



Cooperation in Action: A Thanksgiving Story of Help and Gratitude

As we approach Thanksgiving, a time to reflect on what we're thankful for, it's important to remember one of the core values that makes cooperatives unique: Cooperation between Cooperatives. This principle was on display recently when our Jones-Onslow EMC team answered the call to assist fellow co-op French Broad Electric Membership Corporation in Marshall, North Carolina after Hurricane Helene left thousands without power.

When the storm hit, French Broad EMC faced a system-wide outage, affecting remote areas deep in the

mountains. Entire communities were left in the dark, with rugged terrain and fallen trees adding to the restoration challenge. With over 42,000 homes and businesses without electricity, the task ahead was daunting.

The day after the storm, JOEMC quickly responded by sending crews over the next two weeks of dedicated linemen, vegetation management specialists, and mechanics to assist in the restoration efforts in Western North Carolina. These men left their families and familiar surroundings, working tirelessly to restore power to

those affected by Hurricane Helene. The damage to the electric grid was staggering. Hundreds of broken poles needed replacing, and miles of line had to be repaired or rebuilt in some of the hardest-hit areas. One major task involved replacing numerous three-phase poles and re-energizing lines after additional trees fell. Crews worked across various circuits in remote and mountainous regions, focusing on restoring power to smaller, more isolated communities while continuing to clear fallen trees and debris. With each step, they faced steep terrain and dense woods, but the real work

(continued on next page)



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Light Up Lives This Season:

Donate to Power Bucks

While many homes are filled with twinkling lights and laughter this holiday season, some of our neighbors are quietly struggling in the dark. Their silent nights may not be by choice but due to hardship. You can be the miracle that changes their story.

With Power Bucks, your gift will bring light to their home, restoring hope and transforming their season into one of joy. One simple call to **910-353-1940** can turn their silent night into a merry, glowing celebration.

Together, let's light up their world and brighten the season for all. Learn more about Power Bucks at joemc.com/powerbucks.

What to Do When You Encounter a Downed Power Line

With unpredictable weather being a common theme in Eastern North Carolina, we want you to know that downed power lines are a serious hazard that comes along with that—typically from high winds. Member safety is important at all times, however, it is crucial when there is a downed power line.



Here are a few safety tips that empower you to protect friends and family should a downed power line occur in the area.

1. If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. The ground around power lines up to 35 feet may be energized.
2. You cannot tell whether a power line is energized just by looking at it. You should assume all downed lines are live.
3. If you find a downed power line, call 9-1-1 and JOEMC at 910-353-1940.
4. Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything else in contact with it, even by using an object such as a broom. Even non-conductive materials like wood or cloth can conduct electricity if it is even slightly wet.
5. Be aware of downed lines that may be covered up by debris or downed trees.

For more information about electrical safety, visit joemc.com.



Cooperation in Action

(continued) began once they reached the power lines. Much of the repair involved "hook work" — climbing poles to fix the lines by hand. Despite the challenges, progress was made each day as the crews worked tirelessly to bring the lights back on. It was tough physical work, but our crews knew each hour brought them closer to restoring power and hope for families in the dark.

The spirit of cooperation and mutual aid runs deep in electric cooperatives like JOEMC and French Broad EMC. This bond is shared by all 26 cooperatives in North Carolina and more than 900 across the United States. It's what makes cooperatives truly unique, and JOEMC

is proud to be part of this tradition. Just as a group of determined citizens once came together to bring electricity to rural communities, we carried that same spirit of neighbors helping neighbors to Western North Carolina. In times of need, cooperatives step up, working together to solve problems and bring power back to the people, embodying the values we were founded on.

This Thanksgiving, we are incredibly thankful for the dedication of our linemen and employees, the power of cooperation, and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. Their hard work reminds us that no matter how tough things get, cooperatives can overcome challenges together.

Prevent High Energy Bills: Inspect Your Ductwork Regularly

When was the last time you ventured into your attic or crawl space to inspect your HVAC system's ductwork? If it's been a while, now is the perfect time to roll up your sleeves and take a look.

Ductwork should be inspected twice a year—once before using your cooling system in the summer and again before you turn on your heating system in the winter. Over time, ducts can become detached or fall due to poor installation techniques, which can result in costly energy loss.

A quick inspection now can help you avoid high energy bills later!

- **CHECK FOR DETACHMENT:** Ducts can come loose, wasting your heated or cooled air in unoccupied spaces like the attic or under your home.
- **USE THE RIGHT MATERIALS:** Only mastic sealant should be used to secure ductwork connections. Avoid HVAC or duct tape, as they lose their stickiness over time.
- **SAVE ENERGY, SAVE MONEY:** Taking a few minutes to inspect and repair ductwork can prevent wasted energy and keep your bills in check during the upcoming heating season.



SAVORY BAY CRACKERS

Browning the butter releases a whole new depth of toasty, buttery flavor in these crackers. Seasoned with a touch of Old Bay, they keep perfect company with our Seafood Cocktail—and with soups, salads or as a snack. Use one kind of cracker, or a variety like we did.

Source: www.carolinacountry.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. unsalted butter
- 16 ounces crackers (like saltines, crispy round and club-type)

Seasoning mix

- 1 tablespoon coarse sea salt
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- ½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. For the browned butter, heat butter over medium heat in a heavy bottomed sauce pan, whisking and watching closely as it melts. Continue heating for about 6–7 minutes until butter smells toasty and has turned golden brown. Remove from heat and set aside. Cool to room temperature.
3. Combine seasoning mix and add to browned butter. Stir to mix well.
4. Put crackers in a large bowl. Pour seasoned butter over crackers, and gently toss with hands for about two minutes to make sure the crackers are well coated. Put in a large baking pan (we used a foil, lasagna-sized pan). Toast in oven for about 25 minutes, gently stirring every few minutes. Let cool before storing.
5. Keep in airtight container up to a week.

Leadership & Adventure Awaits for High School Juniors

Calling all High School Juniors, it is time to apply for a free trip to Washington, D.C., in June 2025 for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

Embarking on this journey is not just about an adventure; it's about personal growth. You'll have the chance to enhance your college applications, access several college scholarship applications, and interact with our state and federal officials. You'll get a closer look at our government in action, connect with hundreds of other intelligent young leaders around the country, and, most importantly, strengthen your leadership skills.

Youth Tour delegates will be selected after completing an application and a short essay. More information will be coming soon!



For the latest details, follow us on social media, contact Krystal Phillips at kphillips@joemc.com, or visit joemc.com.

We're Thankful for Your Membership



Gary W. Ray, CEO

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

In the spirit of this quote by author William Arthur Ward, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and thankfulness for your membership in our electric cooperative. Because of your connection to JOEMC, we can make our community a better place.

I generally use this space to provide updates on industry news, legislative matters, new projects and developments, and the progress of ongoing initiatives. I share these updates so that all of you, our consumer-members, can see our priorities, progress, and challenges. However, during this season of giving thanks, I think it's

equally essential to let you and other members know what an impact you have on our co-op and the greater community, likely in ways you may not even realize.

One of our core principles as part of the cooperative business model is "Concern for Community." While our priority is always to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy, we view our role in the community as a catalyst for good.

We are purposeful in partnering with civic groups and non-profit organizations to help them carry out their missions—to help others in need and to make our community a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

We work closely with our local schools to provide safety demonstrations, award college scholarships, and assist educators in teaching our children by providing grants through the Bright Ideas Program. The co-op also participates in an annual Youth Tour, where we take some of our community's brightest young people to Washing-

ton, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. The trip is inspirational for many students, and we are glad to be a part of this leadership development journey. Ultimately, the community, as a whole, benefits from these programs because of you! You empower the co-op by participating in and supporting these programs.

I am thankful that our co-op board members carve out time to attend necessary training sessions, participate in planning meetings, and keep abreast of industry trends. This investment in time results in better-informed advisors who serve the co-op's interests in a way that our members expect and deserve.

Jones-Onslow EMC was established 85 years ago to bring electricity to our area when no one else would. Your electric co-op reflects our local community and its evolving needs. Together, let's continue making our corner of the world a better place. We can't do it without you, and we're thankful for your membership.



If you're heading out of town during the holiday season, remember to set your home to vacation mode. You can save energy while you're away by lowering your thermostat a few degrees or creating an "away" schedule with a smart or programmable thermostat. Newer water heaters include a vacation mode setting to help you save on water heating costs, or you can simply lower the temperature manually.

Small actions can also stack up to energy savings. Unplug devices that consume energy when they're not in use, including phone chargers, toothbrush chargers, TVs and gaming consoles.

Another core principle that JOEMC holds dear is the spirit of cooperation among cooperatives. After Hurricane Helene plowed through Western North Carolina last month, your cooperative responded, sending linemen and support personnel to assist fellow electric co-op, French Broad EMC, in restoring power to their communities. Moments like these remind us of the strength we find in working together for our members and with those in need across the state. Please read more about their experience in the feature article on the front page.

