

**Inside  
Learn How to:**

Participate in One of Our Free, Safety Programs

Access Your Detailed Meter Data

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# PowerLines

Photo by Quentin Rey on Unsplash

## Spring Cleaning

*by Matthew Boshaw, CEO & General Manager*

Given the importance of safety here at Central Electric Cooperative (CEC), I like to make safety the focus of my article at least several times each year. In looking back at my most recent articles, I can’t help noticing that it has been about six months since that was the case. Too long. With that in mind, I would like to spend a few minutes talking about your safety as the weather breaks.

It is March and hopefully the frigid temperatures of January are a distant memory and, since I write this before Groundhog Day, I hope Phil saw no shadow. They say March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. In my house March comes in with weather too bad for me to do outdoor chores and goes out with me working in the yard. (So maybe the worst of all months.) We are all going to get out and start all of those spring rituals like planting gardens and cleaning

up our properties and homes. I just want to remind you the electric lines are still there and you should take extra care around them, especially after the harsh winter weather. Those facilities may have experienced damage that, although they did not result in a loss of power, may have created a hazardous condition. The ice, snow, and wind storm we experienced in late November 2018 can certainly have left debris that can lead to abnormal or dangerous conditions. The very good news is most electrical contact accidents can be easily avoided with minimal effort. If you are going to be digging call 1-800-242-1776 (or 8-1-1) and all utility companies will come mark the location of their underground facilities so you can avoid them. Believe it or not, that is the more difficult of the safety measures. When climbing ladders or doing any work that is above your head, simply

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## Spring Cleaning /From Page 1

look up and identify where the wires are. It might seem like common sense but the time between now and the last time you walked up that ladder makes it easy to forget some of the smallest steps. As always, treat any downed wire as live. Unlike in the movies, energized wires don't always jump around making noise and sparking. As a matter of fact, they are usually quiet and still. A good rule of thumb is if you can't see both ends of a wire, consider it live.

We offer tips in our monthly newsletter and on our website designed to educate, inform, and help to keep you safe around electrical hazards. CEC also offers an electric safety program we present to fourth and fifth grade classes throughout our service territory. (If you are interested in this program and would like more information, please contact us at 800-521-0570 or visit our website.)

This program is very well received and electric utilities all over the country provide similar presentations. This is a great time of year to schedule a presentation, as we are heading to the latter half of the school year and it can often coincide with an electricity lesson in the classroom.

I have had the good fortune to give the presentation many times in Illinois and Oregon, and am pleased we do it here, too. Sometimes we busy adults get complacent and don't pay attention to the excellent lessons illustrated in the presentation. You see, every accident depicted in the presentation has unfortunately happened

to someone. They are common activities that have led to accidents and injuries simply because the victim wasn't paying attention to the potential hazard of electrical contact. Whenever I give these presentations I start by reminding everyone of how great it is to have electricity available for everything we use it for, but also remind them it is only a good thing when used correctly and safely.

We also provide a First Responder Training specifically designed to educate and inform police, fire, and road crews about the dangers they might be exposed to, and how to mitigate them as the first to arrive on an accident scene. Last year nearly 80 first responders in our area participated and we are working now on this year's event.

The bottom line is we all work around electricity everyday so electrical safety is first, second, and third on our minds. For those who don't work with electricity every day, the employees of CEC want to remind you to put electrical safety at the top of your spring cleaning list. Please take advantage of the resources we offer to help keep you safe; be careful out there; and as always thank you for your support of your cooperative.

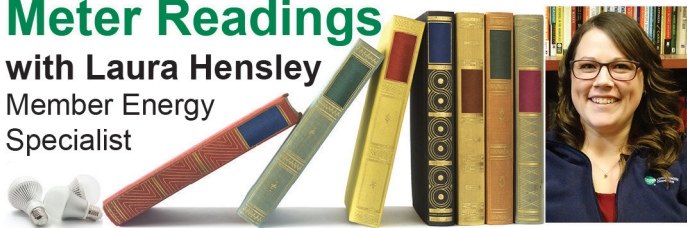
“The bottom line is we all work around electricity everyday so electrical safety is first, second, and third on our minds. For those who don't work with electricity every day, the employees of CEC want to remind you to put electrical safety at the top of your spring cleaning list. Please take advantage of the resources we offer to help keep you safe; be careful out there; and as always thank you for your support of your cooperative.”

Matt Boshaw, CEO &  
General Manager

## Meter Readings

with Laura Hensley

Member Energy  
Specialist



CEC offers a few ways to get details about your electric use. Our meters allow us to obtain daily meter readings. This means good things for you — the member. It means we do not estimate your usage for billing, you can access the daily (and hourly) data online, and you don't have to wait for the monthly bill to see how things are adding up.

So where can you see your detailed meter information?

- On your new bill. With the New Year came a new bill format. On the back of your new bill you can see the actual meter reading dates used to calculate your bill, your average usage per day based on actual daily meter readings, and the cost per day. You can also compare the current period to previous data.

## Your Electric Usage

- CEC's online account center — SmartHub. There is more to the online account center than viewing your bill and making payments. Visit the My Usage tab to see your meter data. The Usage Explorer will show you usage data over specified periods and even down to the hour. You can view by kWh usage and cost. Unbilled usage is also available for viewing. Visit [central.smarthub.coop](http://central.smarthub.coop) to sign up.

- SmartHub app: If you want a simplified, easy-to-access way to pay your bill and view your usage, download the SmartHub app. This is a great way to monitor your usage. The app comes in hand if your recent bills are higher than expected or you have made some changes, like heating and cooling methods, and want to see how your energy dollars are being spent. Get the app by searching "SmartHub" in your app store.

## Electrical Safety Programs

CEC is committed to raising awareness about electrical safety. Every year, thousands of accidents occur due to shock hazards. To reduce this number, we have dedicated a variety of electrical safety education programs. Our Safety City Demonstration is a no-cost, educational electrical safety demonstration for fourth and fifth grade students. The program offers students a fun, hands-on experience that can supplement the electric unit of your science program or provide value on its own.

Getting youth excited about electrical safety may seem hard, but eliminating electrical hazards begins with education and awareness. Our Safety City Demonstration helps take electrical safety from just words to real life examples. It teaches students to be aware of electrical hazards in our surroundings

and what steps to take to prevent being one of the hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries that occur each year because of electrical hazards.

Our Safety City Demonstration includes a summary of electrical concepts and a table top display showing common electrical safety accidents. Materials are also distributed to encourage students to take home what they learn.

The safety of all of our members and employees is our top priority, and through electrical safety awareness and education, we can prevent electrical hazards and injuries in the future. If you are interested in scheduling, or for more information, please contact us at 800-521-0570 or visit [www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop).

## 2018 CEC Year-End Report

In 2018, CEC continued providing safe, reliable electricity at a reasonable cost to its member-owners, was committed to the communities it serves, and dedicated to the Cooperative Difference.

### Member Benefits

Last year members received:

- \$1,654,656 in capital credits.
- 311 Energy Star appliance rebates totaling more than \$20,000.
- Assistance in paying electric bills. Through the generosity of its members, CEC's Family Fund helped 276 families in need pay electric bills during the heating season.

### Reliable Service

Reliability and timely power restoration continued to be areas of emphasis in 2018. The cooperative continues to maintain its lines. Last year CEC:

- Made major improvements across its territory.
- Replaced 900 porcelain fuse cutouts.
- Inspected 7,530 poles.
- Cleared 408 miles of rights-of-way.
- Trimmed 16,325 trees.
- Replaced 483 poles.

### Quality Service

New technologies again played a big part in member satisfaction. In 2018 CEC:

- Continued utilizing SmartHub, which provides convenient account access and two-way communication to members online or via mobile devices to manage payments, notify member

service representatives of account and service issues, check usage, and more.

- Increased electronic payment processing to half of all payments received. This is convenient for members and saves on processing costs.

### Rates

In 2018 CEC did not have a rate increase. CEC strives to keep rates reasonable for its members.

### Community

CEC continued its commitment to the communities it serves. In 2018 CEC:

- Sent five students on Youth Tour, where they made lifetime memories and learned about government and cooperatives.
- Awarded 10 students the Good Neighbor Scholarship of \$2,000 each.
- Donated \$19,000 to non-profit organizations through our Employee Directed Giving program.

### Annual Meeting of the Members

At the cooperative's 81st annual meeting, over 1,200 members and guests attended, and re-elected Nancy Lendyak, representing Armstrong County and William Eichner, representing Butler County to its board of directors. (Subsequent to the annual meeting and election, William Eichner passed away after a brief illness.) CEC encourages members to attend this year's 82nd Annual Meeting of the Members Friday, Aug. 23, 2019.

## Our 2019 Photo Contest is Coming!

Start thinking about which photo you will enter in our 2019 Photo Contest! Look for information on this contest in your April Power Lines newsletter.

# SAFETY MATTERS

## First Responders Electrical Hazards Training

CEC understands the importance of teaching electrical safety. The goal of our First Responders Electrical Hazards Training is to help first responders work safely in emergencies where electric utility lines are involved. Firefighters, police, EMTs, and others, who are typically first on the scene in an emergency, face the greatest risk from electrical contacts and fires. Understanding the potential dangers and learning how to deal with them correctly, makes everyone safer.

All first responders within Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Forest, Mercer, and Venango counties are invited to attend this training on April 4, 2019 at CEC headquarters in Parker. It will begin at 7 p.m. and end around 9 p.m. It will include a hotline demonstration and an electrical safety presentation. In addition to a wealth of knowledge, attendees will receive light refreshments and informational materials. All

materials and information provided are designed to supplement, not replace, your organization's standard operating procedures (SOPs).

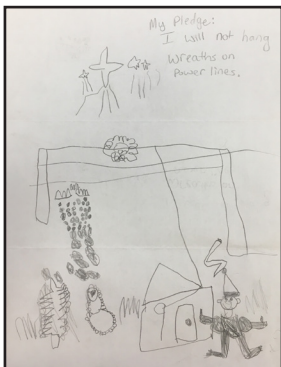
Space is limited, so please reserve your spot by calling Natalie Russell at 800-521-0570 x2208 before March 22, 2019. If you have any questions or requests, please contact Natalie. You are also welcome to submit your questions, for this training, in advance.

Together, we can save lives and prevent potentially hazardous electric-related situations.

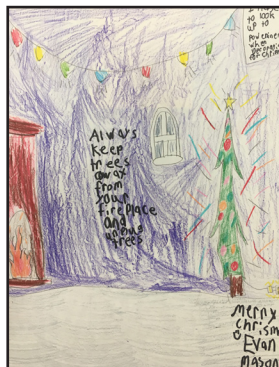
At CEC safety is everyone's responsibility. CEC's Don Cook (chief journeyman lineman) makes safety a top priority because his family is very important, he wants everyone to go home safe, and nothing is more important than another's life. Why do you?

**This training is dedicated to the memory of Mike Over,  
CEC Journeyman Lineman — gone but never forgotten.**

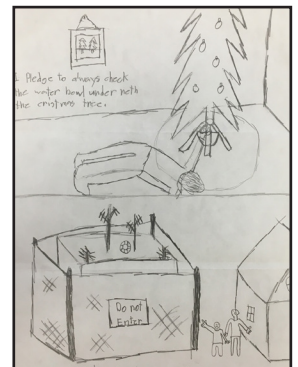
## Congratulations to Our 2018 Safety Pledge & Drawing Contest Winners!



Selah Dunmire, age 5, of Cowansville



Evan Mason, age 8, of Kennerdell



Mariner Perry, age 11, of Oil City

## Recipe of the Month

### Sloppy Joes

#### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1-1/4 pounds ground beef sirloin
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon beef flavoring
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped
- 2 small cans tomato sauce (or one 15-oz. can)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon butter

**Directions:** Cook oil, beef, Worcestershire sauce, beef flavoring, chili powder, salt and pepper, and cinnamon in a skillet until meat is done. Add brown sugar, onion, green pepper, tomato sauce, tomato paste, and butter. Simmer for approximately 45 minutes or until onion and pepper are cooked. Serve on hamburger buns or bread.

*Thank you to Mary Usoff for submitting this recipe!*

## CEC Management Team

Matthew P. Boshaw  
CEO & General Manager

Dennis W. Beggs  
Director of Finance and  
Accounting/CFO

Christopher W. Kossman  
Director of Information Technology

Stephanie Deal  
Director of Human Resources

Fred E. Terwilliger  
Assistant General Manager/COO

Lisa A. Hoover  
Director of Member Services

## Read Power Lines and Win!

Last Issue's Winner:

**John Snyder of Butler**

Last Issue's E-Winner:

**Melanie McCall of Kittanning**

Read Power Lines and win a \$25 credit on your monthly electric bill by completing and returning the quiz below. You can also have a chance at another \$25 bill credit by submitting a quiz online at [www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop).

If you don't have access to the Internet, indicate that on the quiz and we'll also enter you in the online drawing. Just complete and enclose the quiz and personal information below and return it with your monthly payment.

**1. True or False:** CEC offers a variety of safety programs to keep everyone safe around electricity.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. True or False:** Call 8-1-1 before digging and all utility companies will come mark the location of their underground facilities so you can avoid them.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. True or False:** You can access your meter data to see how it's adding up and look for ways to reduce it.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How are we doing?** (no wrong answer)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Acct. #:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Central Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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