

Blown Away

Storms in May pack a powerful punch.

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Dates To Remember

Bylaw proposals, candidate filing, and the CEC Annual Meeting.

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Meetings Of Yesteryear

Elvis Presley shook the world with rock and roll, but electricity changed lives.

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For members of **Choctaw Electric Cooperative**

JUNE 2020

80^{YEARS} CEC *inside your* co-op



Tools for Schools

CEC Helps Kids Learn Energy Basics

Science-packed presentations for schools make learning about energy concepts fun

Summer will find public school students in southeast Oklahoma returning to class to make up for lost time due to the Covid-19 shutdown. As schools reconvene, Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) encourages teachers to take advantage of its Tools for Schools.

Tools for Schools includes courses for elementary and middle schools. Each module uses interactive aids and experiments to teach kids about energy. From energy production and delivery, renewables, energy conservation, and electrical safety, each presentation can be customized to meet classroom needs. The classes are free, and include learning materials and instructors.

Supporting local youth through programs such as Tools for Schools, Youth Tour, and YouthPower Energy Camp are several ways CEC honors its commitment to local communities. For more details, please visit www.choctawelectric.coop, or give us a call at 800-780-6486, ext. 209.



CEC's Brad Kendrick supervises an experiment in renewable energy for students at Broken Bow Middle School.

Four Customized Science Modules

► **Danger Ranger.**

Teaches elementary school students the importance of electrical safety. The curriculum uses video games to make learning about electrical safety entertaining and fun.

► **Get Powered!**

This course for middle schools uses information, experiments, and activities to teach students the many forms

of energy, how to use it efficiently, and how wise energy use helps the environment.

► **Watt's Up With Green?**

Teaches students about different forms of energy, how to use energy efficiently, and how wise energy use helps the environment.

► **Go ECO.** This class teaches students about alternative energy, including nuclear and

bio-mass power. The transfer of electric current is covered from kinetic to mechanical energy, with a wide range of hands-on tools to help students understand how electricity is generated, transmitted, and delivered to consumers. Students also learn how to be safe around electricity inside and outside the home.

Find more details at www.choctawelectric.coop.

MANAGER'S REPORT



Blown Away

Spring storms serve as important reminders

BY KOONEY DUNCAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

While the Covid-19 pandemic has forced a lot of changes on all of us, the weather in April and May reminds us that some things remain the same. For instance, springtime in Oklahoma brings storms. We may not know precisely when, where, or how severe the storms will be, but they will arrive, sure enough.



Uprooted trees and tangled power lines affected over 7,000 CEC members following the May 8 storm.

Our first spring howler blew in on April 28, packing an EF-1 tornado. High winds and lightning damaged 26 power poles and left more than 2,000 co-op members without power. Working as quickly and safely as possible, our crews managed to restore power to everyone by 5:30 pm on April 30. Just in time for Howler #2.

Mother Nature's encore performance took the stage on May 8. Over 7,000 CEC members lost power. Fortunately, no one was injured in the storm, but several buildings sustained serious damages, along with 67 power poles, and several miles of line.

Due to the extensive damage, CEC issued a call for assistance, and contract crews from Oklahoma City responded. Their willingness to travel

during the pandemic, and then work long hours in hazardous conditions will not be forgotten. By May 10, CEC's system was fully up and running.

While major power outages are uncomfortable for all involved, they often force us to focus on what matters most—staying safe, staying alive, and staying positive. Despite the discomfort and inconvenience, CEC members managed to put aside their own grievances to convey sincere gratitude and concern for their co-op employees. Our crews worked their tails off. During a crisis, these kind gestures work wonders for our team morale. Thank you, members, for your support. We are privileged to serve you.

Lucky Acct #215400(\$75)

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, 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.



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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Local: (580) 326-6486
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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.coop



24 Hour Outage Hotline

800-780-6486

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Stuck At Home?

Watch Your Energy Use

With many people staying home to avoid the spread of Covid-19, don't be surprised if you notice an increase in your electricity use.

During periods of higher-than-usual indoor activity, it's normal for usage to spike. The increased use of computers, lights, TVs, game consoles, and other electrical devices adds up quickly.

The antidote: Follow common-sense conservation practices to keep energy use in check.

- Delay turning on the a/c by opening windows and running ceiling fans.
- When you do switch on the a/c, keep it at the highest comfortable temperature. For every degree higher you set the thermostat, you cut your energy use by up to four percent.
- Insist that everyone turn off the lights and the TV when leaving a room; disconnect the computer and printer at the end of the day; and unplug phone chargers and other unused devices. They continue to draw electricity and add to your bill.
- Clean the a/c filter every month. A clean filter lets air flow easily so your unit runs efficiently.

Remember, if you are struggling to pay your electricity bill, please let CEC help you. We can help you avoid bad credit and mounting debt. Please call 800-780-6486.

DATES WORTH REMEMBERING

- ▶ **June 29** | Bylaw revisions due at CEC Hugo. Attorney opinion due 30 days upon receipt of proposed amendment.
- ▶ **July 28** | Candidate filing for Dist. A, B, C, and G due by 5 pm at CEC Hugo.
- ▶ **August 12** | Revisions of proposed bylaw amendments due at CEC Hugo.
- ▶ **August 27** | CEC voter packets and mail-in ballots mailed to members. Mail-in ballots due by September 26.
- ▶ **September 26** | CEC Annual Meeting, McCurtain Co. Fairgrounds, Idabel

THE HOME Energy DETECTIVE

By Brad Kendrick, CEC Energy Use Specialist

You May Not Change, But Your Appliances Do



Often, I hear members say, "I haven't changed a thing, so why is my bill so high?" Just last month,

a member called me regarding a high bill. I reviewed their hourly usage in detail and noted when it began to climb. Could they be having water heater problems? They said "no," so I asked them to turn off the water heater overnight, and we would see if their usage changed. It made a drastic drop!

Water heaters may operate less efficiently due to faulty elements or thermostats. We may not change our energy use habits, but our appliances may operate less efficiently as they age. Have your appliances checked and maintained regularly. It will help them last longer— and help you avoid skyrocketing bills.



Do you have questions for CEC's energy sleuth? Please call Brad Kendrick, CEC energy use specialist, at **800-780-6486**, or email questions to: bakendrick@choctawelectric.coop.



2020 CEC Annual Meeting

Vendor Booth Reservation Form

Saturday, September 26 • McCurtain Co. Fairgrounds • Idabel

Organization _____

Contact person _____

Daytime Telephone _____

Mailing Address _____

Products to be displayed/sold _____

Number of booth spaces _____

Note: Booth spaces are available first come, first serve. Vendors must bring their own tables, chairs and electrical cords.

Deadline to reserve booth: September 18, 2020

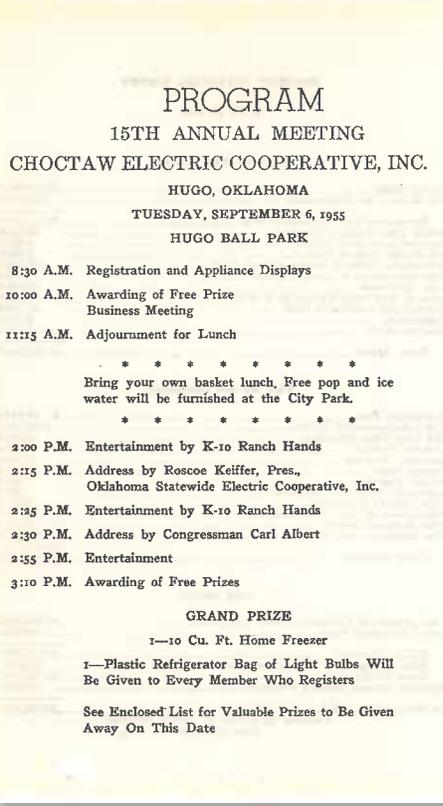
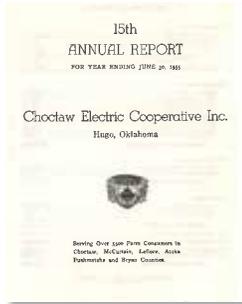
Please send booth reservation form to:

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



A GLANCE BACK

Meetings of Yesteryear



In 1955, Elvis Presley shook up the country with his hip-yrating rock and roll, the first McDonald's opened for business, and minimum wage for U.S. workers rose to \$1 per hour. While much has changed since then, there's one thing co-op members can count on: Choctaw Electric Cooperative will conduct its annual business meeting in September, and yes, there will be prizes!

At the 1955 CEC Annual Meeting, the grand prize home freezer revealed how drastically life had changed along the back roads of southeast Oklahoma. Since incorporating in 1940, co-op power lines had connected 5,500 households. With electricity came convenience, indoor plumbing, hot and cold running water, and ice cold pop.



How Can We Better Serve You?

Your electric cooperative welcomes member input. How can we meet your needs as a member, improve our co-op services, or help our local communities grow stronger?

Please email your suggestions and ideas to customer.service@choctawelectric.coop.

Thank you for getting involved!

Better Ways to Pay

Fast & Easy • Safe & Secure



People have enough on their minds these days so paying bills should be as easy and convenient as possible. Choctaw Electric offers a variety of payment options to suit your lifestyle:

■ **Pay Online.** Log on to www.choctawelectric.coop to pay your bill via CEC's Smarthub. Pay using a credit card, debit card, or e-check.

■ **Prepaid.** The perfect payment option for members who prefer the prepaid advantage. CEC's prepaid program lets you pay for electricity in advance and alerts you via email, text or telephone message when your balance is getting low. Another benefit: No late fees!

■ **Smarthub App.** Pay via smart phone, iPad or tablet using CEC's Smarthub mobile app. Download the free app for your Android or iPhone.

■ **Pay By Phone:** Pay your bill 24 hours a day, seven days a week using American Express, Discover, VISA or Mastercard by calling **800-780-6486**. Please have your account number handy when you call.

■ **Bank Draft.** Enroll in CEC's automatic bill payment plan and your bill is paid on time every month via automatic draft of your checking or saving account or credit/debit card. You will receive a paper statement for your records.

■ **Budget Billing:** If your bill fluctuates due to summer cooling and winter heating costs, CEC's average monthly payment plan is for you. This plan averages your usage over the year so your monthly bill is more predictable.

■ **Pay In Person:** Pay your bill around the clock using the payment dropbox located at CEC office locations in Hugo, Antlers and Idabel, or choose one of our convenient PaySite kiosks located at the following locations:

- ▶ **Choctaw Trave Plaza, Atoka,** Antlers, Broken Bow, Hugo, and Idabel. OPEN 24 HRS/7 DAYS A WEEK.
- ▶ **Pruett's Food, Atoka** MON-SAT, 7 AM - 9 PM; SUN, 8 AM-7 PM.