

PowerLines

YOUR CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS CONNECTION

**Central Electric
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative 

“WATTS” INSIDE

- 3 Are you Interested in a CEC’s Director Seat?
- 3 2024 Christmas Lights Contest Winners
- 4 Space Heater Safety
- 4 Employee Spotlight
- 5 ESCHEATS and Programs
- 6 Secondary Heat Source Efficiency
- 6 Good Neighbor Scholarship Applications are Open
- 7 Energy Explorers
- 8 Shepard’s Pie Recipe

Stay on Target

BY MATT BOSHAW
CEO & General Manager

For many of us, the Star Wars movies have a special place in our pop culture lexicon. We never miss an opportunity to quote, “These are not the droids you are looking for,” “I am your father,” or “the force is strong in my family.” So, when the opportunity arises for me to use an obscure Star Wars reference to reinforce the importance of safety, I jump at it.

In a pivotal scene from the original Star Wars series, in Episode IV: A New Hope, rebels are attacking the Death Star. Before the hero successfully blows up the Death Star (sorry for the 47-year-old spoiler), another group of rebel pilots make their attempt. As the enemy takes position behind the would-be heroes, one of the escorting fighters continually reminds the shooter to “stay on target.” He repeats it several times and with such urgency that his partner tells him to loosen up. The loosen up response is followed almost immediately by the pilot being blown up and the shooter missing his target.

This pop culture reference is a perfect analogy for the need to stay on target regarding safety. As soon as it was suggested that the pilot should “loosen up,” disaster occurred, and the mission

failed. As is often the case when a short-cut is taken, or our emphasis on safety is neglected, something bad happens and our work is left incomplete.

It’s easy to repeat cliché’s reminding people of the importance of working safely but hope is not an action plan. So, how can we actually help employees work more safely? Of course, it all starts with preparation — success does not happen by accident. Here at CEC, that preparation includes training programs designed to improve employees’ knowledge and skills so that they can demonstrate their abilities to perform their jobs safely. Then comes providing the right tools, equipment, and personal protective gear to ensure tasks can be performed safely and efficiently. To reinforce this, we offer regular oversight and feedback to encourage continual improvement and share information on the best practices.

All of this can still fall short if everyone involved is not committed to their own safety and that of those around them. I have often stated that safety is personal because it has to be. It begins with each of us finding our motivation. It has been my experience that people are not motivated by being told what to do. Each employee needs to have their own reason why working

Continued on page 2

safely is important to them. There are no bad reasons to work safely but I would say the biggest motivators are often the other people in our lives that count on us. Family and friends bring far more influence than any supervisor or trainer ever could. These personal motivators also help extend the attitude of safety beyond the workplace. Injuries and accidents off the job can be equally devastating to families and will also result in employees not being able to perform their work.

This all brings us back to the idea that safety is personal because it has to be. We are each responsible for our own safety and holding ourselves and those around us accountable to work safely. So, when you find yourself about to tell someone to loosen up, fight that urge and stay on target. You might not be saving the entire universe, but you may be someone’s universe that needs to be saved. Be happy, be healthy, be better, and yes, STAY ON TARGET! (and may the Force be with you!)




CEC Contractor, Osmose Utilities Services, Inc., is estimated to begin pole inspections in April. Work will be conducted in the areas surrounding the Karns City and Rockland Substations. This project will last throughout the year.

CEC members and others with CEC’s utility poles on their property may see these inspections being conducted. CEC appreciates your patience and cooperation during these improvements.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Matthew P. Boshaw** | *CEO & General Manager*
- Chester Conti** | *Director of Finance and Accounting/CFO*
- Lisa A. Hoover** | *Director of Member Services*
- Christopher W. Kossman** | *Director of Information Technology*
- Fred E. Terwilliger** | *Assistant General Manager/COO*

SPACE HEATER SAFETY TIPS

-  Heaters should be placed on level surfaces.
-  Check heater cords for any damage or fraying.
-  Avoid using an extension cord to power the heater.



GOOD NEIGHBOR SCHOLARSHIP

Available to members enrolled in a college or trade school.

APPLY BY MARCH 14



Central Electric Cooperative

For More Information:
800-521-0570
www.central.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Are You Interested in a CEC Director's Seat?

As a member, you have a voice in who serves on CEC's eight-member Board of Directors. Every year, members elect two directors for a four-year term. Director seats are divided among the counties in which the cooperative serves. This year, resident members from Clarion and Venango counties are invited to run for these two seats. To be eligible for nomination, you must be a CEC member in good standing, have a permanent residence in that county, and meet other qualifications required by CEC's bylaws.

If you are interested in running for the board, you must return the below coupon or complete the online form by April 1. You will then receive a qualifications list, nominating petition (that must be signed by 20 CEC members), prospective director questionnaire, and authorization form for a criminal background check. You must complete all of these items and return them to CEC's nominating committee by April 15 to be eligible to run for CEC's Board of Directors.

After the cooperative confirms your eligibility, you will attend an orientation meeting and meet with the nominating committee for an interview. The committee then submits a list of the eligible candidates for placement on the ballot.

Nominee names, along with a photo, and background

information, are presented in the July issue of Power Lines. Cooperative members will vote by mail or internet prior to the annual meeting, or vote by paper ballot on the day of the meeting, Aug. 6, 2025, prior to the meeting's commencement. Election results will be announced prior to adjournment. Visit www.central.coop for more information about running for the board.

Your board of directors has appointed a nominating committee to review prospective candidates interested in running for CEC director. Committee members are:

Armstrong County
Harvey W. Loose
East Brady

Forest County
Dennis Lamb
Tionesta

Butler County
Joe Gibson
Parker

Venango County
Carl E. Gadsby
Grove City

Angela Bernardo
Butler

Ron Paranick
Cranberry

Clarion County
James M. Reed
Fryburg

Randy Tharan
Knox

If you are interested in being considered as a director nominee, please complete this coupon and return it by April 1, 2025 to: Central Electric Cooperative, Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 329, 716 Route 368, Parker, PA 16049.

Once you submit this ticket, you will be sent a qualifications list and petition requirements for being a director nominee to CEC's Board of Directors.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

County: _____ Account #: _____



Congratulations to the 2024 Christmas Lights Contest Winners!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2024 Christmas Lights Contest! With the help of 5,973 votes, the three winners have been chosen. First place received a \$500 bill credit and \$500 donation to a charity of their choice. Second place received a \$250 bill credit and third place received a \$100 bill credit! Videos and pictures of each display can be found on our website.

First Place:

Deborah Boyles of Venus
"Winter Wonder"

Second Place:

Justine Bifano of Knox
"Kids Crazy Christmas"

Third Place:

Valerie and Thomas Snyder of Parker
"Festive Illumination"



Space Heater Safety

by Grant Potsabay, Administrator of Safety and Loss Control

The winter season is now upon us, bringing colder temperatures and more time spent indoors. It's only natural to rely on multiple heating sources to keep warm and comfortable. However, it's important to be aware of the potential risks that come with using heating equipment such as space heaters and portable electric heaters.

Did you know that auxiliary heating sources are the second leading cause of home fires? In recent years, heating equipment was the cause of 62,200 reported U.S. home fires, resulting in 670 deaths, 1,550 injuries and \$909 million in property damage. Nearly half of all home heating fires occur in January, February, and December. Portable space heaters are responsible for almost one-third of all home heating fires and three-fourths of all heating-related fatalities. The main cause of these fires is placing heating equipment too close to combustible items, such as furniture, rugs, clothing, window treatments, mattresses and bedding.

Let's talk about fire prevention both at work and at home. If you utilize a portable space heater this winter, ensure you follow these safety tips. Keep heaters at least three feet away from anything that can catch fire, such as drapes, furniture, or other flammable materials. Always place the heater on a level surface, away from high traffic areas, to avoid knocking it over.

Never use an extension cord to power a space heater. It should be plugged directly into a GFCI outlet, unless otherwise specified by the manufacturer. Never leave a space heater running unattended, especially while you sleep. If you leave or go to sleep, remember to turn off the unit. Keep electric heaters away from water, and never use them near a sink, pipes or in the bathroom.

As we embrace the necessity of heating equipment this winter, be mindful of the significant risks associated with space heaters and similar devices. The statistics are alarming, with home heating equipment responsible for thousands of fires and fatalities each year. By following safety measures such as placing your heating unit on a flat surface, away from foot traffic, and never leaving them unattended, we can significantly reduce the risk of fires. Practicing vigilance and responsibility when using these devices not only protects your home but also helps to keep you and your loved ones safe.



Role: Communication Supervisor
Employee Since: April 2023

Employee Spotlight: Nikki Staley



What is something you are most proud of? My son, Davis. He is the most incredible human.



What is one thing on your bucket list? Traveling far and wide. I would love to see all the wonders of the world and go on a ruined castle tour through Europe.



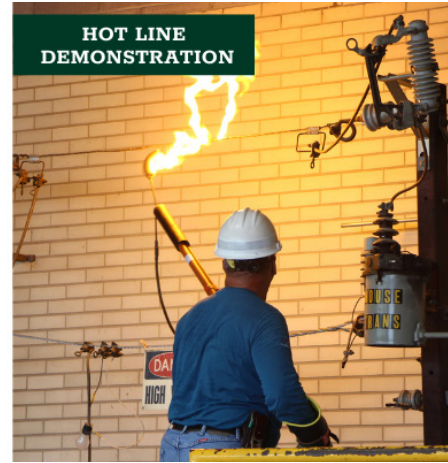
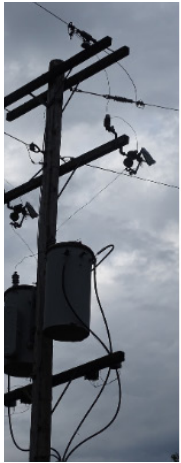
What do you enjoy doing outside of work/what is one of your hobbies? I love being outdoors, riding horses, camping, boating, and water skiing.



What was your first job? I was a lifeguard at the Sligo Pool throughout high school... and sometimes wish I could go back :)



Do you have any pets? I have a dog named Cutler, he is the sweetest boy, a cat named Taco, he is misunderstood, and two horses named Daisy and Forrest.



Escheats Funds and Community Programs

by Izzy Cellucci, Communication Representative

Being a member of a cooperative means more than just reliable service. It is about becoming part of a community-focused organization that puts your needs first. As a member-owner, you have a say in decisions, access to top-quality services, and profits are reinvested. When I say profits are reinvested, I am referring to capital credits. Any revenues related to electric service sales, after expenses are paid, become capital credits, and are returned to members' accounts. Each year, CEC tracks the amount owed to each member, and the board of directors evaluates the co-op's financial status. Based on this evaluation, capital credits will be declared retired, and the capital credits are returned to members.

CEC seeks out members who are due capital credits, even if they are no longer in our service territory, but what happens to the ones that are not claimed? Unclaimed capital credits are retained for three years, if they are not claimed in that time, they are used to fund energy assistance, educational, and civic programs. Pennsylvania legislation passed an act in 2006 that allows electric cooperatives to use unclaimed property for these projects and keep the funds in the community rather than being sent to the state treasury. Unclaimed property has become known as escheats funds at CEC.

CEC developed programs that benefit the many communities we serve because of the available escheats funds. The escheats funds are the main contributors to energy assistance programs, putting nearly half of the unclaimed capital credits towards programs such as the Family Fund and Hardship Grant. CEC Family Fund is a seasonal assistance program funded by unclaimed capital

credit dollars and donations from members. The CEC Hardship Grant exists to help members suffering a hardship that prevents them from paying their electricity bill.

The escheats fund is used for educational programs including our hot line demonstration, Youth Tour, and Good Neighbor Scholarship. Our hotline demonstration provides a visual of electrical safety near high voltage distribution lines. For high school juniors living in our service area, unclaimed capital credits fund Youth Tour. It is a free, week-long trip to Washington, D.C. filled with fun, learning, and sightseeing. These funds also support the Good Neighbor Scholarship Program, which awards scholarships to members or their children who want to further their education at a college or trade school.

CEC's Employee Directed Giving Program is part of the escheats fund's civic contributions. It offers employees the chance to designate an annual \$500 donation to a local community service organization. Additionally, dollars from the escheats fund provides for community projects approved by the board. In the past, escheats have funded equipment for nonprofit organizations, such as local YMCA branches and Volunteer Fire Departments, to support their operations and initiatives.

One of the seven cooperative principles we live by is "Concern for Community." Even when funds cannot be directly returned to members, they are used to support the communities we serve, benefiting them through our programs and services. If you are interested in learning more about capital credits and how escheats funds are used, call us at 800-521-0570 or visit our website at central.coop/capital-credits.



Secondary Heat Source Efficiency

by Connie Long, Member Energy Specialist

If you are like me, you do not like to be cold. With that being said, I also do not like high electric bills. Sometimes the combination can put us in a difficult situation — do I want to be nice and toasty or save money? Let's talk about some ways to stay warm while keeping our usage low when we need that extra warmth.

While our furnaces are always the first and best option for a heat source remember to change the filter for optimal efficiency. However, when the furnace isn't providing enough warmth, we often turn to other heating options. Thankfully, technology has made additional heat sources more accessible than ever, such as space heaters, heated blankets, heated clothing, rechargeable hand warmers, the list goes on and is always growing.

When it comes to space heaters, keep in mind that they are designed for targeted heating, this means they are to be used to heat a room, not a whole home. There are two main types of space heaters: infrared and convection. Now, what is the difference between them? Infrared heaters are for heating objects directly in their path, rather than heating a whole room, while convection heaters circulate the warm air throughout a larger area. Space heaters are known for being energy efficient, or so

we are told anyways. There is often a misunderstanding in that statement. Space heaters are highly efficient in energy conversion, meaning nearly all energy consumed is converted to heat. However, depending on how long the space heater is running, it can significantly increase electric usage and costs. Did you know that running a 1,500-watt space heater for only 8 hours a day can use around twelve kilowatts or more? That adds up over the course of 30 days.

Now onto the smaller items like heated blankets, clothing, and hand warmers. A standard heated blanket can use up to 150-watts, which means running a blanket for 8 hours a day can use around 1.5 kilowatts. As for heated clothing and rechargeable hand warmers, varying from item to item, most of the power banks use between 10-20 watts per hour or more depending on the size. The usage for these items is low, using around 0.1-0.2 kilowatts in an 8-hour period.

When choosing additional heat sources, keep in mind how much electricity they use and how that will affect your monthly bill.



Good Neighbor Scholarship Applications Are Open!

One of the best investments a community can make is in education. Each spring, CEC awards scholarships to graduating seniors or adults going back to school who live at a residence receiving electricity from the co-op. CEC will award 10 scholarships of \$2,500 in 2025.

Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution, complete the application on our website, and submit a 500-word essay. The funds used for these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credits and does not impact members' rates in any way. Employees and directors of CEC, along with members of their immediate families, are ineligible. Visit central.coop/good-neighbor-scholarship to apply!

www.central.coop



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COLLEGE & TECH/ VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Our scholarships are open to students going to college, students going to a tech/vocational school and adults returning to school.



\$25,000 GIVEN YEARLY

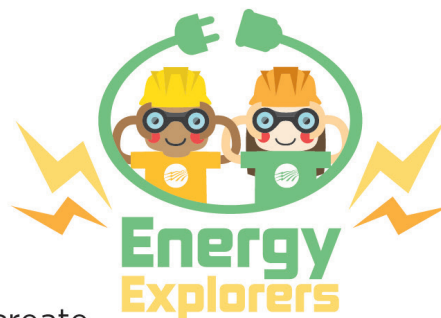
We award approximately \$25,000 in scholarships each year to students within our service territory.



APPLY NOW!

Applications are open now on our website. The deadline to apply is **March 14, 2025**.

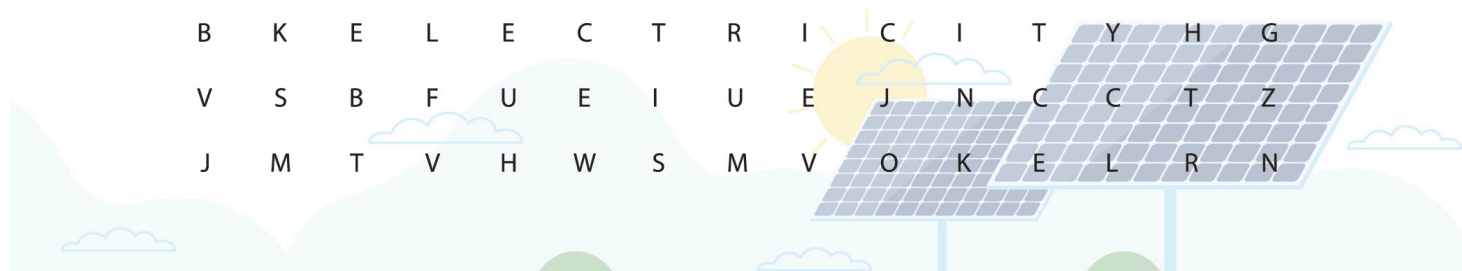
HOW SOLAR PANELS WORK WORD SEARCH



Did you know energy from the sun can be used to create electricity? Read the following information about how solar panels work, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.

Solar panels contain **photovoltaic** cells that convert sunlight into **electricity**.
 Sunlight hits the **solar** panels and generates a direct current.
 The direct **current** flows to an inverter, which converts it to an alternating current.
 (This is the kind of electricity we use in our homes.)
 The alternating current flows from the **inverter** to the home's breaker box, where it's used to **power** appliances and electrical devices in your home.
 If the solar **panels** generate more **electricity** than the home needs, the unused electricity is sent back to the power lines.

T	N	B	S	T	T	G	Z	O	V	S	U	Y	V	K
P	H	Y	I	C	T	N	H	Z	O	V	K	W	Z	A
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G	H	T	Q	Y	N	P	A	R	F	N	R	C	A	E
R	X	O	D	W	G	R	Q	W	R	B	Z	S	U	T
S	P	K	T	X	D	S	T	O	Y	U	T	U	Q	R
V	O	U	U	O	S	L	E	N	A	P	C	Y	S	E
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J	M	T	V	H	W	S	M	V	O	K	E	L	R	N



From the Kitchen of:
Jim Merkel

RECIPE: **SHEPARD'S PIE**



INGREDIENTS:

8 medium potatoes	1 chopped onion
2 lbs. ground beef	salt & pepper to taste
1 egg	1/4 c. butter (1/2 stick)
2 1/2 c. milk	
1/2 package of frozen peas	
1 can cream corn (14.75 oz.)	
1 c. shredded cheddar cheese	

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Brown ground beef and onion, pour off grease. Remove from heat.
2. Place cubed potatoes in a separate saucepan. Add cold water to pan until potatoes are covered by at least 1 inch. Add 1/2 tsp. of salt to water. Bring water to a boil, reduce heat to low, and cover. Cook for 15-20 min, or until potatoes are fork tender. Drain potatoes. Add milk and butter, then mash together. Mix in egg, peas, seasonings and 1/2 c. of cheese.
3. Evenly spread entire beef mixture into 14x9 baking dish. Spread half of potato mixture on top, then add half of creamed corn on top of that. Repeat.
4. Sprinkle remaining cheese over dish, cover with foil and bake at 350° for 30 min. Uncover and bake for another 15 min. Serves 4 to 6 people. Enjoy!

Send your own recipe to:

Izzy Cellucci; icellucci@central.coop or mail to P.O. Box 329, Parker, PA 16049



Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Your Board of Directors

From left (back row): Robert Smith, President, Butler County; Jody Weaver, Vice President, Clarion County; Kenneth Durrett, Butler County; Richard Weaver, Clarion County; **(front)** Ken Etzel, Venango County; Althea Smith, Secretary/Treasurer, Venango County; and Nancy Lendyak, Armstrong County.

 central.coop/meet-your-directors

MISSION: CEC safely provides reliable and competitively priced electricity to our consumer-members and was established by and is committed to the communities we serve.

716 Route 368, P.O. Box 329, Parker PA 16049

Member Services: 800-521-0570

Outages: 800-282-8610

Newsletter Editor: Izzy Cellucci

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



**ON THE GO AND
IN CONTROL.**

MANAGE

your account

REPORT

service issues

VIEW AND PAY

your bill

RECEIVE

key notices

MONITOR

usage 24/7

*...all in the palm of your
hand and online.*



Missed an issue?

Catch up at www.central.coop

Read past issues of Power Lines and stay up to date on CEC news.

