

# BEACON



Amicalola Electric  
Membership Corporation

"Owned By Those We Serve"

Vol 71 | Issue 3 | MAY 2021

## Comments from the CEO

### Tree trimming keeps the lights on

One of the things I love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Amicalola EMC, we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights-of-way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a "right-of-way" is and how it may impact you. A right-of-way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights-of-way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, Amicalola EMC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our



vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

#### Safety

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and the safety of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for

lineworkers to restore power.

#### Reliability

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to promote reliability.

#### Affordability

As you know, Amicalola EMC is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check in order to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.



Todd Payne  
President/CEO  
Amicalola EMC

# Amicalola EMC to implement new Futura Systems technology

The Operations and Member Service departments of Amicalola EMC will soon be implementing new technology from Futura Systems. An industry leader that provides technology for utilities across the United States, Futura Systems provides products that integrate with other leading utility technologies as real-time, configurable web services that utilize mobile internet technology to extend utilities far beyond their office doors.

Three key components of the Futura Systems technology will be put into service in the near future, which

include a geographic information system, staking and work order management.



*Geographic information system (GIS).* The entire suite of Futura software uses GIS as the system of record for network connectivity of all as-built facilities. The Operations Department will rely on GIS for Design/Staking of new construction and inspections. Member Services will rely on GIS because it is the asset management system of record for meter locations, transformers and other assets.

*Futura Stake* is an engineering-focused platform that integrates with

existing accounting systems. From the office or the field, qualified Amicalola EMC staff members can generate any number of detailed reports, including site maps, bills of materials, cost estimates and more. *Futura Stake* provides users with tools to design jobs on any system, regardless of scale or degree of complexity.

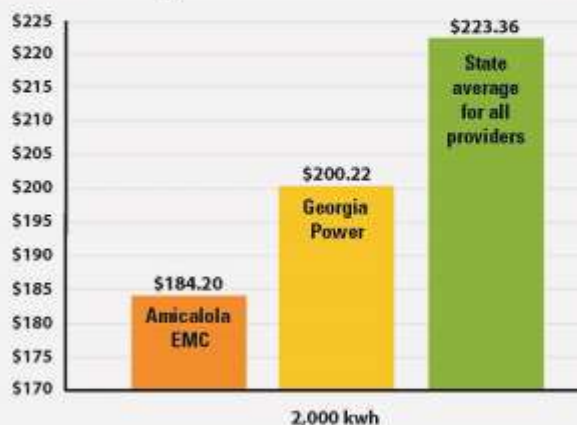
*Futura Project Tracker* is the web-based component of the staking solution. *Project Tracker* will allow appropriate Amicalola EMC staff members to manage the entire workflow process from the initial consumer request to the completion of an as-built design.

Amicalola EMC staff members are excited to apply the Futura Systems technology solutions to everyday tasks.

## Amicalola EMC rates lower than state average

According to the 2020 Winter Rate Survey, recently released by the Georgia Public Service Commission, Amicalola EMC members continue to pay less for electricity than the average Georgia resident. The survey confirms that Amicalola EMC is lower than the local investor-owned utility and lower than the state average in most categories.

2020 Winter Rate Survey  
Georgia Public Service Commission



## Aim-Achieve-Arrive (AAA) Center for Student Success to premier at Lumpkin High School

There are great things happening at Lumpkin High School. Home of the Indians, their motto is "the strength is in the tribe," and the tribe is getting stronger.

It began as a "dress for success" idea in the mind of Paula Cooper, CTAE Instructor at Lumpkin High, as she helped a student secure a job and the needed clothing and tools to start to work. Assistant Principal Jason Lemley got involved, and it soon grew beyond trying to help just one or two students, and the AAA Center for Success went from an idea to reality.

Designed to provide support for students in search of employment past high school, rather than college or technical training, students are turning to the center for assistance in completing employment applications, creating resumes, participating in mock job interviews and assistance in completing required documents once they land a job. Students are even able



Students may choose appropriate clothing and shoes from the AAA Center.



Ribbon-cutting: from left, Paula Cooper, CTAE Instructor, Lumpkin County High School (LCHS); Stacey Fields, Amicalola EMC; Assistant Principal Jason Lemley, LCHS; Principal Billy Kirk, LCHS; community sponsors; faculty; and Superintendent Rob Brown, LCHS. Not shown, Penelope Marshall, Amicalola EMC.



LCHS Assistant Principal Jason Lemley explains about the creation of the AAA Center.

to obtain appropriate clothing for their specific field.

Amicalola EMC, which provides electric service to the high school campus, is proud to be one of the charter sponsors of the AAA Center for Student Success at Lumpkin High and proud to be part of the excitement as the tribe gets stronger. Go Indians!

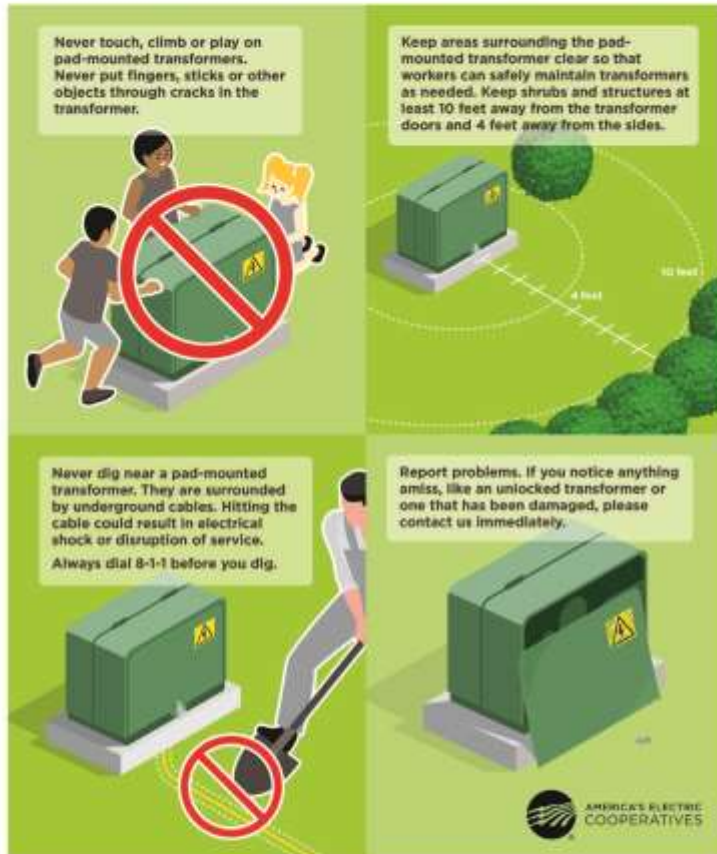
"Imagine if schools actually helped kids identify their strengths by exploring their talents from a young age and growing their skills over their years of K-12 education instead of letting them all follow the same routine and leaving them confused in life after graduation.

"This notion is what drives us in Lumpkin County to think outside the box, to be innovative and to work with our community in educating the whole student."

—Jason Lemley, Asst.  
Principal, Lumpkin High School

# Avoid the big green box

Please stay away from pad-mounted transformers (the big green box). While safe, they are not meant for touching, climbing or playing. Pad-mounted transformers carry high voltages of electricity that serve many homes in our communities.



**Never touch, climb or play on pad-mounted transformers. Never put fingers, sticks or other objects through cracks in the transformer.**

**Keep areas surrounding the pad-mounted transformer clear so that workers can safely maintain transformers as needed. Keep shrubs and structures at least 10 feet away from the transformer doors and 4 feet away from the sides.**

**Never dig near a pad-mounted transformer. They are surrounded by underground cables. Hitting the cable could result in electrical shock or disruption of service. Always dial 8-1-1 before you dig.**

**Report problems. If you notice anything amiss, like an unlocked transformer or one that has been damaged, please contact us immediately.**

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

## Memorial Day Closing



Memorial Day is a national holiday set aside to honor the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. In observance of Memorial Day 2021, our offices will be closed on Monday, May 31.

HAPPY  
*Mothers Day*



*Sunday, May 9*

## Generate safely.



Never use a portable generator indoors.

Do not plug generators into standard electrical outlets.

Use heavy-duty extension cords to connect appliances into the generator.

Start the generator before connecting appliances.