

Decades of INNOVATION: 1950s

World War II is over. Walton EMC has extended lines to every corner of its 10-county service area. The emphasis shifts from connecting homes and farms to the grid to helping members make the most of their new workhorse – electric power.

The 1950s bring explosive growth in rural use of modern appliances.

By the end of the decade, most homes are equipped with a wide range of appliances including refrigerators, freezers, ranges and washing machines. Walton EMC hires home electrification advisors who conduct demonstrations on cooking, clothes washing and other efficient uses of electric power. Homemakers attend in droves.

“New Appliances,” a regular feature in the co-op’s newsletter listing members and their new electric devices, becomes popular. The newsletter itself – named “Realite” after a member contest – launches in 1951. Electric lighting benefits are a frequent topic, featuring tips like “have plenty of outlets” and “place a light switch at every door.”

New Appliances

Troy DeWitt Griffith, Loganville RFD 1, range; Paul Lovern, Monroe RFD 1, range; Gene Lemmonds, Social Circle, RFD 1, range; Eva Glass Hogan, Monroe RFD 1, range; R. L. Simons, Social Circle RFD 1, range; E. G. Akins, Winder RFD 2, range; Gilbert Kerr, Campton, range.

Hugh Gasnell, Watkinsville, range; Larry D. Wheeler, Bogart RFD 1, range; W. D. Dobbs, Good Hope, range; Leon Powers, Monroe RFD 1, range; W. C. Moon, Loganville RFD 3, range; Lee Shell, Grayson, range; W. M. Huff, Bogart, range; G. T. Pittman, Loganville RFD 2, range.

James C. Jones, Social Circle RFD 2, range; W. Hugh Hawk, Monroe RFD 2, water heater; H. J. Nichols, Lilburn RFD 1, range; James Nix, Grayson RFD 1, range; R. E. Bernhart, Conyers RFD 2, range; James Pratt, Statham RFD 1, range, freezer, water heater; Grady Hendricks, Loganville, RFD 3, range; Mrs. R. B. Bailey, Bethlehem, range; Phillip Culbreath, Athens RFD 4, range; A. Hoke Norris, Bogart, range.

Members embraced new electric appliances during the 1950s and were proud to let their neighbors know. Each issue of the Realite listed members who had purchased new appliances.

Farmers reduce labor by installing water pumps, automatic waterers and feeders for poultry houses and electric milking machines for dairies. The long days of heavy toil are finally starting to get shorter.

The co-op also works to make the young electric grid more robust and reliable.

New substations begin dotting the service area to meet increasing member demand. Cutting-edge equipment, like voltage regulators and automatic breakers, improve service quality for end users and reduce outages.

Walton EMC linemen get the first hot line equipment. This allows some repairs and improvements without cutting power to members’ homes and farms.

But all is not promising. Co-op leaders soon spot a new threat on the horizon.

Investor-owned utilities (IOUs) that showed no interest in serving rural areas now realize their missed opportunity. Through smear and propaganda campaigns, encroachments on cooperative territory and lobbying against co-ops building their own power plants, IOUs seek to reclaim what they now see as valuable territory. In response, Walton EMC forms the Minutemen, a dedicated group of influential members ready to advocate on the cooperative’s behalf.

TROUBLES? HERE'S WHERE TO REPORT IT!

In case of trouble Call (8:00 a. m. to 5:00 p. m.) 4111
 From 5:00 p. m. to 8:00 a. m., weekdays, Sundays, and holidays call:
 Head Service Man, Monroe 2914
 Asst. Service Man, Monroe 2919
 Asst. Service Man, Monroe 2935
 Asst. Service Man, Monroe 6158
 Manager, Monroe 3511
 Asst. Manager, Monroe 3396
REPORT ALL TROUBLE!!! SOON!!!

Have an outage in the 1950s? If it's after hours, just call directly to a serviceman or even the general manager! Notice the four-digit phone numbers.

COVER PHOTO:

Snellville, the area with the most Walton EMC members today, didn't get its own substation until 1956.

MARCH 2026

REALITE

Walton EMC

90 Years
1936-2026

NEW SNELLVILLE SUB-STATION NOW ENERGIZED TO SERVE GROWING AREA

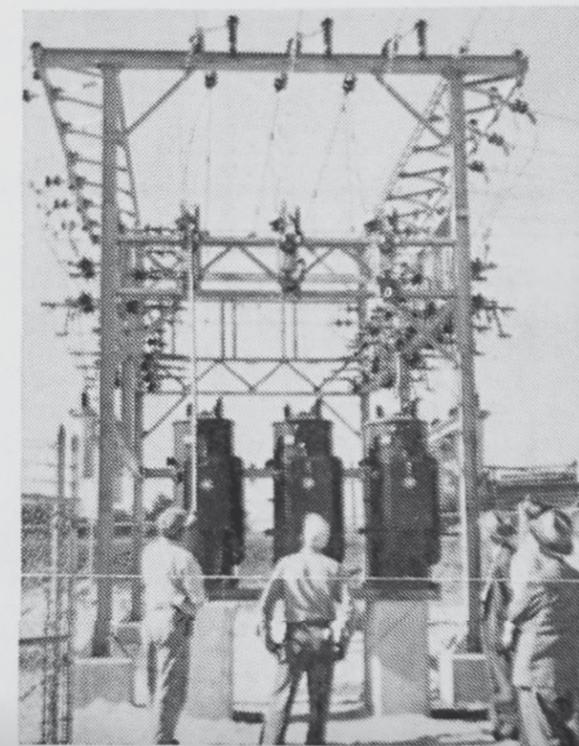
The new Snellville sub-station was energized at 4 p.m., on March 9, 1956. This station was erected by the Georgia Power Company to supply electric current near the center of the fast-growing Snellville area. This area has been served for a number of years by a station located near the Log Cabin at the foot of Stone Mountain.

The Walton EMC erected a modern steel switching structure just outside the Power Company station which has three large voltage regulators, ten oil circuit breakers with by-pass switches and lightning arresters.

The regulators are designed to deliver the same voltage on all circuits at peak periods as well as throughout the night when current use is low.

The oil circuit breakers are installed in each circuit for clearing the line of minor trouble without causing outages but will lock out when a dead short is on the line.

Heavy lines have been constructed out of the switching station along U.S. highway 78 to provide adequate lines to serve this area for years to come. Members in the western part of the system should now be enjoying regulated voltage knowing there is ample electric current for all loads. Also, fewer outages will be caused by electrical storms.



SNELLVILLE Switching Station being energized by Dan Coker, Supt. Walton EMC linemen.

Future planning requires a new substation just east of Campton to serve Boid Springs, Campton, Gratis, Sims Town and the North end of Hog Mountain road in Barrow county. The Whitehall metering point will be replaced by a new sub-station near Snellville. It is hoped that these stations will also be energized this year.

Walton EMC

waltonemc.com

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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

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



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©2026 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.

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Benefitting from the boom

WALTON EMC'S EXPERIENCE IN SERVING A HYPERSCALE DATA CENTER CAN BENEFIT MEMBERS

Data centers are the fastest-growing source of electricity demand in the United States, yet today they account for less than 6% of the nation's total energy consumption — a share that is expected to double within the next few years.

Georgia is one of the fastest-growing data center markets in the nation, and the increased electricity demand they bring is coming whether Walton EMC serves them or not. UGA researchers estimate that additional data centers could increase Georgia's electricity demand by 49% by 2030. By selectively partnering with the right projects, the co-op's customer-owners can be at the front of the line to benefit from that growth rather than simply absorb its impact.

Every time you stream a show, check your email or scroll social media, a data center is doing the heavy lifting. Most of the processing behind the apps and websites you use every day doesn't happen on your device — it happens at a data center. And as our reliance on those services grows, so does the demand for the facilities and the electricity that power them.

Driven primarily by the expansion of AI computing and cloud services, data center construction in the state is exploding, says Hudson Kingery, Walton EMC's vice president of power supply.

"At the end of last year, Georgia had 63 active data centers, 35 under construction, and another 249 planned within the next five years," he said. The majority of these are concentrated in the greater

Atlanta metropolitan area, but data center developers are increasingly looking across the state.

POWERFUL NEEDS

Their need for power is the key reason Big Tech — Amazon, Google, Meta and Microsoft — are developing data centers in Georgia. Through long-range planning, Georgia utilities have developed robust electricity generation and transmission infrastructure.

"These hyperscale data centers use very large amounts of energy," Kingery said. Data centers typically consume 10 to 40 times more electricity per square foot than standard commercial buildings, reports a new University of Georgia (UGA) study.

Georgia law allows certain large-scale electricity users — including manufacturers, distribution centers, most schools, grocery stores and data centers — to choose their electricity provider.

"Some utilities are dealing with Big Tech for the first time, but we've been at this since 2017," Kingery reminded.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

A proven track record serving the Meta project positions Walton EMC to selectively capitalize on the boom.

"We can choose only the opportunities that bring financial benefits to our existing members without compromising the reliable, affordable power they depend on," Kingery said.

Those potential benefits include the ability to maintain affordable electric rates.



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—Hudson Kingery, Walton EMC's vice president of power supply

"These data centers can generate significant, predictable revenue that helps stabilize rates for traditional Walton EMC members," Kingery said.

Hyperscale data centers are being required to pay for the electric infrastructure upgrades needed to serve them — things like new or improved transmission lines and substations. Those investments also strengthen the grid for our existing members.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Whether Walton EMC will serve any of the newcomers will be determined on a case-by-case basis. But the criteria will always be the same, Kingery assures.

"Our approach goes beyond a typical cost-benefit analysis," he said. "First, we make sure the data center covers the costs associated with service to them. Then, we make sure there's a clear benefit to the rest of our membership — while carefully minimizing risk for our traditional members."

You'll come

90th Walton EMC
ANNUAL MEETING



Walton EMC Headquarters
842 US Hwy 78, Monroe

- Easy drive-thru participation
- Vote for Board members
- Receive a bucket of gifts
- Register for door prizes

MORE INFO:
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