



# inside *your* co-op

Published for members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative

## ■ YOUR COMMUNITY

### Co-op Tax Aids Local Schools

**A**t a time when public schools desperately need funding, there's at least one source of money that isn't drying up. It's known as the electric cooperative gross receipts tax and this year it will provide over \$1.2 million to 26 local schools.

In lieu of ad valorem tax, electric cooperatives in Oklahoma pay a two percent gross receipts tax on revenue at both the wholesale and retail level. Ninety five percent of the money collected goes directly to local schools. The remaining five percent is retained by the Oklahoma Tax Commission to cover administrative costs associated with collecting and distributing the money.



**\$750k**  
gross receipts taxes paid in 2017 by CEC members. Ninety-five percent goes to schools .

On a percentage basis, electric cooperatives and their members contribute more tax dollars to local school districts than do other utilities. Co-ops have fought long and hard to retain the gross receipts tax because the money collected goes to local schools who decide the best way to use it.

Gross receipts tax disbursements are determined by the number of miles of electric co-op power line in a school district. The chart published here shows tax disbursements to local schools in 2017 from Choctaw Electric and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative.

If you have questions about the gross receipt tax, please visit call your co-op at **800-780-6486**.

## TAX DISBURSEMENT FOR SCHOOLS

	CEC Tax	WFEC Tax	Grand Total
Antlers	\$75,666.97	\$44,752.33	\$120,419.30
Battiest	\$46,393.14	\$9,051.89	\$55,445.03
Bennington	\$1,690.70	\$22,059.22	\$23,749.92
Boswell	\$17,889.00	\$29,031.96	\$46,920.96
Broken Bow	\$56,984.22	\$59,306.34	\$116,290.56
Clayton	\$11,920.68	N/A	\$11,920.68
Denison	\$10,294.75	\$18,458.75	\$28,753.50
Eagletown	\$18,445.22	\$532.46	\$18,977.68
Forest Grove	\$13,976.36	\$20,208.27	\$34,184.63
Ft. Towson	\$38,798.57	\$71,147.33	\$109,945.90
Glover	\$11,890.52	N/A	\$11,890.52
Haworth	\$56,813.77	\$1,977.72	\$58,791.49
Holly Creek	\$12,050.74	\$10,218.24	\$22,268.98
Hugo	\$70,650.06	\$48,048.53	\$118,698.59
Idabel	\$30,218.78	\$11,967.76	\$42,186.54
Lane	\$26,111.85	\$40,441.91	\$66,553.76
Lukfata	\$14,021.34	\$9,787.19	\$23,808.53
Moyers	\$24,544.75	N/A	\$24,544.75
Nashoba	\$15,653.74	\$202.84	\$15,856.58
Rattan	\$59,057.80	\$23,174.86	\$82,232.66
Smithville	\$40,052.20	N/A	\$40,052.20
Soper	\$28,514.93	\$21,526.76	\$50,041.69
Swink	\$4,120.49	\$19,067.28	\$23,187.77
Valliant	\$43,429.44	\$56,111.56	\$99,541.00
Whitesboro	\$1,993.06	N/A	\$1,993.06
Wright City	\$20,033.55	N/A	\$20,033.55
	<b>\$751,216.63</b>	<b>\$472,320.87</b>	<b>\$1,223,537.50</b>

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

# The Power Behind Your Power

As April arrives, it brings with it the showers that produce spring flowers. It also marks the beginning of a potentially stormy season that can include power outages. While Choctaw Electric Cooperative aims to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes, but there is a group of professionals that spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst—your co-op lineworkers.

**One of the most dangerous jobs**

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, Choctaw Electric linemen often must climb 40 or more feet in the air, carrying roughly 40 pounds of equipment, to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S., electric utility lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high voltage power lines. To help keep them safe, Choctaw Electric linemen wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn to protect them from electrical shock. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight and bulk, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts that can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Choctaw Electric line crews use laptops and cell phones to map outages, take pictures of the work they have done and troubleshoot problems. In our area, our linemen are responsible for keeping 3,600 miles of lines across Choctaw, McCurtain, Pushmataha and parts of Atoka, Bryan and LeFlore counties working. They do this to bring power to your home 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations.

While some of the tools our lineworkers use have changed over the years, the dedication to the job has not. Working the lines is not a glamorous profession. At its essence, it is extremely dangerous, requiring them to work near high voltages in the worst of conditions, at any time of the day or night. In the rain, wind, snow, ice and lightening, crews often work around the clock to restore power. While April is known for spring showers, there's also a day set aside to "thank a lineman."

Linemen Appreciation Day is April 9. During the month of April, if you see a CEC lineman please say thank you to the power behind your power. Let them know you appreciate the hard work they do to keep the lights on.




**BY KOONEY DUNCAN**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## 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

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MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

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

**Lucky Acct#38843859**

If this account number belongs to you, contact CEC by the 10th of the month to claim your \$75 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

## Members Warned of Scam Attempts

Recent scam attempts on a Choctaw Electric (CEC) member prompted the co-op to issue scam warnings via social media. The member reported a call from someone claiming to be a CEC employee. The caller told the member their account was overdue and they needed to pay immediately to avoid disconnection.

This is a common utility scam that preys on consumers by scaring them with the threat of disconnection. The scammer gives the consumer a fictitious account balance and demands payment immediately, usually with a reloadable prepaid debit card or other non-traceable form of payment.

Often the scam calls appear on caller ID as coming from a legitimate utility, such as your electric co-op. The technique, known as “spoofing,” further confuses the victim into thinking the call is real.

Co-op members are reminded that CEC employees never call members to demand payment or personal information. Members with overdue accounts receive payment reminders via automated telephone message, text, email or mail.



### scam signs

■ **Threat to disconnect:** The impostor utility representative aggressively tells the customer his or her account is past due and service will be disconnected if a large payment is not made.

■ **Requests immediate payment:** The caller instructs the customer to quickly purchase a prepaid debit card—widely available at retail stores.

■ **Requests prepaid debit card info:** The caller asks the customer for the prepaid debit card’s number, which grants the caller instant access to the card’s funds.

If you receive a suspicious call, hang up immediately and report the call to CEC at **800-780-6486**. Next, report it to the Attorney General’s Public Protection Unit at **405-521-2029**.

## Tracking Right Of Way Crews

Members are reminded to watch for right of way crews working in the following areas:

- Contract crews are currently working near Rattan and moving west toward Antlers. Contractors are also working in the Sawyer and Spencerville areas.
- CEC right of way crews are in the Valliant area moving towards Ft. Towson.

A clear right of way ensures safe and reliable service for all members, faster outage response time, and safer working conditions for co-op employees. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

CEC’s new website offers a quick way for members to locate information on co-op bylaws, rates, bill payments, energy efficiency loans, capital credits, SmartHub, and more.



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

## Join Us for CEC Member Appreciation Days!

Members matter to Choctaw Electric Cooperative. For that reason, we’d like to show our appreciation with the return of CEC Member Appreciation Days.

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



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

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

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



## CEC Kilowatt Kid's Camp



Idabel | June 19

Hugo | June 21

CEC's Kilowatt's Kids Camp offers a fun, educational experience for younger kids, first through third grade. Campers spend the morning making crafts and playing games that teach them valuable lessons about how to stay safe around electricity. Kids also learn why it's important to turn out the lights when they leave a room and practice other energy wise behaviors.

We are currently enrolling students for our half-day camps in Hugo and Idabel. The camp is free and includes all snacks and camp activities. To enroll, please call Jia Johnson or Brad Kendrick at **800-780-6486**, ext. 241.

### swap shop

Gravity Inversion system "Body Champ," pristine condition. \$90 OBO. 580-298-2671.

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

### RECIPES



## Easter Breakfast Casserole

### INGREDIENTS

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 pound bacon                 | 8 eggs   |
| ¼ cup diced onion             | 2 cups milk  |
| ¼ cup diced green bell pepper | 1 (16 oz) package frozen hash brown potatoes, thawed |
| 3 cups shredded Cheddar       |  |

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 7x11 inch casserole dish. Fry the bacon in a large, deep skillet over medium-high heat until evenly browned, about 10 minutes. Drain on a paper towel-lined plate. Crumble.

In a large bowl beat together eggs and milk. Mix in cheese, bacon, onion and green pepper. Stir in the thawed hash browns. Pour mixture into prepared casserole. Cover with aluminum foil and bake in preheated oven for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 30 minutes until eggs have set.

Source: [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.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
- **Country Market, Clayton.**  
OPEN 6 AM - 10 PM, 7 DAYS/WK.
- **Choctaw Travel Plazas at Atoka, Antlers, Broken Bow, and Idabel.**  
OPEN 24 HRS.
- **TJ's Country Store, Smithville**  
OPEN MON.- FRI. 5 AM-10 PM;  
SAT. 6 AM-10 PM; SUN. 7 AM-8:30 PM