

EMEPA East Mississippi Electric Power Association
We Care
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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Membership has its privileges

I'm often asked why we call those who purchase electricity from East Mississippi Electric Power Association "members" and not "customers." The answer is simple.

Many of you are members of service organizations such as Rotary and Kiwanis. Together these people can accomplish more than an individual could alone.

Membership at EMEPA offers many of the same benefits as service organizations, but with a big extra. You and the rest of our more than 36,000 members own the co-op! That means we answer to you, not investors who've never walked our streets or spent time in our schools. This structure began with our origin.



"At EMEPA...we consider it a privilege to be your electric service provider."

General Manager Wayne Henson

EMEPA was organized by farmers and rural residents from this area in 1938, with support from the Rural Electrification Administration (REA).

At that time, investor-owned utilities said there wasn't enough profit to be made to support the expense of building power lines into the countryside.

REA offered low interest loans for bringing electricity to unserved homes and farms. So folks began forming electric cooperatives to help themselves. A membership fee of \$5 was collected from each family—making them co-op members and owners—to generate capital for borrowing. The rest is history.

You should be proud of what EMEPA has accomplished. We are an economic driver in the communities we serve. A 2009 study funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found electric co-ops across the U.S. employ 130,000 Americans, both directly and indirectly, with revenues in excess of \$45 billion.

Electric co-op member-

ship remains as important today as it was in the late 1930s. And all of the nation's 900-plus electric co-ops in 47 states share a common mission: to keep energy safe, affordable and reliable.

Working together, we're keeping our needs at the top of Congress's agenda. We're part of something special—a nationwide network owned and controlled by people like you and me. That's why membership matters.

We are now on Twitter!

Follow @EMEPA for tips on energy efficiency and outage updates from East Mississippi Electric Power Association.

I PULLED THE PLUG ON MY ENERGY COSTS JUST BY PULLING A FEW PLUGS.

You, gaming consoles, DVI, cable boxes and almost anything that has a plug save energy even when it's off. For saving \$222 a year by pulling plugs and banking off power strips. What else can you do? Find out how the title changes and up at TogetherWeSave.com

Community Spotlight on Bernice C. Bonner

by Julie Walker

"They say children brighten a home. That is certainly true; they never turn off the lights," joked Bernice C. Bonner, 80, of Quitman during a recent visit from EMEPA General Manager Wayne Henson and Communication Specialist Julie Walker. That is just one of the many jokes Bonner regularly mails to the 172 people on her mailing list.

Although Bonner is a retired accountant, she could also be considered an entrepreneur with all the business ventures under her belt, including Bernice Tax Service, Fashion Fabrics, National Photography and Faith Retreat in Tennessee. She is currently working as a Natural Health Consultant giving advice for natural remedies to many common health issues. She began her work in natural health consulting as a result of her mother's memory loss.

However, that does not end the list of Bernice Bonner's many talents. She is the author of the book *Letter to My Son*. The first chapter of the book, which weighed 4 pounds when published, was written at H.C. Watkins Memorial Hospital in Quitman the night her son Shelton was born. She also regularly writes editorials in *The Meridian Star*, as well as other local publications.

As a member of EMEPA since moving back

to Clarke County from Tennessee in 1999, Bonner practices regular energy efficiency and conservation.

"I conserve by cutting off everything but necessities," said Bonner.

One such necessity is her extensive home security system equipped with security cameras both inside and outside her home. On one particularly memorable occasion, Bonner recalls scaring an EMEPA employee while holding her .32 pistol, standing on her front porch.

"He'd been out there too long just to be reading my meter, but turns out he was putting in a new meter," recalled Bonner laughing.

Called to minister since she was 9 years old, Bonner has a natural passion for helping and giving to others. She has even given away five cars in her lifetime to those in need. Bonner spends most of her time these days writing to the disabled and their caregivers on her mailing list. She regularly sends cards, homemade on her computer, funnies, scripture and notes of encouragement in recycled envelopes decorated with stickers.

"People ask me if I care if the letters are just thrown away with junk mail, but what they do with it, I don't care. I'm obeying the Lord and trying to help people," said Bonner.



Bernice Bonner was recently visited by EMEPA's Wayne Henson and Julie Walker in appreciation for her caring and thoughtfulness towards the Association.

"Thankful for 'wonderful' service"

Thank God for our utility companies that do much more than supply our homes with their services – their employees go the "extra mile" to help us in an emergency.

One recent Friday morning at 2:30 a.m. I woke up unable to breathe and a loud beeping noise in my bedroom. I realized at once that my oxygen tank had no power, the lights were out and there was an unusual odor. After getting an oxygen tank started that did not require electricity, I tried my land line dial telephone to call EMEPA to check if the power was off or maybe just my house had a short circuit and could catch fire. After dialing many times and not getting anything I dialed AT&T and an operator answered. This lady probably saved my life! As an 80 year old, handicapped woman, I was about to pass out. This operator was very kind and helpful, telling me not to worry she would help me. She made contact with EMEPA for me. They told me the power was out on the line in my vicinity. This helped me to calm down as I realized my home was not in danger of fire.

Sometimes as we "maybe" complain about the cost of our utilities, we "maybe" never realize that these people seldom get praise for all the ways they go the "extra mile" to help us up when we need them.

Several months ago I was having trouble paying all my bills. At different times Tim, Tony and Beverly with EMEPA gave me advice on how to conserve without suffering a great loss of comfort.

Again I say thank God for AT&T and EMEPA employees. Wonderful!

Bernice C. Bonner recently wrote an editorial featuring EMEPA that was published in several local newspapers in Clarke and Lauderdale counties.

EMEPA offers more than just quality electric service

EMEPA launched a new Web site in the fall of 2009 providing our members with an improved, more user-friendly site. We work hard to provide you with affordable, reliable electric service, but quality service goes beyond just providing electricity.

The improved Web site features all the same useful safety information on preparing for outages, downed power lines, severe weather and proper use of a generator, but now it also offers more opportunities to learn about energy efficiency to help you save money on your monthly bill.

The new EMEPA Web site now allows you to access energy calculators in the *Home Energy Suite*, *Billing Insights* coordinated with your personal energy use through your account information, as well as a "How I Saved" section where you can share tips on how you've saved on your power bill with other EMEPA members. In addition, the *Kid's Korner* offers opportunities for kids to learn about energy efficiency and electrical safety through interactive applications.

"We Care" defines the quality of service we provide the people of East Mississippi. We pride ourselves in diligently focusing on member needs and improving the quality of life in our communities. In doing this, we have updated our Web site to bring you new interactive solutions for cutting energy use and saving money.



Online bill pay services


EMEPA's online bill pay services are quick and easy to use. Online bill pay has numerous benefits, including automatic posting to your account and saving stamp and check costs. In addition to paying your bill online, you can view your monthly statements and update personal contact information.

Log onto emepa.com and click Pay Bill. Your account number will serve as your username, and a temporary password is printed on your monthly billing statement if you have never registered for online payments. Once you register, you'll choose a new password to help protect your account information.




Billing Insights & Home Energy Calculator

The best tool for saving on your electric bill... EMEPA's Home Energy Calculator now works with our Billing Insights tool to personalize your potential energy saving through your account information. This robust calculator allows members to enter their home's information and then look at cost alternatives for improving efficiency. The calculator uses EMEPA rates, local weather service and your personal energy usage for accuracy.




Kid's Korner

Conserving energy and electrical safety are concerns that interest all ages. EMEPA offers the Kid's Korner Web site to entertain and educate elementary-age children or answer a question for a curious parent or teacher.




Touchstone Energy Savers

Save energy, save money. Touchstone Energy Savers offers useful tools, valuable tips and resources designed to create greater home comfort and promote energy efficiency. You'll also find a wealth of information to help your business to save energy and manage costs, as well as information on rebates, programs and resources in your area.




Never late. Never a hassle. Never a worry. Pay by Bank Draft.

Take the hassle out of monthly check writing. Bank draft is the easiest way to pay your bill. Sign up for bank draft by visiting www.emepa.com/member_services or visit your local district office.



Co-op Connections Card

As an EMEPA member, you can receive discounts on products and services from participating local and national businesses. EMEPA members save an average of \$9,500 a month on prescriptions at participating pharmacies. The Co-op Connections member benefit program is absolutely free. All EMEPA members automatically receive Co-op Connections cards. If you do not have a card, contact your local EMEPA office.



Check out the tools available to you on our Web site.

EMEPA Service Awards



The following employees have provided long-term service to the Association and were recently recognized at EMEPA's Employee Appreciation Luncheon for their hard work and dedication.

35 Years of Service

Wayne Henson

30 Years of Service

Al Hughes

25 Years of Service

Pat Clay

Marce Goforth

Andy Robinson

Betty Womack

20 Years of Service

Michael Chaney

Zeb Jones

Brent Lofton

David Morris

Mark Robertson

15 Years of Service

Sondra Bell

Doug Goodman

Steve Sampley

Anthony Triplett

10 Years of Service

Kevin Dyess

Lee Roy Carpenter

Patrick Phillips

Randall Thornton

Robert Whitehead

5 Years of Service

Jimmy Andrews

Gerald Brown

Tim Covert

Tim Doolittle

Caleb Ethridge

Matthew Hale

John Harrison

Victoria Hollis

Tom Miles

Matt Sampley

Michael Burton

Bruce Freeman

Matthew Hickman

Tommy McDade

William Young

Myth or fact?



Be sure you know the truth about power line safety

If birds can touch electrical wires, are they safe for people, too? If you're not on a metal ladder, are you clear of danger from power line electrocution?

Know for sure before you take a chance with your life. First the facts: Electricity is always looking for the shortest and

easiest path to the ground—including people and objects that touch or come too close to power lines. Electricity is fast, and it can cause severe burns or death if it flows through the human body. Take power line safety seriously. Read on to find the facts on the following myths:

Myth: Wires must be safe to touch if birds can land on them.

Fact: Birds don't represent a direct path to the ground, giving electricity nowhere to go but back to the wire. It's easier for the current to simply stay in the wire. So touching a power line is not safe for humans.

Myth: Power lines are safe to touch because they're insulated.

Fact: Most lines are insulated only to protect against slight tree contact, but not enough to prevent human injury. Don't touch them!

Myth: Non-metal ladders are safe to rest on a power line.

Fact: Anything that can get wet can conduct electricity, and many non-metal ladders still contain metal parts. Keep your ladder away from

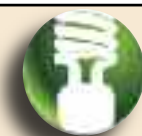
power lines, no matter what it's made from.

Myth: Ladders are safe near power lines as long as they don't touch.

Fact: Electricity can "jump," especially when a good conductor like a metal ladder comes close. Keep a safe distance of at least 10 feet.

Myth: Trimming trees around power lines is safe if I don't use a ladder.

Fact: Electricity doesn't need metal to conduct. The moisture in the tree is enough. If a tree comes into contact with the line while you're trimming, it has a direct path to the ground through the tree, your pruning tool and you. Call your EMEPA when it's time to trim trees near power lines.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Use your microwave for cooking whenever possible. They use 50 to 65 percent less energy than conventional ovens and do not heat up your house in the summer. However, conventional ovens may be more appropriate for larger size items when cooking time is increased.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Energy Star-rated appliances are beneficial for consumers

Lots of Mississippians are cutting down on energy use, improving a home's insulation, turning lights off, or exchanging traditional light bulbs for more efficient lighting options. So when consumers shop for new appliances it's common to focus on finding a product with an Energy Star rating.

But how do appliances get this rating? And why don't all appliances have them? The answer may surprise you.

Computers and monitors were the first products to receive an efficiency rating from Energy Star, a program launched in 1992 by the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy. Since then, more than 60 product categories have been added, from dishwashers to windows and DVD players.

According to the program, Energy Star-rated products deliver the same or better performance as comparable models while using less energy and saving money.

"We're recognizing the top performers when it comes to energy efficiency," explains Katharine Kaplan, Energy Star program manager. She notes the initiative works closely with folks in a wide variety of areas, including industry experts, governments, non-profit organizations and utilities.

"We agree on a fair way to test products. Manufacturers test products using that procedure, submit the data to us, and we say 'This is how much energy you can use to be considered a leader by Energy Star.' Generally, that means you're in the top 25 percent. These are the top performers."

For example, qualified refrigerators must be at least 15 percent more efficient than the minimum federal efficiency standard. Energy Star-rated TVs consume 3 watts or less when switched off, compared to a standard TV, which consumes almost 6 watts on average. By pushing for the manufacturing of more efficient products, Energy Star estimates the rating system saved businesses, organizations and consumers \$19 billion in 2008 alone.

Consumers are taking advantage of the program. A survey by the Consortium for Energy Efficiency—a group including members like the quasi-governmental Tennessee Valley Authority and Bonneville Power Administration, a federal power marketing administration in the Northwest—discovered 76 percent of American households recognize the Energy Star brand. Of these consumers, 73 percent purchased an Energy Star-labeled product within the last year.

But not all products are rated by

Energy Star. The program gauges the average energy efficiency of different appliance technologies and evaluates whether there's potential for increased



efficiency—generally at least 25 percent higher than minimum standards.

According to Energy Star, the most efficient electric resistance water heaters on the market have an Energy Factor of 0.95, about 5 percent more efficient than the minimum federal standard. Since there's little room for improvement, Energy Star does not have a category for the product.

"The technology doesn't qualify for the Energy Star program—not because it's not efficient, but because it's already as effi-

cient as possible," remarks Steve Koep, a regional manager for REEM/Marathon Water Heaters.

"When it comes to purchasing an electric water heater, consumers should consider durability and energy factor [EF], a mandatory evaluation done on all water heaters regardless of fuel source. EF takes into account fuel use, standby energy loss, and insulation under simulated actual conditions."

Last October, the *New York Times* revealed some manufacturers of household appliances were testing products for Energy Star-certification internally instead of using independent laboratories. In response, Energy Star ramped up oversight of product ratings and by the end of the year had revoked the Energy Star label for some refrigerators while raising the bar for the efficiency expected from TVs.

Energy Star remains a driving force not

just in the United States, but in other countries as well as Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the European Union. Federal energy efficiency tax credits for appliances and

home heating and air systems typically require qualifying products to be Energy Star-rated. To learn more about the Energy Star program, visit www.energystar.gov.



EMEPA hits record demand peak

East Mississippi Electric Power Association officials expect the highest wholesale and retail electric bills of the winter season as a result of January's freezing temperatures and a colder than average December. These cold temperatures bring higher energy bills as heating equipment inside members' homes and businesses is challenged to fight the unusually cold weather.

EMEPA set an all time winter demand peak in excess of 150 megawatts, 36 percent higher than the projected summer peak, during the recent extremely cold weather.

While members should expect high

monthly bills, EMEPA will also receive high bills for wholesale power. EMEPA will pay January wholesale bills estimated to be between \$8 Million and \$10 Million for the power we delivered to our members during the month.

"We have and will always work with our members to ensure they're able to pay their electric bills, especially following record-breaking cold weather where the use of electricity to stay warm and safe is an absolute necessity. We are committed to that," said EMEPA General Manager Wayne Henson.

Officials at EMEPA stress the importance of energy efficiency, especially during the

extreme cold weather season. This is an important time to address areas of your home or business that are not as energy efficient as they could be. Insulating attics, caulking windows and doors and letting sunshine in during the daylight hours to add heat are all things you can do to save money on your energy bill this winter season.

"Energy efficiency is a solid investment benefiting both EMEPA and our members," said Henson.

