



# inside *your* co-op

Published for members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative

## COMING UP

### Get Smart SmartHub Workshop

Choctaw Electric's SmartHub is much more than a way to pay your electric bill online. It's a powerful tool that can help you save money by putting you more in control of your CEC account.

To help members become better acquainted with SmartHub, CEC will host a free workshop from 4 pm to 6 pm on March 7 at the Hugo office. During that time, members are encouraged to stop by and visit with staff, ask questions, get set up in SmartHub, and learn about the many ways this online tool can help them.

Many CEC members rely on SmartHub to help them understand how and when their home uses the most electricity. Those members who are serious about saving use

**Learn how this easy, online tool can help you save energy, money and time, while putting you in control of your account.**



SmartHub to monitor their daily use. By tracking their usage they learn how and when their home uses energy and are able to adjust their behavior to lower their costs.

SmartHub is also one of the most convenient ways to report a power outage and stay informed about your service restoration.

"We encourage everyone who can to join us for this "come and go" workshop,"

said Jia Johnson, CEC director of member services. "Whether you stay for ten minutes or two hours, I guarantee you'll learn something that will help you. And once you catch on to all SmartHub can do, you'll use it all the time."

For more details on SmartHub or the upcoming SmartHub workshop, please visit call your co-op at 800-780-6486.

■ **MANAGER'S REPORT**

# Board Votes To Withdraw From Touchstone Energy

All good things come to an end eventually. For Touchstone Energy and Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC), it's a business relationship that has simply outlived its usefulness. Your co-op board voted unanimously to end CEC's participation in the Touchstone Energy partnership at their monthly meeting in January.

Created in 1998, Touchstone Energy serves as a unified brand for some 600 electric co-ops nationwide and provides a number of broad-based marketing services to its participating co-ops. CEC used Touchstone Energy's website building and hosting services and participated in the Co-op Connections discount program.

For years, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC) paid the \$16,000 annual Touchstone Energy membership fee for each of its member co-ops, including CEC. WFEC let us know earlier in the year that it may no longer pay these dues, effective January 2019. After careful evaluation and discussion of the value of Touchstone to CEC and our members, the board concluded that the costs simply outweigh the benefits.

CEC's in-house information technology staff are currently handling all duties related to managing the website. While the Co-op Connections card offers useful discounts on entertainment, travel, shopping and dining, these sort of discounts are now available through banks, credit card companies, the AARP and other outlets. Many of our members enjoyed the Co-op Connections pharmaceutical discount and used it regularly. For these members, we've compiled a list of similar discount Rx programs (*See chart above*) that provide similar benefits, but at no cost to your cooperative. We encourage you to look into these other options as soon as possible because the Co-op Connections card is no longer active.

There's no doubt that Touchstone Energy served the electric co-op industry well over the years, but our decisions now must be weighed in dollars and good sense. It's hard for CEC to justify paying \$16,000 a year for services that are easily available to our members for free. We hope you agree.




## Rx Alternatives

*The Co-op Connections prescription benefit is no longer active.*

*Please use these options for similar savings on medicine:*

- **Your Rx Card**  
[www.yourrxcard.com](http://www.yourrxcard.com)
- **Good Rx Pharmacy Card**  
<https://www.goodrx.com>

## Choctaw Electric Cooperative

*Serving members in Choctaw, Pushmataha, Atoka, and McCurtain counties*

### HUGO OFFICE

PO Box 758  
Hwy 93 North  
Hugo, Oklahoma 74743

Toll Free: (800) 780-6486  
Local: (580) 326-6486  
FAX (580) 326-2492

Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

### IDABEL OFFICE

2114 SE Washington  
Idabel, Oklahoma 74745

Toll Free: (800) 780-6486  
Local: (580) 286-7155

Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

### ANTLERS OFFICE

HC 67 Box 62  
Antlers, Oklahoma 74523  
(One mile east of Antlers)

Toll Free: (800) 780-6486  
Local: (580) 298-3201

Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

*On the Web:*

[www.choctawelectric.coop](http://www.choctawelectric.coop)



24 Hour Outage Hotline

**800-780-6486**

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Brent Franks, *President*

Joe M. Silk, *Vice President*

Mike Brewer, *Secretary Treasurer*

Stacy Nichols	Bill Woolsey
George Burns	Norman Ranger
Ken Autry	Becky Franks

### MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Kooney Duncan, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Jennifer Boling, *Executive Assistant*  
Jia Johnson, *Director of Public Relations*  
Tiffany Hempsted, *Chief Financial Officer*

### Lucky Acct#38747200

If this account number belongs to you, contact CEC by the 10th of the month to claim your \$50 bill credit. Unclaimed bill credits will roll over each month by \$25 for a maximum credit of \$100. To claim your credit by phone, please call 800-780-6486, ext. 207.

## OFFICIAL MINUTES OF YOUR CEC BOARD MEETING

Scan this code with your smartphone or tablet to read the monthly minutes of your co-op board meeting. Minutes are also available at any CEC location and online at [www.choctawelectric.coop](http://www.choctawelectric.coop).

To scan the code, install a Bar Code Scanner app, available at the App Store.



## ■ GOOD TO KNOW

### Don't Pay Your Electric Bill At Walmart

If you want your monthly electric bill payment to go to Choctaw Electric Cooperative, please don't pay it at Walmart. Many co-op members are paying their electric bills at the Walmart customer service/return area, which is not one of Choctaw Electric's authorized payment locations. Payments made at Walmart are sent to an electric co-op with the same name in Florida.

To ensure your payment is received, please use one of the following Choctaw Electric's authorized bill pay services:

- PaySite kiosks
- Smarthub
- Mail payments
- Pay at CEC offices
- Pay online at our website

### Find New Member Info Online

New co-op members will find information about CEC policies, rates, and services online at [www.choctawelectric.coop/newmembers](http://www.choctawelectric.coop/newmembers).

### Right of Way Work Continues

Right of way contractors are working in the Rattan area, moving west toward Antlers. Choctaw Electric right of way crews are working in the Valliant area and moving towards Ft. Towson. Their work is important. Please give them your full cooperation. Thank you!

BECAUSE MEMBERS MATTER

## Join Us for CEC Member Appreciation Days!



Members matter to Choctaw Electric Cooperative. For that reason, we'd like to show our appreciation. Join us for CEC Member Appreciation Days, taking place on the following dates:

**April 11 • 10 am - 2 pm**  
**CEC Antlers**

**April 12 • 10 am - 2 pm**  
**CEC Hugo**

**April 13 • 10 am - 2 pm**  
**CEC Idabel**

On the menu: Hot dogs, soda pop and good conversation. Stop by, meet co-op employees and staff, and visit with CEC trustees. We look forward to seeing you there!

## We'll pay you to save energy.

Sign up for the Cooperative Home Energy Efficiency Program (CHEEP) and get money back for making your home more energy efficient. The program includes:

- A professional on-site evaluation of your home that includes a blower door test and duct blasting. **FREE!**
- List of recommended improvements based on evaluation results. **FREE!**
- Rebate of \$1 per watt of estimated savings (up to \$1,000 maximum) for improvements you choose to make.
- Freedom to choose any or none of the suggested recommendations.

Please call us today for more details or visit us online:

**800-780-6486**  
[www.choctawelectric.coop](http://www.choctawelectric.coop)



# Your Power Outage Pantry

We do our best to avoid power outages, but unfortunately, Mother Nature occasionally has different plans. Stay ahead of the storm by stocking your pantry with a variety of non-perishable items.

- Beans
- Canned & Dried Fruit
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Vegetables
- Cereal
- Dried Meats/Jerky
- Graham Crackers
- Pasta
- Rice
- Spam
- Oatmeal



## swap shop

Rabbits for sale for show or meat. 580-982-8267

Submit classified ads online at [classifieds@choctawelectric.coop](mailto:classifieds@choctawelectric.coop) or email [jboling@choctawelectric.coop](mailto:jboling@choctawelectric.coop).

## RECIPES



## Spicy Garlic Lime Chicken

### INGREDIENTS

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| ¾ teaspoon salt           | ¼ teaspoon dried parsley                   |
| ¼ teaspoon black pepper   | 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves |
| ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper | 2 tablespoons butter                       |
| ⅛ teaspoon paprika        | 1 tablespoon olive oil                     |
| ¼ teaspoon garlic powder  | 2 teaspoons garlic powder                  |
| ⅛ teaspoon onion powder   | 3 tablespoons lime juice                   |
| ¼ teaspoon dried thyme    |  |

### DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, mix together salt, black pepper, cayenne, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, thyme and parsley. Sprinkle spice mixture generously on both sides of chicken breasts. Heat butter and olive oil in a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Saute chicken until golden brown, about 6 minutes on each side. Sprinkle with 2 teaspoons garlic powder and lime juice. Cook 5 minutes more, stirring frequently to coat evenly with sauce.

Source: allrecipe.com



# Many Ways to Pay

Choose the most convenient method for you!

- Pay online using SmartHub at [www.choctawelectric.coop](http://www.choctawelectric.coop).
- Pay by phone 24 hours a day using a major credit card at **800-780-6496**.
- Pay via smart phone, iPad or tablet using our SmartHub mobile app. Download the free app at [www.choctawelectric.coop](http://www.choctawelectric.coop).
- Pay in person or use CEC's drive-through drop box, available 24/7.

**Or use our Paysite kiosk at one of the following locations:**

- **Save A Lot Grocery, Hugo.** OPEN SUNDAY, 9 AM - 8 PM. MON.-SAT., 7:30 AM - 9 PM
- **Choctaw Travel Plazas at Atoka, Antlers, Broken Bow, and Idabel.** OPEN 24 HRS.
- **Country Market, Clayton.** OPEN 6 AM - 10 PM, 7 DAYS A WEEK.