will share ideas for festive decorating and entertaining at two Walton EMC Holiday Programs coming in November.

Crowd pleaser Dean Pannell of Bogart, a Georgia master florist and owner of Pannell Designs & Events, brings his wit and flair to the stage to showcase practical ideas for decking the halls. Holiday entertainment and gift-giving pro Denise Beacham, owner of Moultrie's Three Chicks and a Hen, adds to the fun with new trends and tips.

Monday, Nov. 10

Oconee County Civic Center, Watkinsville

Thursday, Nov. 13

The Rock Gym, Loganville

Both programs begin at 7:00 p.m.
No pre-registration is required.

See you
there!

