

## **JEFFERSON ENERGY COOPERATIVE SENDS LINE CREWS TO MARYLAND**

Personnel from many electric membership corporations (EMCs) in Georgia, including Jefferson Energy Cooperative, headed to North Carolina and Maryland over the weekend to help electric co-ops restore power to areas hardest hit by Hurricane Irene.

According to Georgia EMC Safety, Education and Training Vice President Jim Wright, the co-ops were in close contact with EMCs to the north to pre-arrange assistance even before the hurricane made landfall. Wright says doing so allows the timely dispatch of an arsenal of Georgia co-ops consisting of much needed manpower, trucks and equipment.

“It’s a massive effort to restore power in as short a time as possible,” Wright says. “The North Carolina and Maryland cooperatives will now have access to a large, experienced group of EMC line workers from Georgia to help them restore power as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

According to Steve Chalker, with Jefferson Energy Cooperative, cooperatives in Georgia will offer as many crews and equipment for as long as necessary to get the lights back on, because consumers in those areas depend on electric power.

“Being an electric co-op means calling upon your neighbors during emergencies,” notes Chalker. “In the past, we’ve asked for and benefitted from the assistance of other cooperatives when we’ve been hard hit by storms, and it’s

our duty and privilege to assist others now that their distribution system has been damaged and resulted in the loss of power to hundreds of thousands.”

Georgia EMCs currently have approximately 147 linemen responding to the call for help. Approximately 60 Georgia EMC linemen are headed for Jones Onslow EMC in Jacksonville, North Carolina and approximately 87 linemen are headed for Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative in Hughesville, MD.

Specifically, Jefferson Energy crews left Sunday to take part in the massive effort to aid consumers of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative.

Across the state, crews left over the weekend from Altamaha EMC in Lyons, Canoochee EMC in Reidsville, Carroll EMC in Carrollton, Central Georgia EMC in Jackson, Cobb EMC in Marietta, Colquitt EMC in Moultrie, Diverse Power Inc. in LaGrange, Flint Energies in Reynolds, Grady EMC in Cairo, GreyStone Power Corp. in Douglasville, Hart EMC in Hartwell, Irwin EMC in Ocilla, Jefferson Energy Co-op in Wrens, Middle Georgia EMC in Vienna, Mitchell EMC in Camilla, North Georgia EMC in Dalton, Oconee EMC in Dudley, Planters EMC in Millen, Snapping Shoals EMC in Covington, Southern Rivers Energy in Barnesville, Sumter EMC in Americus and Walton EMC in Monroe. Additional Georgia EMCs are on stand-by, should they be needed.

Representatives with the North Carolina and Maryland cooperatives reported high wind gusts and waters levels which caused extensive power outages for their members. But the process of restoring electricity will be as timely as possible with the help of EMCs in Georgia who have vast experience in restoring power during storms. In recent years, EMC crews have worked

alongside co-ops in South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida.

The crews, trucks and equipment are being coordinated by Georgia EMC in the Electric Cooperative Training Center in Smarr, Ga. The statewide association works from an emergency plan that coordinates crews during emergencies such as ice storms, tornadoes and hurricanes.

Jefferson Energy Cooperative is a consumer-owned cooperative providing electricity and related services to more than 30,000 customers in parts of 11 different counties in the CSRA.

Georgia EMC is the statewide trade association representing the state's 42 EMCs, Oglethorpe Power Corporation, Georgia Transmission Corporation and Georgia System Operations Corporation. Through this statewide network, the EMCs provide electricity and related services to more than four million people, half of Georgia's population, across 73 percent of the state's land area.

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