

Cooperative Principle #1

Discover the seven principles that guide the way we do business.

■ PAGE 2

A Guide to the Grid

Where does electricity come from? Find out in our grid guide.

■ PAGE 3

Generator Safety

Learn to use your generator safely in case of an outage.

■ PAGE 4

For members of **Choctaw Electric Cooperative**

FEBRUARY 2024

CEC *inside your* co-op

Exploring southeast Oklahoma

Veterinary services support animal-focused agritourism

As a state deeply rooted in agriculture, Oklahoma boasts a robust agritourism industry. From sprawling farms and ranches to interactive experiences with animals, the red dirt state offers a wide variety of agriculture-based attractions that cater to all interests. Explore farmers markets, pick fresh produce at one of the state's many orchards, take the kids to a pumpkin patch or corn maze, or enjoy a farm-to-table dining experience.

In coming months, we will highlight agritourism opportunities on Choctaw Electric lines.

This month, we take a look at one of the most popular facets of agritourism in Oklahoma—animals. The southeast region features numerous activities for animal enthusiasts: trail rides through picturesque landscapes, visits to working ranches, and interactive petting farms, to name a few. These experiences not only offer entertainment but also serve as educational opportunities.

Integral to the success of animal-centric agritourism is the presence of dedicated services that support the well-being of those animals. Nashoba Valley Veterinary Services, located in Nashoba, Oklahoma, is a prime example. The only vet clinic in Pushmataha County, NVVS opened a year ago, under the leadership of Dr. Rebecca Beasley and her husband, office manager Miles Beasley.

Rebecca has always loved working with animals. Her interest in a veterinary career was piqued when she participated in a Choctaw Nation summer work program.

"I found a veterinary clinic that was willing to let me work with them for the summer. After that, I knew I wanted to be a vet," she says.

After high school, she went into the Army and attended Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine, graduating in 2009.

Miles retired from the Marine Corps in 2018, after 21 years of service. During his time on active duty, he earned an MBA.

Together the Beasleys and their two employees ensure animals receive top-notch care. NVVS operates under the motto, "Helping you take care of your animals like the hero they think you are." Their comprehensive services for small and large animals include preventive care, diagnostics, dermatology, dental care, soft tissue surgery, emergency care, health certificates, and an in-house diagnostic lab.

Visit <https://nashobavet.com> or call (918) 755-4040 to learn more. 🐾

Below: Dr. Rebecca Beasley poses with a client. Photo courtesy NVVS



Visit www.oklahomaagritourism.com to find agritourism experiences near you.

MANAGER'S REPORT



Cooperative Principle #1 Open and Voluntary Membership

BY KOONEY DUNCAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Did you know that Choctaw Electric operates according to a different model than most businesses? Cooperatives around the world, including CEC, are guided by the same set of core principles and values. We call them the Seven Cooperative Principles. Adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance, we can trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

This month, we begin a series in which we will take a deeper look at the Seven Cooperative Principles. They are the reason electric

cooperatives operate differently from for-profit electric utilities, putting the needs of our members first. We like to call this the “Cooperative Difference.”

For 82 years, the Seven Cooperative Principles have served as a compass to guide Choctaw Electric. As we explore them, we find CEC’s commitment to the principles has not only defined our identity but has

been key to our ongoing success.

The first of the seven principles is “Open and Voluntary Membership.” This principle emphasizes cooperatives’ inclusivity, welcoming individuals from all walks of life to join, regardless of factors such as race, religion, gender, or economic circumstances. This ethos of openness ensures that those who can benefit from our services have the

opportunity to become members, fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility.

By embracing Open and Voluntary Membership, Choctaw Electric prioritizes the needs of our diverse membership above all else.

In the forthcoming monthly articles, we will

explore the remaining principles. I hope you’ll join me on this journey as we witness how our founding principles continue to guide Choctaw Electric Cooperative and contribute to the co-op’s, strength, resilience and member-focused success. ✎

“By embracing Open and Voluntary Membership, Choctaw Electric prioritizes the needs of our diverse membership above all else.”

Choctaw Electric Cooperative

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

Monday-Friday • 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

HUGO OFFICE

PO Box 758
1033 N. 4250 Road
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

On the Web:

www.choctawelectric.net



24 Hour Outage Hotline
800-780-6486

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Brent Franks, *President*

Jarred Campbell, *Vice President*

Perry Thompson, Jr., *Secretary Treasurer*

Bill Woolsey	Debbie Cody
Jana Burris	Ken Autry
Stacy Nichols	Jackson Ferguson

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Kooney Duncan, *Chief Executive Officer*

Tanya Roebuck, *Executive Assistant/
HR & Benefits*

Jia Johnson, *Director of Public Relations*

Lucky Acct #27754400 If this is your account number, please contact CEC by the 5th of the month to claim your **\$25 bill credit**. Unclaimed bill credits roll over each month by \$25 for a maximum credit of \$100. To claim your credit, please call 800-780-6486, ext. 241.

A guide to the electric grid

Learn how electricity reaches your home or business

Electricity plays an essential role in everyday life. It powers our homes, offices, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter (and cool in the summer), charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings when we're starting our day, and in the evenings when we're cooking dinner and using appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. So, to make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure that span the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

The journey of electricity begins at power plants. Power plants can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources, like natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

Choctaw Electric receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) co-op, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative. We work closely with WFEC to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your co-op, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community.

To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system. High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you—to power everyday life.

We're proud to be your local, trusted energy provider. From the time it's created to the time it's used, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That's what makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine—and one of our nation's greatest achievements. ⚡

HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU



step 1
Generation
Electricity is generated from various sources.



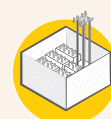
step 2
Step-Up Transformer
Voltage is increased to push the electricity over long distances.



step 3
Transmission Power Lines
Lines carry electricity over long distances.



step 4
Transmission Substation
Voltage is lowered so electricity can travel across the local system.



step 5
Distribution Substation
Voltage is lowered further for safe distribution.



step 6
Distribution Power Lines
Electricity travels across these lines in your community.



step 7
Final Stop
A transformer reduces voltage a final time, and electricity is sent to your home.



Amp up your generator safety

Six reminders for safe generator use

Generators provide a valuable source of electricity during power outages. While they are incredibly useful, it is crucial to prioritize safety to prevent accidents and ensure a secure environment for you and your family. Here's a comprehensive guide to using generators safely.

⚡ Outdoor Operation

Always operate generators outdoors to avoid the buildup of harmful gases such as carbon monoxide. Generators emit exhaust fumes that can be lethal if confined spaces, like indoor areas, lack proper ventilation. Choose an open, well-ventilated location away from windows, doors, and vents.

⚡ Carbon Monoxide Monitoring

Install a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm near sleeping areas to detect any potential gas hazards. Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless, making it imperative to rely on detectors for warnings.

⚡ Dry Conditions

Ensure the generator remains dry during operation. Avoid using it in rainy or wet conditions, and never touch the generator with wet hands.

Operate it on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure to shield it from moisture.

⚡ Proper Wiring Practices

When connecting appliances to the generator, either plug them directly into the unit or use a heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cord. The cord should have a watt or amp rating equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Inspect the entire cord for cuts or tears and ensure the plug has all three prongs, including an earthing pin.

⚡ Backfeeding Risks

One of the most dangerous practices is backfeeding—attempting to power your home's wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet. This not only poses a severe electrocution risk to utility workers and neighbors but also bypasses built-in household circuit protection devices.

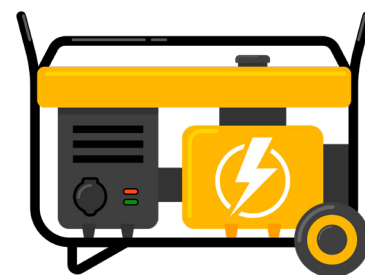
Always keep generator power and home electric systems isolated from each other. Safely connect portable generators directly to appliances or equipment through power supply cords. Ensure there is no path back to the electrical panel.

If utilizing a permanent generator, install a changeover switch between the generator and electric panel to allow power from only one source at a time. A licensed electrician must handle the installation for proper isolation.

⚡ Fuel Safety

Store generator fuel in properly labeled, non-glass safety containers, located outside the home. Keep these containers away from fuel-burning appliances, such as natural gas water heaters in garages. When refueling the generator, turn it off and allow it to cool down. This precaution prevents fuel spills on hot engine parts from igniting.

For more information, or safety questions, call 800-780-6485, ext. 227. ☎



Leave heat on during winter travel

If you are traveling during the winter months, be sure to leave the heat on at home. Don't forget about vacation homes, even those vacant for a short time period. You might be tempted to turn the heat off completely, in an effort to conserve energy and save money, but you could also be setting yourself up for a burst pipe.

When the water inside your pipes freezes, it puts pressure on its container—including metal and

plastic pipes. When that happens, the pipes can leak or explode, causing a flood and extensive damage to your home

To keep your pipes from freezing, do not expose them to freezing temperatures. Keep the thermostat at 55 degrees or higher in all areas of your home and vacation home. In parts of your house without heat, like exterior walls and attics, add insulation around pipes to keep them warm all winter long. ❄

ENERGY CAMP

Deadline is Friday, March 1

Eighth graders: Apply now at <https://choctawelectric.net/energy-camp>

