

Hazards of Spring

Avoid electrical hazards by adopting a mindset for safety.

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Kilowatt Kid's Camp

Fun times await K-3rd graders at CEC's free summer camp.

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Be Prepared With Prepaid

Take the sting out of summer bills by switching to prepaid billing.

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For members of **Choctaw Electric Cooperative**

APRIL 2023

CEC *inside your* co-op



Spotlight

Is it time for a storm shelter?
Please call today for complete details.
800-780-6486

SAFE SHELTER

High winds and tornadoes drive up interest in CEC's storm shelter program

There's nothing like tornado warnings and 80+ mph winds to get Lacey Peters' phone ringing. Peters, coordinator of the storm shelter program at Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC), says storms like the one that hit southeast Oklahoma on March 2 usually prompt members to take action.

"People tend to wait until after a storm hits and then boom, boom, boom, my phone starts ringing," Peters said.

Strong storms tend to remind people how vulnerable they are to the weather, she added. Peters received five applications the day after the March 2 storm and calls have continued since.

CEC's Storm Shelter program makes a safe shelter easy and affordable by allowing members to finance their purchase and make small monthly payments on their electric bill.

Members may choose from a variety of sizes and safety options. Special features include ventilation fans, vacuum-locked door, and hand rails on steps. An optional staircase design offers a more gradual slope, making access easier for some people.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Affordable financing
- In-ground or safe room
- Price includes installation
- Ten-year warranty included

Both in-ground shelters and above-ground safe rooms are available. Prices begin at \$3,450 and includes installation and delivery.

Hausner's Precast Concrete manufactures and installs every shelter ordered through CEC. With 70 years of experience, the company's has earned its reputation for quality work and excellent customer service. Another plus: Hausner's shelters are 100 percent made in Oklahoma, and they are backed by a ten year warranty against leaks.

"They're great to work with," Peters said. "I always recommend Hausner's, whether the member buys their shelter from us or not."

With storm season picking up, Peters urges members to place their order now. Wait time

is currently four to eight weeks, depending on the number of orders. The sooner you place your order, the sooner you and your family will be to riding out the next storm in safety. ☼

For more details on CEC storm shelters, please visit www.choctawelectric.net, or call Lacey Peters at 800-780-6486, ext.213, or email lpeters@choctawelectric.coop.



GOOD Friday

PLEASE NOTE OUR
Holiday Hours

Choctaw Electric Cooperative will close on **April 7** for Good Friday. To report an outage, please call **800-780-6486** or report your trouble online using Smarthub.

Please enjoy a safe holiday!

MANAGER'S REPORT



The Hazards of Spring

Stay aware and stay alive.

BY KOONEY DUNCAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

We've had our share of storms over the past three months and this was before official kick-off of tornado season! With the oddball weather on my mind, I'd like to focus on a topic that is important to me—safety.

There are reasons I'm a huge safety advocate. At the top of my list are the 62 individuals working

for Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC), plus our 14,875 members and their families. When you provide an energy source as potent as electricity, you can't be slaphappy about human lives.

Over the years, I've heard a number of heartbreaking stories about co-op personnel who died while doing the jobs they'd done for years. One slip, one small mistake, is all it takes. As convenient and necessary as electricity is to our lives, it's also deadly and unforgiving.

That's why this time of year makes me a bit anxious. At CEC, we make darn sure our employees are aware of the dangers they face on the job. Our line crews and field personnel are reminded of the hazards through consistent training and regular safety meetings. They make this learning a priority because they know their lives depend on it.

The average person isn't so 'in tune' with electrical hazards. These folks worry me. If a trained professional can fall victim to a fatal misjudgment around electricity, it stands to reason the average person could, too. Usually, when they least expect it.

In the spring, we spend more time outdoors. We're busy trimming trees, doing yard work, moving equipment, cleaning out the pool, and making repairs to our home exterior. That's the short list of tasks that drive us outside and almost all of them take place near power lines. Our awareness and respect for those lines can make the difference between life and death.

"... I've heard a number of heartbreaking stories about co-op personnel who died while doing the jobs they'd done for years. One slip, one small mistake, is all it takes."

Severe thunderstorms often leave a tangle of safety hazards. CEC crews try to repair these problems as fast as possible, but we can't be everywhere at once. If you spot a downed line or a wire dangling among the tree limbs, by all means, stay away and report it immediately. Please

call CEC as soon as possible or report the problem using Smarthub. We also urge you to notify your local law enforcement of the problem.

Hanging from the pole or lying flat on the ground, hot lines are deadly. Don't take chances by assuming otherwise.

If what I've said makes you hesitate before you raise a ladder or drive your hay baler under a low-hanging wire—good. It means you're exercising caution around power lines.

At CEC, safety is a state of mind. We want to encourage the same in you. Please be aware and stay safe.

Choctaw Electric Cooperative

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

Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

HUGO OFFICE

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Hugo, Oklahoma 74743
Toll Free: (800) 780-6486
Local: (580) 326-6486
FAX (580) 326-2492

IDABEL OFFICE

2114 SE Washington
Idabel, Oklahoma 74745
Toll Free: (800) 780-6486
Local: (580) 286-7155

ANTLERS OFFICE

HC 67 Box 62
Antlers, Oklahoma 74523
(One mile east of Antlers)
Toll Free: (800) 780-6486
Local: (580) 298-3201

and
On the Web:

www.choctawelectric.net



24 Hour Outage Hotline

800-780-6486

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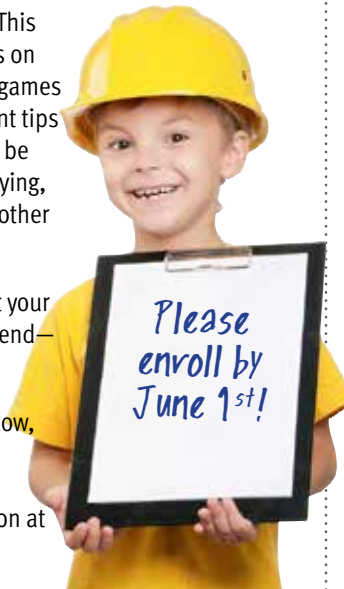
Helping Kids Stay Safe

Kilowatt Kid's Camp makes learning about electrical safety fun—and it's free!

It's almost time for summer camp! This year, Kilowatt Kid's Camp will focus on summer electrical safety. Through games and activities, we will share important tips that remind children, K-3rd grade, to be aware of electrical hazards while playing, swimming, fishing, and engaging in other summer activities.

Join us and enjoy a morning of fun at your local electric cooperative! Bring a friend—camp is free.

Enroll using the registration form below, pick up a form at any CEC location, or visit www.choctawelectric.net. Questions? Please contact Jia Johnson at 800-780-6486, ext. 241.



2023 KILOWATT KID'S CAMP ENROLLMENT FORM

Student Name (Print): _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Tele: _____ Work Tele: _____

Cell: _____

Allergies: _____

Medications: _____

T-shirt Size (Circle): Youth XS (4-6) | Youth S (6-8) | Youth M (8-10)
Youth L (10-12) | Adult S | Adult M | Adult L

Emergency Contact: _____

Home Tele: _____ Cell: _____

Camp (Please circle):

Hugo Camp • Tuesday, June 6 **Idabel Camp • Wednesday, June 7**

K-3rd grade • 8:30 am to 11:30 am K-3rd grade • 8:30 am to 11:30 am

Mail enrollment form by June 1, 2023 to:

Jia Johnson or Brad Kendrick
Choctaw Electric Cooperative
PO Box 758
Hugo, OK 74743

Win a **\$100 Bill Credit!**

Enroll in CEC's paperless billing.

When you enroll in paperless billing, your name will be entered in our monthly drawing for new paperless accounts. Enroll today using Smarthub's payment options, or sign up by phone at **800-780-6486**.



Congratulations to Catherine Flood of Haworth, our \$100 bill credit winner for the month of March. We appreciate your participation.

BEWARE:

Scammers At It Again



They're at it again. Telephone scam artists pretending to represent your co-op are trying to steal from you. At least two attempts to scam Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) members have been reported since the first of the year. Thankfully, both attempts failed, but the incidents serve as an important reminder: **Anyone who calls you claiming to be from CEC and requesting payment for services of any kind is a fraud.** Hang up and report it to CEC immediately.

Utility scams are widespread and scammers are clever. Scam calls may appear on your caller ID as Choctaw Electric

or another familiar business. Don't believe it—especially if the caller threatens you with loss of service or requests immediate payment.

Remember, CEC personnel NEVER call to request payment for services. Past due accounts receive a reminder in the mail, a recorded telephone message, plus emails and text alerts via Smarethub.

If a call or a request seems unusual to you in any way, please hang up and call us at **800-780-6486**. We need to warn others.



CHOCTAW ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

2023 Board Meetings

The Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) board of trustees meets at 9 am on the last Tuesday of every month at co-op headquarters in Hugo. Meetings are open to the public. Meeting minutes are available at www.choctawelectric.net or at any CEC location. To read the minutes on your smartphone or tablet, please scan the bar code to the right.



- April 25
- September 26
- May 30
- October 31
- June 27
- November 28
- July 25
- Thursday, December 21
- August 29

Super Services

Prepare For Summer

Enroll In CEC's Prepaid Program

Summer is coming and that means higher electricity bills. Members who use Choctaw Electric's prepaid billing option may be better equipped to weather the seasonal increase. Why?

Prepaid members can pay as they go along. When and how much they pay is up to them. This freedom helps prepaid accounts avoid a big bill at the end of the month.


Prepaid is a smart option for any member who appreciates having more control over their finances. Surveys show that prepaid customers have higher satisfaction scores, so it's a popular program among consumers everywhere.

For those who struggle to pay their bills, CEC's prepaid option eliminates a lot of worry. Prepaid members can log into CEC's Smarthub, call the co-op, or sign up for text alerts, so they know exactly how much credit is left on their account. When it gets low, they decide how much they wish to pay. Another benefit: Prepaid accounts avoid all late fees and reconnect fees.

Instead of worrying about higher electricity bills this summer, sign up for prepaid billing. For details, please visit www.choctawelectric.net or call 800-780-6486.

The Prepaid Advantage

- Pay as you go
- No late fees
- No billing deadlines
- No surprises



CELEBRATE
the Power Behind Your Power.
Lineworker Appreciation Day | April 18, 2023



Don't become part of a tragic fishing story. Keep an eye on weather conditions and know when to call it a day.

SEEK SHELTER

If you see or hear signs of weather rolling in, stop fishing and retreat to a four-sided building or hard-top car. If you ignore the signs and keep fishing, it could cost you your life.



WAIT 30 MINUTES

Wait 30 minutes after you see or hear lightning before heading back outside.

REMEMBER

Always look up for overhead power lines before casting.



LIGHTNING FACTS 2006-2020:



Two-thirds of lightning deaths occurred during outdoor activities.



Of those deaths, 33% happened during water-related activities.



Fishing accounted for most, or 44%, of those water-related activities.

Source: National Lightning Safety Council