

Upgrading Facilities is an Investment in Efficiency and Reliability

For years, Jones-Onslow has made adoption of new technology a part of a strategic effort to improve operational efficiency and maintain strong member service as long as the new technology made economic sense and was cost-effective.

After closely watching our industry and other electric utilities around us, JOEMC is in the early stages of implementing an advanced metering system that will continue to enhance those efforts. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is a metering and communication technology that enables two-way communications between the co-op's offices and electric meters in the field. AMI provides many functions that were previously not possible or had to be performed manually.

Here are five reasons why we've decided to implement an AMI system:

1. Save money by eliminating the labor and transportation costs of in-person meter reading and other services like connects and disconnects—savings we pass on to our consumer-members.
2. Improve billing accuracy, eliminating misreads or inaccurate readings.
3. Pinpoint the exact location of outages more quickly, meaning a faster response time.
4. Help our consumer-members troubleshoot high-bill or service-related problems by providing information about power consumption patterns, outages and blink count history and voltage information.
5. Help secure the overall safety of the cooperative employee team.

JOEMC has been following this technology for several years. As the cost of equipment came down and the reliability of the advanced electronic meters went up, the move to AMI at the co-op became more attractive. In examining all the facts and costs, it was clear that AMI will provide significant member benefits that make the investment worthwhile.

The cooperative does not expect any additional costs to its members to install the new system. There is also no rate increase anticipated in association with this project.

JOEMC consumer-members expect more from their cooperative and expect it to use technology to provide them with information about their power usage, outages, expected time of restoration and more. The AMI system will provide the co-op with immediate notification when a meter detects loss of service and it provides many features to assist in ensuring that service is restored.

The technology, which has proven itself to be safe and beneficial, is being adopted by many electric utilities across the country. Nationwide, 50 percent of all meters are AMI meters, and among electric cooperatives, more than 70 percent of all co-ops have deployed some type of AMI system.

If you are interested in reading more about the project, visit our website (joemc.com) and look under the **ENERGY CENTER** header and **TECHNOLOGIES & RENEWABLES**. Here you'll find updates on the project as well as a Frequently Asked Questions section and other related materials. ▶



Fun, Food, Door Prizes and Entertainment

JOEMC members...bring the family out for an evening of fun, food, door prizes, and entertainment. On Friday, March 29, the co-op will hold its Annual Meeting of Members at the American Legion Building/Onslow County Fairgrounds located at 146 Broadhurst Road in Jacksonville.

Highlighting this year's meeting will be special entertainment from North Carolina's very own Sweet Potato Pie.

Sweet Potato Pie is not your traditional cookie cutter band. The group, which has been performing together for nearly two decades, is best known for their distinct harmonies and entertaining stage shows. Pie's blend of bluegrass, country, and gospel has created a new musical style called "sweetgrass", which includes elements of country, classical, blues and bluegrass. Audiences call this group classy, funny, warm and entertaining! When taste matters—have a serving of Sweet Potato Pie.

In addition to Sweet Potato Pie, local entertainment will also be performing. There will be barbeque sandwiches and soft drinks, a clown for the kids, giveaways and informative displays. Don't forget one lucky co-op member will win a recently retired fleet vehicle (in "as is" condition). ▼



5:30PM Registration/displays open
5:45PM Local entertainment
7:00PM Business meeting
8:00PM Sweet Potato Pie



Are you plugged in?

In addition to our website, joemc.com, here are some easy ways online to get energy efficiency tips, the latest news from your co-op and manage your energy use:



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Want to get this newsletter delivered to your email inbox? If we don't have your email address or you need to update it, call the office at (910) 353-1940 or send us an email at joemc@joemc.com – we can update the information in a flash! ▶



DID YOU KNOW

It Pays to be a Member

Returning money to our consumer-members is an important cooperative value, and we hope you agree that it's also a nice benefit of being a JOEMC member.

During the last week of February, your cooperative mailed “green” letters to members about the JOEMC Board of Directors’ authorization of a capital credits refund. There is a space provided for the member’s signature and a return envelope so it may be mailed back to us.

The name “capital credits” may sound complex but it’s a simple concept. Capital credits are the annual margins—revenues minus expenses of the cooperative—which are allocated to each member based on their purchase and use of electricity. Until returned to members, capital credits are funds used as operating capital to invest in power lines, substations, and other electric system assets that provide all of the members with reliable electricity. After using the money for years to finance investments in electric facilities, it is returned to members.

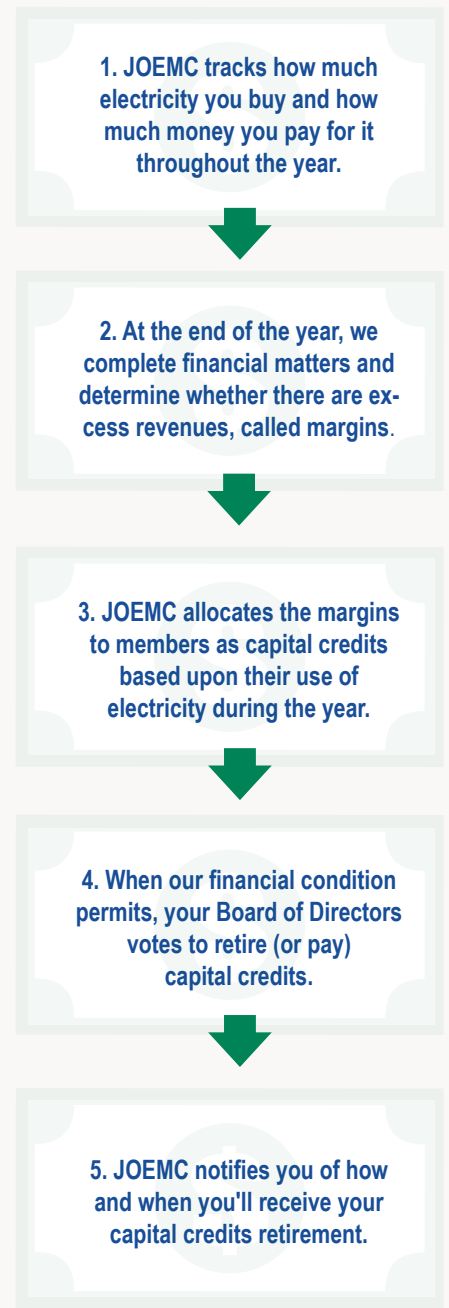
To assure your return of capital credits and the fiscal health of your cooperative, the Board of Directors has approved and put into place an equity management plan. The plan uses an industry best standard that looks at the percent of member equity to total

assets. It includes a schedule for the regular return of member equity in the form of capital credits.

The equity plan also determines how much of the co-op’s investment in electric system assets will be covered through member capital and how much will be covered by long-term debt. Our goal is to balance member capital (equity) and debt to give members the lowest possible rates.

This year, the capital credit refund authorization (almost \$3.15 million) will be for members who received electric service from JOEMC during the years 1996 and 2018. These refunds will consist of 100% of the remaining allocated capital credits from 1996 and 40% of the allocated capital credits from 2018.

All active members who received service during the years mentioned above will receive their refund in the form of a “capital credit refund” on their electric bill. All inactive members who received service from the cooperative during those years will receive a capital credit check in the mail. ▼



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Three Easy DIY Projects to Save Energy

Now that spring is just around the corner, it's the perfect time to tackle a few DIY efficiency projects for your home. The good news: You don't have to be an energy expert to do this! Here are three projects you can do now to start saving.

- 1 Make the Most of Your Water Heater:** Insulating a water heater that's warm to the touch can save 7 to 16 percent annually on your water heating bills.
- 2 Seal Air Leaks with Caulk:** Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money.
- 3 Weather Strip Exterior Doors:** One of the best ways to seal air leaks is to weather strip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. ▶



Bringing You the Power to Empower

Innovation is the bellwether of progress, the current that propels us to keep evolving. The technological advances of today are the benchmarks charting this rapid evolution. For JOEMC, this means constantly seeking solutions to serve you, our consumer-member, better. It's a charge we take seriously, as we strive to be the best version of tomorrow's electric utility for you. Except, we must be that electric utility today.



Think about how quickly things change. Twenty years ago, most of us wouldn't dream that today our home appliances would be coined as "smart," that our phones would do more than computers did 20 years ago, that

modern television programming would stream from any number of "connected" devices.

We are embracing the future today. Starting this spring, we will begin an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project that will see the co-op install advanced meters at consumer-member's homes and businesses. Bringing AMI to our members has been a long time in the making. The AMI of the past was cost prohibitive. But as the metering equipment and technology have improved over the years (and as costs decreased), the time has come for the co-op to invest in this technology. We are confident that the benefits of converting to AMI will quickly make this investment successful.

As a cooperative consumer-member, these new meters will provide you with better outage information and improve your ability to help track your electric use. In the future, it could help you with other customer friendly services and innovative options such as pre-pay where you purchase your electricity much like you purchase gas or groceries.

For JOEMC, advanced metering will allow us to serve you better. We'll have improved ways to measure and increase operational efficiencies and planning. AMI will provide a more detailed view of outages and also analyze how our electric distribution system is performing at any given time.

As part of this spring's pilot project, close to 5,000 homes and businesses will receive the new advanced meters. Over the next year and a half, the rest of our 76,000 plus meters on our system will be replaced with these new meters. This is a substantial investment in JOEMC's electric grid and infrastructure, but there are future savings and cost reductions that will be realized through changing business practices and operational efficiencies.

If you are interested in reading more about the project, visit our website (joemc.com) and look under the ENERGY CENTER header and TECHNOLOGIES & RENEWABLES. Here you'll find updates on the project as well as a Frequently Asked Questions section and other related materials. I'll also provide updates periodically in this article.

Jeffery T. Clark | CEO

*Our offices will be closed on
Friday, April 19 for Good Friday.*



Shamrock Shakes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups vanilla ice cream
- 1 ¼ cups milk
- ¼ teaspoon mint extract, or more to taste
- 9 drops green food coloring
- 2 tablespoons chocolate syrup
- 2 tablespoons whipped cream
- ½ teaspoon green decorator sugar

Directions:

Blend ice cream, milk, mint extract, and food coloring together in a blender until smooth.

Drizzle chocolate syrup around inside walls of 2 tall glasses; pour shake into glass. Top with whipped cream and green decorator sugar.

serves 2

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