

CEC *inside your* co-op

For members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative | FEBRUARY 2026



Powering the Future

WFEC's balanced fuel mix helps keep electricity reliable and affordable

Have you ever thought about where your electricity comes from when you flip on a light switch? Electric cooperatives like Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC), Choctaw Electric Cooperative's wholesale power provider, use a variety of energy sources, or fuels, to generate electricity. This mix of fuels helps keep power reliable, affordable and more environmentally friendly.

WFEC's focus is on providing the best service for its members, balancing cost with reliability, not making profits. As a member-owned cooperative, decisions are guided by long-term value rather than short-term gains.

Different Fuels, One Goal: Electricity

WFEC maintains a well-balanced and diversified portfolio of generation resources, including renewables such as wind, solar and hydropower. Generating facilities are located at Mooreland, Anadarko and Hugo, Oklahoma, and Lovington, New Mexico. These

power plants provide natural gas and coal-powered energy. In addition, WFEC has power purchase agreements and contracts with facilities located throughout its service territory.

WFEC doesn't rely on just one fuel. Rather it uses a diverse mix to ensure power is always available, no matter the weather or fluctuating market conditions. This diversification benefits both WFEC and its members.

Why WFEC Uses a Mix of Fuels

Reliability: A diverse fuel mix provides a buffer against supply disruptions or fluctuations in any single energy source. For example, wind and solar power can be supplemented by always-available sources like coal or natural gas during periods of low renewable energy production.

Cost: Some fuels are cheaper at various times, while some are more volatile due to market conditions and extreme weather events. Utilizing the

lowest-cost resources first and leveraging different fuel types helps keep electric rates lower.

A Bright Future

WFEC is currently building more natural gas generation, with plans for additional natural gas generation by 2029. Concurrently, several projects for wind, solar and battery generation have been put in place to purchase power from non-WFEC owned facilities. These investments strengthen reliability while adding flexibility to the generation portfolio.

In summary, a diverse fuel mix allows WFEC to balance the characteristics of different energy sources, ensuring a reliable, affordable and responsible electricity supply for distribution cooperative members like CEC. By utilizing a diverse mix of fuels, WFEC will continue to maintain reliability—now and in the future.

For more on how WFEC is powering the future, visit www.wfec.com.

Careful Planning Helps Control Costs

Choctaw Electric Cooperative

Serving members in Choctaw, Pushmataha, Atoka, McCurtain, Bryan and LeFlore counties.

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Monday-Friday | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Rising costs are not new, but they have become more visible over the past few years. At Choctaw Electric Cooperative, we approach these challenges with careful planning and oversight while continuing to deliver the reliable service our members count on.

For CEC, managing costs is a continuous, daily process. One of the ways we do this is through competitive bidding. For our maintenance and operational contracts, we routinely solicit bids to ensure we're receiving quality work at a fair price. The same is true for materials like poles. We secure quotes from four to five vendors, allowing us to compare pricing and availability and make the best decisions for our members. Kenny Sivard Jr., purchasing agent, said that in 2025, the bidding process saved CEC \$458,989 on supplies alone.

Another example of how continuous management has paid off is our right-of-way maintenance contracts. By taking a more strategic approach to right-of-way clearing in recent years, we've reduced those costs by nearly half. This change

has also lowered the cost of pole replacements by minimizing unnecessary clearing by contractors, which has been reflected in recent bids.

Building strong, long-term relationships with contractors also helps us manage costs. When it's not storm season and demand on our own system is lower, we allow crews to assist other systems. That flexibility helps control costs while ensuring experienced crews remain available when needed.

We also work closely with our board to review costs and identify savings opportunities. Over the past year, we have focused on identifying opportunities to operate more efficiently. Those conversations help ensure accountability and keep member interests front and center.

Rising costs impact every utility, but through constant management, strong relationships and a focus on price and quality, CEC continues to protect reliability and keep costs in check for the members we serve.



CEO Kooney Duncan

Navigating Rising Costs for Reliability

Over the past five years, Oklahoma's electric cooperatives have seen cost increases across the industry. It is our responsibility to find the most cost-effective way to keep the lights on safely, affordably and reliably for our members. Below are average percentage increases for electric infrastructure in Oklahoma since 2020:

50–80%...Utility poles (wood, steel, composite)

40–110%...Crossarms & braces (steel/wood)

50–80%...Conductor wire (aluminum/copper)

80–120%...Transformers

50%–100%...Copper wiring

20–50%...Smart meters

80–100%...Pad-mounted transformers

30–60%...Circuit breakers/reclosers



Local Highlights



Youth Ambassador Ella Herron reads to students at Dierks Elementary.

Youth Ambassador Ella Herron Leads the Way

Choctaw Electric Cooperative's 2025–26 Youth Ambassador Ella Herron is making an impact in southeastern Oklahoma. Since taking on the role in the summer of 2025, she has represented CEC at state meetings, spoken to community groups like the Idabel Lions Club, led voter registration efforts at schools and the co-op's annual meeting, read to local elementary students, and promoted the Oklahoma Youth Tour by helping juniors with applications and scholarship opportunities. "Ella has done an incredible job as youth ambassador," says Jia Johnson, CEC director of communications. "I'm so proud of her."



CEC Operations Update

In January, CEC contract crews worked north of Hochatown, near Carter Mountain, to upgrade an existing three-phase line. The project reconducted a 15-mile section of line with larger wire in order to strengthen capacity, supporting long-term reliability for the area and allowing for a future double circuit.



Congratulations, Rooster!

Congratulations to Tony "Rooster" Hallows, pictured above (left) with CEO Kooney Duncan (right). Hallows retired on January 5, 2026, after 20 years of dedicated service to Choctaw Electric Cooperative. We wish you all the best in your next chapter!

Go Paperless!

Sign up for paperless billing via the SmartHub app or call Choctaw Electric Cooperative at 800-780-6486.

Avoid Utility Scams

Enrolling in autodraft payments through Choctaw Electric Cooperative's free SmartHub app can help prevent certain types of utility bill scams.

If a scammer contacts you with fake disconnection threats, you can rest easy knowing your bill is paid automatically through a pre-arranged, secure channel. Autodraft payments also eliminate the risk of exposing checks and personal banking info through the mail.

To sign up, visit choctawelectric.net/payment-options or call us at 800-780-6486 to learn more.

Source: AARP

February Efficiency Tip

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system.

- Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently.
- Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing.
- Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy.

A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.

Source: energy.gov

Lucky Acct. #38860914

If this is your account number, please contact CEC at 800-780-6486, ext. 241, by the 5th of the month to claim your \$50 bill credit. Unclaimed bill credits roll over each month by \$25 for a maximum credit of \$100.

Do you rely on life support?

If you rely on electricity to power life support equipment, it's time to update your records with Choctaw Electric. CEC maintains a record of our life-support-dependent members so the co-op can notify you of scheduled outages in your area. To protect your health and safety, we ask members to submit a life support member form every year in March.

Forms are available on our website: choctawelectric.net/applications-and-forms or by calling 800-780-6486. Life-support-dependent members should be prepared with battery backup or another source of alternate power during a power outage. Your safety is our top priority. Thank you for your cooperation!

Eighth-graders, apply now for an all-expense-paid trip to

Energy Camp 2026

To learn more, [scan here](http://choctawelectric.net/energy-camp) or visit choctawelectric.net/energy-camp



DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MARCH 6 AT 5 P.M.

To apply, write a 150-200-word essay on the topic, "Lighting the Way: Energy & Innovation in America's 250 Years." Eighth-grade students from all schools in the CEC service area, including faith-based programs and home schools, are encouraged to apply.

United Acts of Kindness Day

Each year, we partner with First United Bank to spread a little extra kindness in our communities. On Feb. 13, you'll find small tokens, like coupons for a candy bar, shared with employees and members as a reminder that even simple acts can make a big difference.

Stay Warm, Stay Safe

Ensure safety while keeping your home powered during winter outages

During a power outage, you may find yourself in the dark and unable to use your appliances for a period of time. A generator can provide temporary electricity that, depending on the type, can power a few appliances or an entire building. While convenient during an outage, generators used improperly can also create safety hazards.

Before investing in a generator, think first about your electrical needs and usage. Know the difference between standby and portable generators.

Standby Generators

Standby generators are wired directly into the home and can be sized to match the electrical demands of the home or building. A permanently installed standby generator must have

an approved transfer safety switch to avoid feeding electricity back into the electrical system outdoors, creating what's known as "backfeed." Backfeed occurs when an improperly connected generator begins feeding electricity back through the power lines. It is very dangerous for line workers as well as anyone who may be near downed power lines.

Portable Generators

Portable generators do not permanently attach to the home and can power only the appliances that are plugged into the generator, so consider essential electrical needs when choosing. To avoid backfeed into the utility electrical system, the portable generator should never be plugged directly into the home. Improper installation or use



could be dangerous to you and threaten the lives of your family, friends, neighbors and Choctaw Electric Cooperative crews trying to restore service.

Don't wait for a power outage to prepare for safety. Before using a portable generator, read all manufacturer instructions. Properly connecting the generator into the system is a critical step for safe and effective use. A licensed professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator and can help with proper equipment for safely using a portable generator.