

SEMCO NEWS

Official Member Newsletter

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®

November 2022

Sumter EMC sponsors members at Georgia Cooperative Council conferences



Sumter EMC members Matt and Ivy Oliver attended the annual Georgia Cooperative Council Couples Conference in August.

Sumter EMC, along with other statewide financial, electric, telephone, marketing, and service Cooperatives, is a member of the Georgia Cooperative Council. The objective of the Council is to promote and encourage all types of Cooperative associations in the state and educate the public about the Cooperative way of business.

Sumter EMC is pleased to have sent Jordyn Walker of Leesburg to the Georgia Cooperative Council Youth Leadership Conference. Jordyn is the 16-year-old daughter of Kenneth Walker and Teresa Walker, both of Leesburg, and a senior at Lee County High School.

The youth conference, affectionately known as Co-op Camp, is an engaging leadership and learning experience for students across Georgia that highlights the impact of Cooperatives on communities, what they do, and how youth can be a part of them.

Held at the FFA/FCCLA Center July 18-22, the conference promised the attendees a week of leadership, learning, and laughter and gave them the opportunity to grow in areas of community leadership, problem-solving, relationship-building, and

communication in a fun and relaxed environment.

Cooperatives from all over the state, including Sumter EMC, sponsor the conference to provide a unique way for students to see what Cooperatives do and

Continued on page 22D



Sumter EMC member and Lee County High School Senior Jordyn Walker attended the Georgia Cooperative Council Youth Leadership Conference in July.

Protection guide for electric motors and equipment

Who pays for equipment damage resulting from power failure—the member, the Cooperative, or the insurance company?

Sumter EMC's liability insurance covers the loss of a member's equipment and food if the loss is caused by the Cooperative's error. If a loss occurs involving Sumter EMC's facilities, but the Cooperative is not in error, the loss is not covered by our insurance, and no payment is made to the member. These cases usually involve acts of nature or vehicular accidents.

Are you protected?

Many losses occur due to acts of nature, which are beyond the control of the Cooperative. The member must provide his own protection for these losses. We recommend you become familiar with available means of protection and determine which risks you choose to protect against.

PROTECTING AGAINST EQUIPMENT AND MOTOR FAILURE

Protect against quick restarts.

Momentary power interruption to a central air conditioner or heat pump can result in damage to the compressor. For \$95 to \$125, your equipment dealer can install a time delay device that will keep the unit from restarting immediately when the power supply is momentarily interrupted. The device gives the compressor three to five minutes for its pressures to stabilize before allowing it to restart.

Protect against low or high voltage. Several products are available that provide protection. They often provide more than one function. A voltage-sensing relay is available that will shut the motor down when voltage falls below or rises above adjustable set points. Installation of this device



and the time delay device mentioned above are good protective measures.

A solid-state device can be installed on your equipment that protects against all three problems: high voltage, low voltage, and quick restarts. Often, a device is installed as standard equipment on some new air conditioners and heat pumps that will only protect against low voltage and quick restarts, but not high voltage. Check with your equipment dealer to see what kind of protection you have or need.

Protect against phase failure, phase reversal, or frequency failure. Devices are available to protect from loss of three-phase compressors and large motors where one or more phases are dead or where the rotation of the equipment is reversed due to two of the three supply phases being reversed.

Some devices provide protection

from unacceptable frequency levels as well. Protective devices in this category are generally more expensive and are found more commonly on large commercial motors and compressors. The over-load heaters provided with motor starting equipment may not protect the motor from single-phasing. If the additional protective devices described here are omitted, load conditions exist where a motor is vulnerable to single-phasing.

Protection against lightning.

Secondary lightning arresters are commonly installed on large commercial air conditioning systems. For residential systems, placement of a secondary lightning arrester at the weatherhead, meter base, or service entrance panel will provide some lightning protection for air conditioners and other household circuits. See "Lightning Protection" in the following section for additional information.

Protection for TVs and other

Sumter Electric Membership Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

electronics. A device that is designed to protect TVs and DVD players against voltage spikes can be purchased for under \$50. It senses the momentary surge of voltage caused by lightning hitting the distribution system near your home. The TV plugs into this adapter and then into the wall outlet. Once this device operates to prevent a spike from damaging the television, it must be replaced. It is neither effective against a direct lightning strike nor will it protect against sustained high or low voltage caused by a damaged distribution transformer.

Protection for appliances. There are solid-state protective devices designed for window air conditioners, refrigerators, and freezers. They could be used on other appliances as well, but the cost is prohibitive for small appliances. They serve the same three functions: protection against quick restarts, low voltage, and high voltage. They plug in as an adapter, also.

Additional protection for appliances can be obtained through proper grounding and the use of secondary lightning arresters.

LIGHTNING PROTECTION

Sumter EMC installs primary lightning arresters at each distribution transformer pole and on other distribution equipment. Surge protection equipment on the power distribution system cannot always provide adequate protection to the member's premises. Steps can be taken by the member to provide a greater degree of protection.

Ground properly. Often, the grounding of the home (or other structure) is inadequate to protect against lightning. Grounding conductors

should be fastened to ground rods with heavy-duty grounding clamps that are suitable for this purpose. This is often treated with too little care. Additional ground rods can be added to improve the grounding. A very effective ground can be accomplished by fastening the grounding conductor to the well casing if the casing is steel and if the attachment is done properly. Many ground connections are ineffective because of poor attachments.

Install secondary lightning arresters. Secondary lightning arresters can provide a degree of protection when properly installed. They have received adverse publicity because so many have been improperly grounded. Arresters should be UL approved.

A secondary arrester can be installed at the weatherhead, meter base, or service entrance panel. An arrester can also be installed on a specific piece of equipment. In any installation, the preferred method of grounding the arrester is to attach it to the steel well casing.

If the well casing is not available or it is not steel, the use of multiple ground rods can be used as an alternative.

While the above measures provide some lightning protection, they do not necessarily always prevent lightning damage due to the tremendous energy transfer that takes place during lightning storms. Protection against lightning damage should include protective equipment and insurance coverage to cover losses that might occur in spite of efforts to prevent them.

INSURANCE PROTECTION

If loss does occur, insurance policy provisions can provide some protec-

tion. The average user of electrical energy seldom knows or understands the extent of his insurance protection. Many policies are available from numerous carriers, such as:

- Dwelling Policies
- Homeowners Policies
- Tenant Homeowners Policies
- Farm Owners Policies
- Commercial Policies
- Computer Policies

Policies vary greatly in their extent of coverage. Many policies will cover lightning damage to equipment and appliances with exclusions for electronic components. Some policies will cover damages resulting from power interruptions if the interruption originates on the insured's premises. There are varying interpretations of what constitutes "on the premises."

Other policy considerations include payments of replacement costs versus actual cash value, differences in coverages concerning contents as opposed to parts of the structure, and special or unusual peril provisions, such as food spoilage peril.

Only your agent can provide the full information you need to assure adequate protection. Have your agent specifically point out your peril coverages and exclusions. Be sure to address losses that can occur when a problem occurs with the electrical distribution system serving you. You need to provide your own protection for losses that are beyond the control of Sumter EMC.

All wiring installation should be performed by a licensed electrician and/or heating and air conditioning dealer in compliance with the NEC and/or local codes.



Holiday office closing

The offices of Sumter EMC will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 24-25, for Thanksgiving. For emergencies, call (229) 924-8041 or (800) 342-6978. A dispatcher is on duty 24 hours per day.

Cooperative Council conferences, *Continued from page 22A*

why they are vital in their communities. Students learned about the different types of Co-ops and their impact, in addition to more about themselves and what it takes to be a leader.

New leadership skills were learned by putting them into practice while teaming up with peers and new friends. Interactive workshops for the teen participants helped them learn how to be better leaders through a personality profile session to understand how to better work with others and a leadership visioning exercise that focused on their goals.

Throughout the week, students participated in encounter sessions with representatives from the Farm Credit Associations, Georgia EMC, Go Energy Credit Union, Pineland Telephone Cooperative, and Adam Schwartz from The Cooperative Way. The presenters emphasized and gave examples of how their organization incorporates the Seven Cooperative Principles that all Cooperative businesses follow: Voluntary and Open Membership, Democratic Membership Control, Members' Economic Participation, Autonomy and Independence, Education and Training for Members, Cooperation Between Co-ops, and Concern for Local Communities.

In addition to activities on-site at the Georgia FFA/FCCLA Center, the group went on a field trip to two Cooperatives, Walton EMC and Godfrey Dairy, to see firsthand what they had been learning about. And while leading and learning took place throughout the week, fun and games were an important part of camp as well. A challenging high-ropes course, mud course, and team-building activities brought students together and helped them build meaningful friendships that made the goodbyes at the

end of the week so hard.

"I would have never done something like this had you not chosen to sponsor me and allow me this experience of a lifetime," Jordyn shared in her thank you note to Sumter EMC. "I broke a little more out of my shell each day, made friends, and learned so much more than I thought!"

Sumter EMC also sponsored Matt and Ivy Oliver of Americus to attend the annual Georgia Cooperative Council Couples Conference. This conference is a three-day event that brings together couples from across the

state to learn about the Cooperative business model and the impact of Cooperatives on their local community as well as at the state and national level.

Sumter EMC members Wes and Mary Catherine Gaston who attended the Couples Conference back in 2019 were also chosen to attend and serve as the

hosting couple for the 2022 conference. This year's couples gathered at The Ridges Resort and Marina in Hiawassee August 19-21 for a weekend of fun, fellowship, and learning. Our goal at Sumter EMC is to serve our members, and we do this by not only providing them with electricity, but also by providing opportunities for those in our community to learn and engage with others by offering educational experiences like this conference.

Throughout the weekend, couples participated in educational sessions that were led by Georgia EMC, Pineland Telephone Cooperative, AgGeorgia Farm Credit, and AgSouth Farm Credit. The featured speaker for the



Matt and Ivy Oliver

weekend was, again, Adam Schwartz. He engaged the attendees in interactive workshops that were both educational and entertaining, while also bringing the Cooperative business model to life.

"EMCs and other Cooperatives provide vital infrastructure in Georgia, particularly in rural areas," says Ivy Oliver. "This conference provides attendees with education and resources for a better understanding of the impact Co-ops have in our communities."

The group also traveled to Blue Ridge Mountain EMC and toured their facilities to have a personal experience of the unique cooperation among Cooperatives.

"Cooperatives exemplify perfectly what can be accomplished by working together for the benefit of all," says Kelly Crawford, Manager of Media and Communications at Blue Ridge Mountain EMC.

These conferences provide a platform for Sumter EMC and other electric Cooperatives to share the core principles in which we operate. Having the same set of principles is the key reason electric Cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of our members first.



Jordyn Walker