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2021 Line Clearing & Pole Inspections

PowerLines

Photo from Unsplash

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Never More Important

by Matthew Boshaw, CEO & General Manager

2020 and a global pandemic have made it abundantly clear that the seven cooperative principles, those principles which guide every cooperative organization, have never been more important. As a reminder, the principles are: Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Member Economic Participation; Autonomy and Independence; Education, Training and Information; Cooperation among Cooperatives; and Concern for Community.

Central Electric Cooperative’s (CEC’s) commitment to these principles has provided a framework that has allowed us to weather a remarkable set of obstacles, while remaining focused on a singular goal of maintaining a healthy and available workforce to provide an essential service to our members. Like our Mission Statement, these principles provide

a clear template and common set of goals for our employees, board, and entire membership.

There is a lot of rhetoric in the news and I can find supporting reference material for almost any position I choose to believe. It has led to a great deal of mistrust and division. It is reassuring to know that our cooperative is built upon and follows fundamental and long-established principles. When my fatigue with the pandemic and all things political had reached its highest level, it became clear to me that our cooperative principles have never been more important.

With the support of our board, the employees at CEC have demonstrated exactly what I mean throughout this challenging time. While we all live and work in this area, we do not share the same opinions. For goodness sake at least one of us is a Las Vegas Raiders fan

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and some are cat people. Our employees are willing and able to put those aside, and other more substantial differences, and work together toward a common goal.

“What we do share is a belief in the cooperative principles and the importance of safely providing reliable, competitively priced electric service to our members. Wherever you fall on the political spectrum, from Marx to Genghis Kahn, we are all part of the same cooperative.”

Matt Boshaw, CEO &
General Manager

What we do share is a belief in the cooperative principles and the importance of safely providing reliable, competitively priced electric service to our members. Wherever you fall on the political spectrum, from Marx to Genghis Kahn, we are all part of the same cooperative. Especially during a pandemic, the goal of maintaining this essential service is our priority and electric service is apolitical. We don't always agree on the best way to reach our goals, but we do have the same goals.

Moving forward, we have been busy making plans to return to a more “normal” work environment so that whenever that opportunity is made available to us, we are ready. Local control and autonomy allow for us to take those steps that are best for our membership and community without having to wait on others to catch up. Our open membership and democratic member control provide staff with a variety of opinions that ultimately make our decisions smarter and better. We have been and will continue to leverage our cooperation among cooperatives through our sister cooperatives, and statewide and national associations in order to maximize the resources available to our membership in furthering our mission. Not everything represents a defining principle nor should we treat everything as if it does.

Cooperation, collaboration, and compromise have provided CEC with a more robust and sustainable outcome for nearly 84 years.

I have strong personal political opinions. In my role at CEC, I choose to set them aside to focus on what is best for the cooperative. I think I have done a fair job of that as I have been accused of leaning both left and right over the years. My goal is always the same, do what is best for the cooperative. That may sound like an attempt to appear overly selfless, but it is in fact quite the opposite. One of the best pieces of professional advice I have ever been given was to put the company first. This came from a man that was an executive vice president of a major utility. His explanation was that if his decision was best for him, he would benefit in the short term but if the company did well, he would benefit in the long term. The cooperative principles make it easy to follow that advice.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for your continued willingness to work together in helping us to serve you during this difficult period. I recognize your pandemic and political fatigue, like mine, may be pushing each to their limits. It is that fact that makes me recognize and appreciate the cooperation we are all demonstrating. It has never been more important for us to positively and actively participate with our cooperative and one another.

Meter Readings

with **Laura Hensley**

Member Energy
Specialist



This month's focus is on an appliance that gets little recognition, but may make up a large portion of your energy bill. According to The Department of Energy, water heating is typically the second largest energy expense for your home, accounting for 14-18 percent of your energy bill.

The easiest first step to save energy with your water heater, is turning its thermostat to 120 degrees, a safe and energy-efficient setting for any water heater. If your tank is warm to the touch, install an insulated water heater blanket to reduce standby heat loss. You may also insulate the hot water pipes leaving the tank to reduce additional heat loss.

Simply reducing demand for hot water will help you save. Wash laundry in cold water, be sure

Water Heaters

the dishwasher is full when running, and take short showers instead of baths.

From time to time, I speak to members who have received a high bill and we determine that a water heater problem, such as a bad heating element or leaking tank, has caused the excessive demand for electricity. Regular maintenance and replacement of an old water heater can pay off. Most water heaters last about 10 – 15 years.

A storage tank water heater remains the most common option. If you currently have an electric water heater and want to really boost energy efficiency, check to see if a heat pump water heater could work in your home. In the proper setting, a heat pump water heater could cut energy costs in half.

If you are in the market for a standard electric water heater, check out our 50 and 75 gallon tank options. For participating in our Load Management Program, CEC offers tanks at a discounted price to members. Learn more at central.coop/water-heaters.

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The Safety Linke



Don't be a stranger, to electrical danger.

Electric Breaker Panels



Manager of Safety
& Loss Control

Dylan Linke

Typically, electricity is provided to your home, building, or facility by way of underground or overhead power lines. The power lines feed through a meter into your electrical breaker panel(s). Each breaker in a panel represents a circuit supplying electricity to a designated area of your home or building.

Here are some basic safety considerations for electric panels:

- The breaker panel should be readily and easily accessible at all times. Maintain an aisle in front of the panel that is at least three feet wide.
- The panel should have a closed cover.
- The panel should have a directory index identifying each individual circuit breaker. The directory should identify the various receptacles, general areas, or equipment serviced by each circuit breaker.
- There should not be any missing breakers or

other openings in the breaker faceplate that would allow you to contact the “hot” electrical wires at the back of the panel.

- Breakers should never be taped or otherwise secured in the “closed” (on) position. Each circuit breaker and circuit are rated for a maximum amount of amperes. An ampere is the unit for measuring the rate of flow of electricity through the circuit. If the rate of flow in the circuit exceeds the designated maximum for the breaker, the breaker “trips” and stops the flow of electricity. If the breaker is not allowed to trip, insulators could melt from excessive heat from electricity flowing too fast!
- Lastly, breakers should not be taped in the “open” position as a means of de-energizing the circuit during repair or maintenance activity. Open breakers should be properly tagged or locked out.

CEC Continues Line Clearing to Improve System Reliability

Trees are the number one cause of power outages and service interruptions. As part of CEC’s ongoing efforts to improve system reliability, contracted line clearing crews are working on circuits originating from Mineral (Polk), Saxonburg, and Wolf’s Corners (Fryburg) substations in Butler, Clarion, and Venango counties in 2021.

CEC will be utilizing a variety of contractors in 2020 which include Hazlett Tree Service, Davey Tree Service, and Jaflo Tree Service.

CEC members, and others with CEC’s electric poles on their property, may encounter contracted crews working and may be approached by CEC or

Hazlett, Davey, or Jaflo employees. All contractor representatives and CEC employees carry company-issued identification.

CEC respects property owners’ rights and will complete the work required as quickly as possible and professionally.

The project will last throughout 2021. If you have any questions or comments, please contact CEC’s Forestry Supervisor, Brice Stewart, at 800-521-0570 x2210.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation during these improvements.

Congratulations to Our 2020 Coloring Contest Winners!



Lexi Davis, age 5,
of Butler



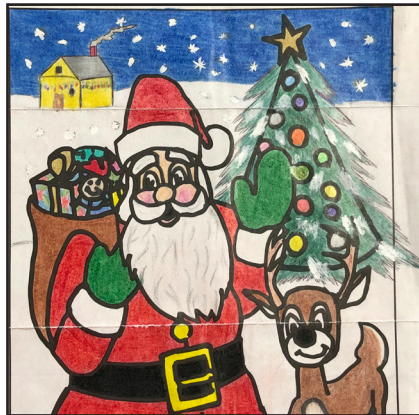
Theresa McFarland, age 7,
of Karns City



Evan Mason, age 10,
of Kennerdell



Navy Perry, age 10,
of Oil City



Leah Allio, age 12,
of Tionesta



Trinity McFarland, age 12,
of Karns City

2021 Pole Inspections

Contracted pole inspection crews will be inspecting poles on circuits originating from Fredericksburg and Cowansville substations in Armstrong County.

CEC's contractor, Osmose Utilities Services, Inc., (Osmose) will begin work on March 1. CEC members and others with CEC's electric poles on their property may see these inspections being conducted. Inspections typically include a visual inspection, sounding of the pole with a hammer, and excavation up to 18 inches around the base of the

pole. Poles identified as having issues will either be addressed in the field by Osmose, or by CEC personnel at a later time. All Osmose and CEC employees carry company-issued identification. CEC respects property owners' rights and will complete the work required as quickly and professionally as possible.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact CEC's Bill Betros, assistant manager of operations, at 800-521-0570 x 2209. We appreciate your patience and cooperation.

Recipe of the Month

Broccoli Soup

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 6 cups water
- 4 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1 package broccoli, chopped
- 8-ounce Kluski noodle (thin noodles)
- 6 cups milk
- 1 pound Velveeta® cheese, cubed

Directions:

Saute onions and garlic in melted butter. Add water and bring to a boil. Stir in chicken flavoring, broccoli, and noodles. Cook for 20 minutes. Add milk and heat. Add cheese; stir until cheese has melted.

*Thank you to Marge Terwilliger
for submitting this recipe!*

CEC Management Team

Matthew P. Boshaw
CEO & General Manager

Chester Conti
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:

Aaron Reeger of Valencia

Last Issue's E-Winner:

Robert Ramsey of Kittanning

Read Power Lines for a chance to 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.

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: You can save energy with your water heater by setting its thermostat at 120 degrees.

Answer: _____

2. True or False: Seven cooperative principles guide every cooperative organization.

Answer: _____

3. True or False: It is okay to tape breakers in both the on and off positions.

Answer: _____

How are we doing? (no wrong answer)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Acct. #: _____



Central Electric Cooperative

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