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inside *your* co-op

Published for members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative

■ YOUR POWER

POWER OUTAGES 101

What causes them and how to stay informed when they happen

Keeping the power on for our members is job number one for Choctaw Electric Cooperative. But as hard as we work to keep the lights on, from time to time power outages happen. In an instant, they disrupt the flow of everyday life for you and your co-op.

Choctaw Electric tracks principal reasons for outages to identify areas for improvement. For example, in 2017 lightning, wind and storms caused the most problems for co-op members

Not all outages are unplanned. For safety or maintenance reasons, your cooperative may schedule an outage for a particular day and time. When this happens, we make every attempt to notify members who will be affected. Keeping your contact information up to date (home, business and mobile phone, email address and mailing address) helps ensure you are notified when these events occur.

When outages occur for any reason, Choctaw Electric provides periodic updates on Facebook or members can sign up for

special outage alerts through SmartHub. Choctaw Electric also issues automated calls and text messages to inform members of any pre-planned outages and keep them informed about restoration efforts.

During a major outage, please remember your co-op is experiencing extremely high call volume. You may be placed on hold or receive a busy signal. Members can avoid the wait by reporting their outage using SmartHub.

Member who wish to track the restoration process are encouraged to check the co-op website and Facebook for links to Choctaw Electric's online outage map. The map shows you how many members are affected in your area and changes in real time so you stay up-to-date on the restoration effort. ☺

To view Choctaw Electric's outage map, please visit www.choctawelectric.coop. To visit with a co-op representative about SmartHub special alerts, please call **800-780-6486**.



41%
WEATHER

Lightning, high winds, tornadoes and ice storms cause outages. To decrease damages caused by lightning, CEC installs lightning arrestors on high voltage equipment.



37%
UNKNOWN

With 3,600 miles of line, it can be difficult to determine the precise cause of every power outage. These outages are logged as unknown.



35%
TREES

Tree limbs that come into contact with power lines are the frequent cause of blinks, surges and outages. Trees also fall into lines during storms or limbs break when weighted with ice.



9%
VEHICLES

Car accidents and construction equipment can damage poles, lines and equipment. Keep safety in mind if you are involved in a vehicle accident near power lines.



4.2%
ANIMALS

Birds, squirrels, snakes and other animals come into contact with equipment when nesting or looking for food. This causes equipment to momentarily fail or shut down.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Giving Credit Where It's Due

Board approves capital credit return for members

Electric co-ops like to remind members that they are more than just consumers, they are owners of their cooperative. You own your co-op when you participate in local elections for your Choctaw Electric trustees. Ownership is also evident when your co-op returns excess financial margins to you in the form of capital credits.

This year your board of trustees approved a capital credit retirement of \$892,725.34 to members who belonged to Choctaw Electric in 1988 and 1993. These members should expect to receive their capital credit check in the mail sometime in August.

Capital credits are unique to electric cooperatives. Because electric cooperatives are owned by their members, they don't create profits for distant shareholders like traditional businesses do. Member-owned electric co-ops set rates to generate enough money to pay operating costs, make payments on any loans, and provide an emergency reserve. At the end of each year, we subtract our operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating "margin." This excess revenue is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits. Capital credits are "retired" and then allocated to you based on your purchase of electricity from the cooperative during that particular year.

When co-op members die, their capital credits are placed in an estate capital credit account until the official executor of that member's estate files an application for its return. Last year, CEC returned \$465,916.84 in estate capital credits to the families of deceased members. Thus far in 2018, we've paid \$124,927.40.

A capital credit retirement only occurs when your co-op's current financial condition is sound. During some years, a co-op may experience high growth in the number of new accounts that requires more construction and line extensions. At other times, severe storms make it necessary for a co-op to spend a lot of money rebuilding and repairing lines. These sort of events usually increase costs and decrease member equity, which may cause a co-op board to decide against retiring capital credits. Choctaw Electric's ability to issue capital credits this year reflects the co-op's current financial stability. We're proud of this fact and I hope you are, too.




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



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 #36736001

If this account number belongs to you, contact CEC by the 10th of the month to claim your \$25 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.

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



GOOD TO KNOW

Board Candidates Must File Petitions

Filing dates for Districts D, E and F is July 24

Members seeking election to the Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) board of trustees must file their petition to run by July 24. Petitions must be signed by at least 25 CEC members.

This year, members will elect trustees for Districts D, E and F. Candidates are advised to read the qualifications for trustee prior to filing. For example, a trustee must reside in the district they represent and have no immediate family members employed by the cooperative.

Please refer to your bylaws for the complete list of qualifications. Trustee qualifications are published in Section 4.02 of the CEC bylaws.

CEC bylaws are available online at www.choctawelectric.coop, or pick up a copy at any CEC office.

July 24

Candidate filing date for Dist. D, E, and F. Petition due by 5 pm at CEC in Hugo.

Save the
DATE!

August 8

Second revision of proposed bylaw amendments due at CEC Hugo.

September 21

Deadline for submitting mail-in ballots to E-Ballots. Do not submit ballots to CEC.

September 22

CEC Annual Meeting
Larry Brinkley Event Center
Fairgrounds, Idabel

Mind *the* Peak!

Please power down during peak alert hours to keep your electric rates as low as possible.



Why the peak usage matters

High system-wide usage results in higher cost to CEC from our wholesale power provider during peak summer months. When cooperative members work together to lower peak demand, the result is lower power costs for everyone.

What you can do

When CEC issues a peak alert, please make an effort to lower your electricity use during the hours indicated. CEC will post peak alerts on its website, Facebook and local radio stations. Peak alert notices will also be issued via SmartHub for members who have signed up to receive them.

Questions?

Please call **800-780-6486**.

CEC Closed July 4

Choctaw Electric will close on Wednesday, July 4th for Independence Day. If you experience a power outage during this time, please report it using the SmartHub app, or call **800-780-6486**.



Watch For Your "New" Electric Bill

Choctaw Electric (CEC) members will notice a change in their electric bill soon. The cooperative redesigned its monthly bill format to include certain enhanced features. For instance, the new bill will include a 12-month usage chart that allows members to compare their current monthly usage to their usage from the same month last year. The new bill also includes a change in the description of certain charges. Instead of the meter charge appearing on the bill, members will see a base service charge. There is no change in the amount charged.

The co-op hopes the change in terms will clear up the long-running confusion over the term "meter charge." "Base service charge is a more accurate description of the charge and what it covers," said Kooney Duncan, CEO of CEC. "Meter charge sounded like a cost for the meter itself, which is not the case."

Tracking Right Of Way Crews

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

- Contract crews are working east of Antlers.
- CEC right of way crews in the Ft. Towson area.

Your cooperation is appreciated.



Choctaw Electric Cooperative Youth Tour winners Katelyn Lofton, Kasey Alford, and Serenity McGuire in Washington D.C. The teens toured the capital city June 9 - 14 as participants in the 2018 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The trip included stops at major historic sites, monuments and government buildings. Find more photos and information about Youth Tour online at www.oaec.coop or visit www.choctawelectric.coop.

■ CO-OP YOUTH

Washington Welcomes Youth Tour Teens

Oklahoma winners join other teens for a powerful learning experience

Rural America's best and brightest high-schoolers visited Washington, D.C in June to learn about the political process, interact with elected officials and gain an up-close understanding of American history.

NRECA organizers of Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, now in its 53rd year, said the weeklong program included Youth Day on June 11, a spirited gathering of young delegates and featured speakers. At more than 2,100 participants—about 260 are adult chaperones—this year's tour is the largest, said Patrick Ahearn, NRECA's director of political affairs.

"We've grown so much over the last few years that we now have to hold our Youth Day rally in two separate sessions," said Ahearn.

Choctaw Electric Cooperative and other co-ops from across the U.S. select and sponsor high schoolers in their service areas for the all-expenses co-op paid trip. Youth Tour participants also attend leadership training and learn about their co-ops' purpose in programs back home.

"They learn so much on this trip and absorb so much history that it takes awhile for it all to sink in," said Jia Johnson, CEC director of members services and Youth Tour coordinator. "We tell them this is the trip of a lifetime and when they return home, they believe it."

Oklahoma sponsored 70 kids on Youth Tour this year. Texas co-ops send the largest contingent: 165 high-schoolers and chaperones. Tennessee is close behind with more than 140 delegates.

"From these giant groups, to states like Alaska, who sends one delegate on the almost daylong travel journey, and every state in between, Youth Tour is a life-changing opportunity for all involved," said Beth Knudson, an NRECA consultant. ☺

■ FLASH BACK

Riding the Bus

In the early years of Youth Tour, students traveled by bus to Washington DC. For students from many states, the road trip alone was quite a trip, showing them towns and cities they'd never seen before. For Oklahoma Youth Tour participants, the bus ride added three days to their trip, but served as valuable learning experience and a chance to get to know other students. In 1979, Oklahoma's Youth Tour coordinators decided to fly teens to Washington.





Co-op Volunteers

Pam Tedder, Bart Tedder, Rocky Roxberry and Julie Roxberry served as volunteers for the Oklahoma Special Olympic Summer Games on May 16-18 in Stillwater. Oklahoma's electric cooperatives provided a team of 101 volunteers for the event. Volunteers help escort athletes to their events and to the awards stage, provide moral support, serve as referees and umpires, and assist with timing, judging, and score keeping. Five thousand special athletes competed in the summer games this year.



**Special
Olympics**
Oklahoma

FACTS

Oklahoma held its first Special Olympics athletic event in 1969 in Tulsa. Today, Special Olympics Oklahoma benefits 11,600 athletes and is supported by over 1,700 volunteer coaches and thousands of sponsors, donors and volunteers conducting more than 140 sports competitions and training clinics every year.



Energy Campers

Ember Gregg, Isaac McNutt, Jordan Jones represented Choctaw Electric Cooperative at YouthPower Energy Camp this summer. The teens competed for the opportunity by entering the CEC Energy Camp essay contest. Eighty eighth graders from across the state gathered at Canyon Camp near Hinton, Okla. for the three-day cooperative camp held May 29 - June 1. Energy Camp teaches kids about cooperatives while fostering leadership skills.



YouthPower Energy Camp is sponsored by the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives. For photos and details about Energy Camp, please visit www.oaec.coop. For information on how your teen can participate, please visit www.choctawelectric.coop.

Fans Needed

Donate to the Fan Drive and help senior citizens stay cool this summer

If you have an electric fan that you aren't using, please consider donating it to the 2018 Keep Our Citizens Cool Fan Drive. Sponsored by the Senior Awareness Committee, the Fan Drive aims to provide working fans to local senior citizens to help them stay cool this summer.



Please help by donating a fan at one of the following locations:

- Choctaw Electric Cooperative Hugo, Idabel, and Antlers
- Encompass Home Health, Hugo, Idabel
- Kindred Health Care, Hugo

*Thank you!
Your donation makes a difference.*

ENERGY WISE

Hot Days Bring Higher Bills



If bad energy habits are making your house uncomfortable this summer, it's not too late to make a few changes.

- **Check for loose or leaky window panes.** Single pane windows are not efficient. If replacing them is out of the question, at least consider replacing any broken or cracked panes and caulk around the edges.
- **Switch bulbs.** If you're still using incandescent light bulbs, it's time to switch to compact fluorescent bulbs or LEDs. Both are far more energy efficient than old-fashioned light bulbs. One reason: Incandescents produce more heat than light. That added heat competes with your air conditioner.
- **Change filters.** Dirty, clogged filters force your a/c to work harder. Replace your dirty air filters once a month during cooling season.
- **Go automatic.** Install a programmable thermostat, which automatically adjusts the temperature so you use less energy to cool your home when no one is there. The device can save you up to \$100 a year on cooling and heating bills.
- **Move appliances and lamps away from your thermostat.** They emit heat that could trick your thermostat into "thinking" that the house is warmer than it really is—and making your air condition work harder as a result.

There's Still Time To Sign Up!

Reserve a booth space at the CEC Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting Vendor Booth Reservation Form

Saturday, September 22 • McCurtain County Fairgrounds, Idabel

Organization _____
 Contact person _____
 Daytime Telephone _____
 Mailing Address _____
 Products to be displayed/sold _____
 Number of booth spaces _____

A limited number of spaces are available. Spaces will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis. Vendors must provide their own tables, chairs, and electrical cords.

Reservation deadline: September 14, 2018

Please mail booth reservation form to:
Jia Johnson, Choctaw Electric Cooperative, PO Box 758, Hugo, OK 74743



■ PLAY IT SAFE



Stay Cool And Stay Safe

Hot weather mixed with outdoor activities can lead to heat-related illness. Follow these guidelines to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids; drink about 16 ounces before starting and 5 to 7 ounces every 15 or 20 minutes.

Avoid dehydrating liquids. Alcohol, coffee, tea and caffeinated soft drinks can hurt more than help.

Wear protective clothing. Lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing helps protect against the summer heat.

Pace yourself. Slow down and work at an even pace. Know your own limits and ability to work safely in heat.

Take breaks. Take time for rest periods and water breaks in a shaded or air conditioned area.

Avoid sunburn. Use sunscreen and wear a hat if working outside.

Be alert to signs of heat-related illness. Know what to look for and check on other workers that might be at high risk.

Don't leave people or pets in a closed, parked vehicle.

Check on elderly friends and neighbors. Adults over the age of 65 have an increased risk of heat-related illness.



Many Ways to Pay

Choose the most convenient method for you!

- Pay online using SmartHub at www.choctawelectric.coop.
- Pay via smart phone, iPad or tablet using our SmartHub mobile app. Download the free app at www.choctawelectric.coop.
- Pay by phone 24 hours a day using a major credit card at **800-780-6486**.
- 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.
- **New!** **Country Market, Clayton.**
OPEN 6 AM - 10 PM, 7 DAYS/ WK
- **New!** **CJ's Corner Store, Smithville**
OPEN MON.- FRI. 6 AM-7 PM; SAT. 6:30 AM-7 PM; SUN. 9 AM-5:00 PM

REPORT OUTAGES FAST!

Use Smarthub to report an outage and you'll never get a frustrating busy signal! Two ways to access Smarthub:

1. Download the app from the App Store or at www.smarthubapp.com. You will be asked to register by providing an email address, password, and CEC account number. Once registered, use Smarthub to report an outage via smartphone, tablet or computer.
2. Visit www.choctawelectric.coop and click "Report An Outage" at the upper right of the homepage.

swap shop

2005 Honda Accord, 186,000 miles, new tires, runs good. Good gas mileage. 580-286-0735

CEC Swap Shop ads reach 13,062 homes and businesses. Swap Shops ads are free for CEC members. Please submit your classified ad online at classifieds@choctawelectric.coop or email your ad to: jboling@choctawelectric.coop.

RECIPES



Sweet Restaurant Cole Slaw

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1 (16 ounce) bag coleslaw mix | ½ cup white sugar |
| 2 tablespoons diced onion | 1 tablespoon white vinegar |
| ⅔ cup creamy salad dressing (such as Miracle Whip) | ¼ teaspoon salt |
| 3 tablespoons vegetable oil | ½ teaspoon poppy seeds |

DIRECTIONS

Combine the coleslaw mix and onion in a large bowl.

Whisk together the salad dressing, vegetable oil, sugar, vinegar, salt, and poppy seeds in a medium bowl; blend thoroughly.

Pour dressing mixture over coleslaw mix and toss to coat. Chill at least two hours before serving.

Source: allrecipes.com

Is Prepaid Right For You?

Use the chart below to see the difference and decide for yourself. To visit with a CEC service representative about the Prepaid option, please call **800-780-6486** or find details online at www.choctawelectric.coop.



Prepaid Payment

- **Fees:** \$125 to begin service. (This includes \$10 deposit, \$5 membership, \$25 connect fee, and \$85 prepaid credit.)
- ~~Credit Check, Late Fees, Due Dates~~ Not required.
- ~~Reconnect Fee:~~ If your service is disconnected for non-payment when enrolled in Prepaid, no reconnect fee is required.
- **Eliminates debt.** Prepaid members avoid the debt cycle that comes with unpaid bills and added fees. With Prepaid, your bill updates daily so you never accrue large unpaid bills.

Standard Payment

- **Fees:** \$5 membership fee + \$25 connect fee to begin service
- **Deposit:** A deposit may be required based upon your credit score. Deposits required could be twice the amount of the average bill for the past 12 months at the new service location.
- **Due Date:** Payment is due in full within 30 days of due date printed on your bill.
- **Late Fee:** A late fee of 6.5 percent the amount of your bill is charged on any bill paid after the due date.
- **Reconnect Fee:** \$50 fee is charged if disconnected for nonpayment.