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Learn How To ...**

Use a Chainsaw Safely

Get Your Home Ready for Winter

“Watts” Inside

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PowerLines

2013 Photo Contest Entry
Taken by Brenda Snyder of Butler

How We Compare

by Matthew Boshaw, CEO & General Manager

I have said that when I am choosing topics for these articles, I prefer that ideas come from our members. At least when the idea comes from the membership, I know it is probably something that interests many. I have been traveling on the business of your cooperative of late and my interactions with our members has been limited, but please keep contacting me with questions or article ideas. This month I will discuss the results of our annual member survey.

The results we received from our recent member survey were great! Respondents gave us high marks in member service, reliability, value of service and, frankly, all categories! On behalf of Central Electric Cooperative (CEC) employees, let me be the first to say “thank you!” I know surveys are not all inclusive and there are areas are not covered in them that may be identified as

needing improvement, but I will say that we are committed to continuous improvement and are always looking for ways to better meet your expectations.

Member expectations are very important. Seventy-seven years ago, the expectations of our membership were different. Few rural Americans had electricity and just getting service was a remarkable achievement. When you consider all that we do with electricity today, having access to it is still pretty remarkable, but I was talking about expectations and our commitment to continuous improvement. Over the years, we have built-out and improved our system and improved our service to the point where our members no longer remember life without electricity. CEC members started comparing their service to that of other electric providers, and so did we in our surveys.

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The early comparisons were not always favorable to CEC. We faced challenges that our urban neighbors didn't have. Access to homes and businesses was more difficult in remote rural areas with the number of consumers served per mile of line small by comparison to urban, investor-owned utilities (IOUs). As a result, our electric service necessarily cost more. Access and proximity to power suppliers further complicated things and drove prices up. The electric generating companies could make a lot more money selling their power in more densely populated urban areas and often left rural consumers in the dark when demand was high.

With time, technology improvements, dedicated employees and a membership committed to the cooperative spirit, we now compare favorably to other area electric utilities. Areas that IOUs consider sparsely populated are densely populated by our standard, and are the focus of our efforts. Our ongoing expansion of infrastructure and investment in technology has made it possible for us to provide service to rural areas at a competitive price. As a matter of fact, our power supply rate compares very favorably to local IOUs, as does our reliability, expenses and, as proven by our member survey, our member service.

We are not done improving. We have closed the gap, or surpassed our investor-owned counterparts, in many

measured areas. But we will continue to improve, because at some point (just as has happened in the past) CEC members won't compare our service to life in the dark or the IOUs, but instead will raise the bar and compare CEC only to CEC's past performance.

I recently talked with friends, who are not CEC members, about the cooperative. Their families had been members back in the days when we did not compare so favorably to IOUs and they expressed negative sentiments toward CEC. I quickly told them that their opinions of us were out of date by about 30 years. CEC has a good story to tell and I love telling it. I am asking you to join me in telling our story. It probably doesn't happen to you as often as it does to me, but the next time CEC comes up in discussion, let your cooperative pride show and share our story with your less-fortunate neighbors (you know, those who aren't CEC members). We expect that you will keep raising your expectations and you can be certain that we will continue to strive to meet those expectations. Our commitment to continuously improve is just one example of the "cooperative difference" that will allow us to continue to provide safe, reliable and affordable electric service to our members for another 77 years.

"I am asking you to join me in telling our story. It probably doesn't happen to you as often as it does to me, but the next time CEC comes up in discussion, let your cooperative pride show and share our story with your less-fortunate neighbors (you know, those who aren't CEC members),"
Matt Boshaw, CEO & General Manager

SAFETY



Matt Alderson
Manager of Safety and
Operations Support

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How To Use a Chainsaw Safely

A chainsaw is one of the most useful tools you can own. They are perfect for cutting up fallen trees and large branches. But you must know where to start and how to go about using one safely. The following tips will help you with both of these tasks.

■ **Dress safely from head to toe.** Wearing the right clothes is important. Never work in jeans and everyday shoes, even if you are only cutting a small amount of wood near your home. Proper dress while using a chainsaw

includes: protective trousers (chainsaw chaps), an approved helmet with hearing protection and visor, work boots, work gloves, and a long-sleeved shirt.



■ **Start the saw properly.** Switch the stop button to “on” and pull the choke all the way out. Place the saw on the ground, hold the saw firmly, put your right foot through the rear

handle and grip the cord with your right hand until the engine fires. **Note:** The chainsaw must not move when the saw is idling. If it does, the idle setting needs adjusted. The instruction manual will tell you how to do this.

■ **Have a practice session.** If you are an inexperienced chainsaw user, we recommend you familiarize yourself with the saw before you go into the forest and start felling trees. For example, you can begin cutting wood on a saw horse outside your home.

■ **Sharpen the chain.** A well-sharpened chain is just as important as a powerful engine. Learn how to sharpen the chain yourself so it’s kept sharp in order to cut efficiently, safely and with accuracy. How often you sharpen your chain depends on how much you use the saw. When the chain starts to seem blunt it is usually time to sharpen it. A sharp chain produces fine, regular wood chips, while a blunt chain just produces saw dust.

■ **Never cut alone.** Take someone with you while you are using a chainsaw.

To Celebrate the Holidays CEC will be Closed:

Thanksgiving, Nov. 27 (normal hours will resume Nov. 28)

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, closing at noon

Christmas Day, Dec. 25 (normal hours will resume Dec. 26)

New Year’s Eve, Dec. 31, closing at noon

New Year’s Day, Jan. 1 (normal hours will resume Jan. 2)

CEC Sponsors Emergency Preparedness Symposium

Do you have a plan for an extended power outage? What will you do if a natural disaster occurs? These are the questions answered by a panel of experts at the Butler County Chamber of Commerce's Emergency Preparedness Symposium on Sept. 25.

CEC's Chris Panian addressed power outages and their causes. Chris made recommendations to help businesses prepare for outages. Included were suggestions on lightning protection, surge protection and generators "CEC prepares for the worst by investing heavily in maintenance and technology," Panian said. He added, "our biggest asset is our dedicated staff who will work around the clock to get the power back on."

Other topics discussed included how 911 calls are dispatched, the nationwide network of emergency

centers ready and willing to help each other out, the importance of having an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and insurance needs. Cyber security and continuity of operations were highlighted as there is a constant and growing threat to vital electronic data.

Bob Winters from the Department of Homeland Security gave an overview of best practices in emergency preparedness. Mr. Winters gave several real-life examples of how being prepared helped businesses continue operations after disaster and consolidated all the other speakers' comments into one cohesive message: businesses must prepare for the worst to survive.

Sign up to get our "e-Connections" newsletter geared towards non-residential accounts by sending an email to cpanian@central.coop.



Get Ready for Winter

Last month I wrote on tuning up your heating system for winter. Here are a few other items to consider to increase comfort and lower your energy bills:

- Caulk and seal windows, doors, and wall penetrations (plumbing, electrical, vent pipes, etc.).
- Add plastic film to windows if they leak or are single pane.
- Seal and insulate attic access hatches.
- Reverse ceiling fan direction to blow upwards.
- Replace furnace filters.
- Do not block heating registers with furniture or curtains.
- Keep south-facing curtains open on sunny days to collect natural heat.
- Close curtains at night to reduce radiation cooling.
- Adjust thermostat down 10 to 15 degrees when away from home or sleeping to save about

10 percent per heating season. A programmable thermostat works perfect for this.

- Remember to drain one to two gallons out of the water heater to remove sediment.
- Weather-proof and seal any window air conditioning units that will not be removed.
- Check and repair the bottom of doors for leakage areas.

As a safety reminder, replace batteries in your smoke and carbon-dioxide alarms. Do the above and you will sleep comfortably knowing you have done your part for energy efficiency.

Why not sign up for weekly energy saving "E-Tips" by contacting me at kmaleski@central.coop?

CEC's 77th Annual Meeting

CEC conducted its 77th Annual Meeting on Aug. 22 at Whitehall Camp and Conference Center near Emlenton. During this meeting our members re-elected William Eichner of Butler County and elected Nancy Lendyak of Armstrong County to the board of directors.

Almost 1,000 attended the meeting. Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) catered the dinner, and the Keister Family Band provided entertainment. The meeting opened with the Parker Post 7073 presenting the American flag and CEC's Stacey Bechtel singing the National Anthem.

Since the Annual Meeting, the board of directors has elected officers: Jody P. Weaver is the board president, Kenneth Durrett is the vice president and Althea M. Smith is the secretary/treasurer.



CEC's Board of Directors



2014-2015 Member Aware Advisory Committee (MAAC)



Thanks to Hazlett Tree Service for providing the bottled water!



2014 Good Neighbor Scholarship recipient Courtney Olesky



The Mike Over Memorial Display



Members learning about our Water Heater Program from Dr. Waterheater!

Recipe of the Month

Cranberry Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 packages raspberry gelatin
- 1 can crushed pineapple in juice
- One 16 ounce can whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1 medium apple, chopped
- 2/3 cup chopped walnuts

Directions:

Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Add enough cold water to pineapple juice to measure three cups. Pour in large saucepan. Add gelatin and bring to boil. Stir at least two minutes until completely dissolved. Add cranberry sauce and stir until well blended. Pour into large bowl. Refrigerate one and a half hours or until slightly thickened. Stir in pineapple, apple and walnuts. Pour into serving bowl. Refrigerate four hours or until firm.

Thank you to Joanne McVay for submitting this recipe!

Send in your recipes to be shared today!

Send Recipes to:

Renee Tritten at rtritten@central.coop or mail to CEC, 716 Route 368, PO Box 329, Parker, PA 16049

CEC Management Team

Matthew P. Boshaw
CEO, General Manager

Dennis W. Beggs
CFO, Director of Finance and Accounting

Christopher W. Kossman
Director of Information Technology

Stephanie Deal
Director of Human Resources

Christina J. O'Donnell
Director of Member and Community Relations

Lisa A. Hoover
Director of Member Services

Fred E. Terwilliger
Director of Engineering and Operations

Read Power Lines and Win!

Last Issue's Winner:

Albert King of Knox

Last Issue's E-Winner:

William Harrison of Fenelton

Read Power Lines and win! It's simple — you can win a \$25 credit on your monthly electric bill by completing and returning the quiz below. And you have a second chance at another \$25 bill credit by submitting a quiz online at www.central.coop.

If you do not have access to the Internet, indicate that on the quiz and we will also enter you in the online drawing. Just complete, clip and enclose the quiz and personal information below and return it with your monthly payment. For quiz rules visit www.central.coop.

1. True or False: Adjusting your thermostat by 10 to 15 degrees when you're away will save you about 10 percent on your annual heating costs.

Answer: _____

2. True or False: Your chainsaw should move when it's idling.

Answer: _____

3. True or False: Seventy-seven years ago most rural Americans didn't have electricity.

Answer: _____

How are we doing? (no wrong answer)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Acct. #:** _____



Central Electric Cooperative

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716 Route 368 • PO Box 329 • Parker, PA 16049-0329 • www.central.coop
Customer Service 1-800-521-0570 • Emergency Outage Number 1-800-282-8610

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