

# CEC **inside** *your* **co-op**

For members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative | OCTOBER 2024



## This fall, go electric in the kitchen!

As cooler weather arrives, it's the perfect time to embrace electric kitchen appliances for canning and preserving. Electric water bath canners and electric pressure canners offer a more convenient, efficient and safer way to can fruits, vegetables and even meats.

"Using an electric water bath or pressure canner is cheaper than using an electric stove," says Jacque Compton, McCurtain County Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) president. "Not having to lift heavy pans with jars is simpler, there's less mess, and it's a lot easier on the shoulders and arms."

An electric water bath canner makes preserving high-acid foods like jams, fruits and tomatoes easier than ever. For low-acid foods including vegetables and meats, an electric pressure canner is a fantastic tool. It provides consistent pressure and temperature control, reducing the risk of burns and ensuring food safety. If you enjoy

stocking up on hearty meals, you can safely can soups, chili and meats with ease. Plus, electric canning helps keep your kitchen cooler—a bonus during early fall in Oklahoma.

For those interested in juicing, consider an electric juicer to make 100% pure juice, perfect for canning or freezing. "Whenever fruits are ripe, I juice them down, cool the juice and freeze it," Compton says. "When it's cold out, I make jelly from the juice, and canning helps heat the house."

Whether you're experienced with preserving or just starting out, going electric in the kitchen makes canning simpler and safer! Be sure to check out upcoming canning classes and events through your local OHCE. You can also learn skills like using an Instant Pot or air fryer from OHCE master volunteers.

Don't miss the McCurtain County OHCE booth at the Idabel Fall Festival on Oct. 5, where the group will showcase their

famous homemade fried pies—a crowd favorite, especially during the holiday season when they make nearly 4,000 pies!

For more information on OHCE canning classes and other upcoming events visit the McCurtain, Choctaw and Pushmataha county OHCE Facebook pages.



Electric appliances like this water bath canner make canning easier, safer and more energy efficient.

## Choctaw Electric Cooperative

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

### CONNECT WITH US

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

**24 Hour Outage Line**  
(800) 780-6486

### Hugo Office

PO Box 758  
1033 N. 4250 Rd.  
Hugo, OK 74743

Toll free: (800) 780-6486  
Local: (580) 326-6486  
Fax: (580) 326-2492

### Idabel Office

2114 SE Washington  
Idabel, OK 74745

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

### Antlers Office

417732 SH3  
Antlers, OK 74523

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

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# Cooperative Proud

## CEC celebrates National Co-op Month

As we celebrate National Co-op Month, it's a time to reflect on what makes Choctaw Electric Cooperative truly special.

Our cooperative is driven by one purpose: to serve our members. Being locally owned and operated means we're not just here for your energy needs—we're here for our community. We take pride in knowing what matters to you because we live and work alongside you.

This year, we've been out and about, connecting with many of you at local fairs and events. It's always rewarding to see familiar faces and meet new members. Following the success of our Annual Meeting in September, we are energized to strengthen the relationships we've built and continue celebrating the meaningful progress we've achieved together.

In September, CEC proudly hosted its inaugural Buddy Ball baseball game, an event that gives children with

disabilities the chance to experience the joy of playing baseball. From volunteering at Buddy Ball to supporting our local Little League teams, our employees are committed to giving back. These efforts embody what it means to be Co-op Proud—lending a hand where it's needed because we genuinely care about the community we serve.



CEO Kooney Duncan

As a cooperative, we have the unique ability to spearhead projects that truly make a difference locally. On Page 4, you'll read about our third annual Warming Tree. Started by CEC employees, the initiative has helped hundreds of community members in need stay warm during the winter. We invite our members to participate as well!

This Co-op Month, we celebrate you—our members—and the strong sense of community that drives us forward. We take pride in honoring this cooperative spirit, not just in October, but throughout the year.

## Take advantage of efficiency tax credits!

Have you recently made energy efficiency improvements to your home? If so, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Save up to \$3,200 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%. Some upgrades covered by the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating and cooling equipment and other major appliances as well as energy audits. If you completed an upgrade this year—or you are considering one—visit [www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/energy-efficient-home-improvement-credit](http://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/energy-efficient-home-improvement-credit) to learn if you qualify for a tax credit.

**CEC offers efficiency audits and loans. Visit our website to learn more.**





## Keeping lines clear for reliable service

From Jan. 1 to Aug. 31, 2024, Choctaw Electric Cooperative's right-of-way crews have worked diligently to clear 386.4 miles of power line. This essential maintenance ensures reliable electrical service by trimming trees and vegetation near power lines.

Operations Supervisor Darin Kirkes explains the importance of this work: "With the amount of timber we have, tree growth is non-stop. Without regular clearing, we couldn't provide reliable service," he says.

Crews have been busy in the Bethel, Battiest, Pickens, Eagletown, Frogville and Sawyer areas. Currently, they're working on the Haworth and Valliant substations and will soon start on the Rattan substation. Regular trimming helps prevent outages and helps maintain a dependable service. Next year, CEC will ramp up herbicide spraying along 1,000 miles of line, to further control vegetation growth.

CEC's right-of-way team consists of an in-house, four-man crew and two contractor teams. While the crews work to clear the lines, members are asked for patience, especially with cleanup efforts. "Sometimes cleanup crews may be a few days behind trimming crews, but they will be there to clean it up—even if it's not the day the branches hit the ground," Kirkes assures members.

Stay informed of where crews are working by checking CEC's Facebook page for updates. And please, always move over when you see crews on the road. They're hard at work keeping your electricity flowing safely and reliably!

**Follow CEC on Facebook for the latest tree trimming updates.**



[www.facebook.com/choctawelectriccooperative](https://www.facebook.com/choctawelectriccooperative)

### Give the gift of life!

Please join us for the  
CEC Fall Blood Drive

Tuesday, Oct. 29  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
2114 SE Washington St., Idabel.

To make an appointment visit  
[obi.org](http://obi.org) or call 877-340-8777.



Scan here to schedule  
an appointment

### Paperless for the win

Sign up for paperless billing via the free SmartHub app or call Choctaw Electric Cooperative at 800-780-6486. Any member who signs up during the month will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a \$100 bill credit!

### Trick or Treat

Hey kids! Stop by any of CEC's three offices during business hours on Oct. 31 for a treat from your cooperative. We can't wait to see your costumes!

### Warming Tree is back

CEC's Warming Tree returns, Oct. 1-Dec. 6. Help warm up someone's holiday season with a donation of warm clothing items. Read more on Page 4.

### Thank you for attending

We're grateful to each member who participated in the CEC's 84th Annual Meeting on Sept. 28.

### Lucky Acct #38774700

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.

## Help spread warmth this winter with CEC's Warming Tree

Choctaw Electric Cooperative invites members to brighten the holidays for those in need through our third annual Warming Tree initiative.

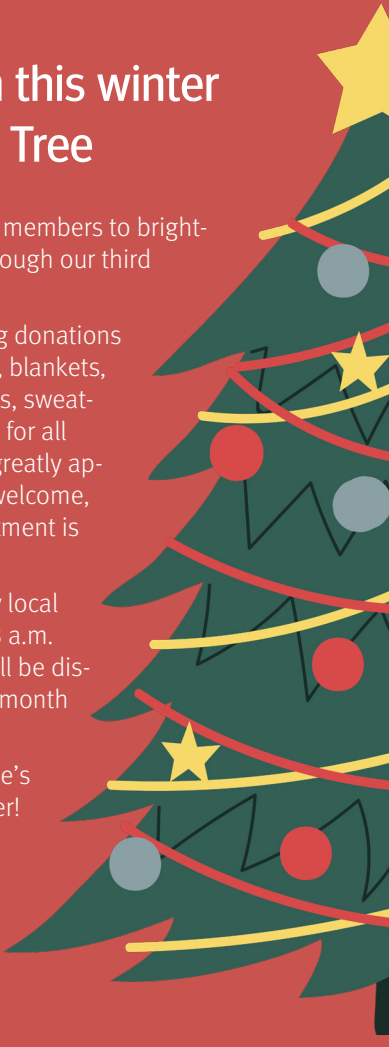
Now through Dec. 6, CEC is collecting donations of warm gloves, winter hats, scarves, blankets, non-slip socks, slippers, robes, wraps, sweat-shirts, and other cozy apparel. Items for all ages—from children to adults—are greatly appreciated. Cash donations are also welcome, and if you prefer, CEC's MRPR department is happy to shop on your behalf.

Donations can be dropped off at any local CEC office, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., through Dec. 6. They will be distributed to those in need during the month of December.

Thank you for helping make someone's Christmas a little warmer and brighter!



Read more about CEC's Warming Tree as featured in Oklahoma Living Magazine!



On Aug. 22, Emma Bundy spoke at the Idabel Lions Club, promoting Oklahoma Youth Tour and the Youth Ambassador Program. Emma served as a 2024 Youth Tour delegate. We are so proud of the way she represents Choctaw Electric Cooperative!

## Go paperless for your chance to win \$100

Sign up for paperless billing via SmartHub or call CEC at 800-780-6486. Any member who signs up during the month will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a \$100 bill credit!

## What to do when your power goes out

Before calling CEC to report a power outage, please help us determine if the service problem exists within your home's electrical system or on our system. This could help get your power back on more quickly.

# 1 2 3 4 5

Check to see if your neighbors are without electricity. If they also are without service, there's a good chance the problem is on our system.

If your neighbor has power, but you don't and your homes are served by the same power line, the problem may be within your home's electrical system.

Try resetting your home's main disconnect breaker (outside by your meter) by switching the breaker off and then back on.

If this doesn't work, check your breaker panel (often in the garage) for tripped breakers and reset them if necessary.

If this doesn't work, please report the outage either through the free SmartHub app or by calling our 24 hour outage line at 800-780-6486.