

NEWS Central

Monthly newsletter from Central Electric Membership Corp.

FEB 2019

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ROW and reliability

ENERGY-SAVING TIPS

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ELECTEL CFCU

Membership benefits

Central welcomes Chris Smith to co-op team

Central Electric recently welcomed Chris Smith as a new addition to the co-op's management team. Chris joined the co-op in September 2018 as the new Vice President of Engineering and Operations. Originally from Winchester, VA, Chris spent most of his life in the Hampton Roads area outside of Norfolk, VA. After graduating from West Virginia University with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, Chris began his career at the Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipyard where he oversaw the creation of a new fiber optic system, equipment testing procedures, as well as bidding and budgeting for the new Ford class carrier ship for the Navy.

Following his time at the shipyard, Chris began his electric utility career in 2006 with Prince George Electric Cooperative in Waverly, VA, as the system engineer. While at Prince George, Chris managed the staking department and contract crews,

oversaw the implementation of work plans, the design and build of the co-op's substations as well as the geographic information system (GIS) system.

Chris's prior experience in project management at both the shipyard and Prince George makes him a key addition to the growing co-op. "We are very excited to have Chris with us here at Central Electric as he steps in to lead our engineering and operations department," said Eddie Oldham, Assistant General Manager. "Safety and reliability are two of the co-op's key commitments to the membership and his prior experience will serve the co-op extremely well in both of these capacities."



Building on his prior experience, one of Chris' first strategic initiatives has been working closely with the right-of-way (ROW) program.

"Continuing the co-op's commitment to ROW initiatives is essential for long-term

reliability and performance. By maintaining the ROW in a cyclical fashion, the co-op will continue providing the safe and reliable electricity members expect," Smith said. "Our duty at the co-op is to serve our members to best of our ability. I look forward to building relationships with our members and employees as well as embracing constant challenges such as ROW maintenance to further strengthen our co-op."



Energy efficiency tip:

- ▶ When doing laundry, dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing. You'll spend less time running the dryer for lighter-weight items, which saves energy. *Source: energy.gov.*

POINT OF VIEW

ROW program key to reliability

From the desk of CEO & General Manager Morris McClellion

“ The co-op is committed to maintaining our ROW areas to ensure the safety of our community and also the reliability of our service to you, our member-owner. ”

The spring and summer months are right around the corner but the cooperative is already gearing up for its annual vegetation maintenance program. There are many ways the co-op provides its members with safe and reliable electric service. One of the most common and crucial ways is right-of-way (ROW) clearing.

A ROW refers to a strip of land underneath or around power lines that the co-op has the responsibility to maintain and clear. Clearing the ROW is critical to keeping the power flowing to your home. Without an effective ROW clearing program, power interruptions occur when trees, shrubs or bushes grow too close to power lines. Tree branches are also extremely dangerous when they come in contact with power lines as they can become energized just like the power line. An effective ROW program not only helps keep you connected, but it also helps keep you and other members of our community safe by ensuring tree branches do not become energized due to contact with power lines.

In order to maintain an effective ROW clearing program, the co-op invests a portion of its operating

budget to cutting back trees and shrubs that grow too close to the power lines. We must ensure that trees grow at a distance far enough from our lines where they will not cause harm to individuals or disruption to electrical service. Specifications can vary, but the general guideline the co-op follows in maintaining a safe ROW is 20 feet of clearance on either side of primary conductors. We accomplish this by trimming back trees with bucket trucks, chainsaws, chippers and mowers, and also with an environmentally safe herbicide that interrupts photosynthesis so plants aren't able to convert sunlight to energy.

The co-op is continually looking for ways it can improve service to its members and in 2019, the co-op is focusing on the ROW clearing program and committing to an updated eight-year trimming cycle. The goal under the updated ROW program is to trim the entire system over an eight-year period, and when complete, start over and repeat the cycle.

The process has already started and our crews are working diligently in the Pittsboro area of Chatham County, which has traditionally been one of the more



challenging areas to maintain due to the amount of trees in the area. For each section of the system, crews will start at the substation and trim primary lines until they reach the end of the line. At that time, they will then begin trimming secondary lines that tap off of the main lines. Once an area has been completely trimmed, crews will move into other areas of the system and repeat the process.

The co-op is committed to maintaining our ROW areas to ensure the safety of our community and also the reliability of our service to you, our member-owner. Remember to always contact the co-op rather than trying to trim or remove trees near power lines. We can send a crew to your home to trim the tree back until our ROW crews are able to fully clear the lines near your home. If you have any questions about our ROW clearing program, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are always here to answer any questions you may have.

Until next time,

Morris McClellion

Save money and take the chill out of winter



It's cold, but that doesn't mean Old Man Winter has to put a chill on you or your wallet. Use these tips to help stay safe, warm and save money when the temperatures drop:

- ▶ **Consider installing a programmable thermostat.** This will allow you to set the temperature of your home based on times when you will be home.
- ▶ **Keep it set.** If you are not using a programmable thermostat, keep your thermostat set at 68° F, or lower. This will help ease the burden on your heating unit and save you money in the long run.
- ▶ **Seal your home.** A low cost option to help keep warm air in your home is caulk. Use caulk around areas that may be leaking cold air from the outside into your home, this will help prevent heat loss.
- ▶ **Layer up.** Wear several layers of lightweight clothing to help stay warm. This will help prevent loss of your body heat.
- ▶ **Remember the 3 feet rule.** If you are using a space heater, make sure you plug it directly into the wall outlet and keep it at least 3 feet from flammable objects. Make sure it is equipped with an automatic shutoff in case the unit tips over.

Students rewarded for classroom efforts

Five outstanding students earned a Visa® gift card for receiving at least one “A” on their recent report cards. The reward is in connection with Central Electric’s “Give us an A” program.

Local students from kindergarten to college with a grade of at least one “A” are invited to send in a copy of their most recent report card.

Four times each school year, Central Electric will draw from the entries and award a \$25 Visa gift card to four winners with at least one “A” and a \$50 Visa gift card to one winner with all “A’s”.

If you have at least one “A” on your next report card, send in a copy to Ryley Osentoski at Central Electric by Feb. 7 for a chance to be selected in the next random drawing. Entries can be submitted by email at OsentoskiR@cemcpower.com or by mail at Give us an “A”, PO Box 1107, Sanford, N.C. 27332.



**Savannah
Isom**



**Shelby
Young**



**Dash
Stafford**



**Brody
Blell**



**James
McLaurin**



Apply for a TESC Scholarship

Central Electric annually awards two Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships to local students in Chatham, Harnett, Lee, Moore, or Randolph counties.

the upcoming school year, have permission from a parent or guardian to attend the overnight camp and must be able to provide their own transportation if selected to attend.

A young man will be selected to attend the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a young woman will be selected to attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at NC State University in Raleigh.



Coaches and athletes at both camps will work closely with students to develop fundamental skills like sportsmanship and leadership to help the young athletes excel both on and off the court.

The deadline to apply is March 31. Visit CEMCPower.com for more information or to apply for one of the scholarships.

To be eligible to apply, the student must be in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade during



Morris McClellion
CEO & General Manager

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James Taylor, *Editor*

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membership is unique. Just like your membership in our electric cooperative, credit unions are governed by the members and everyone has an equal voice. Profits are returned in the form of higher savings rates.

The ElecTel Cooperative Federal Credit Union is



Your Co-op, Your Credit Union.

open to any member and their family of the 26 electric cooperatives in North Carolina, including Central Electric. Once you join ElecTel, you are an ElecTel member for life, regardless of whether you move outside a cooperative territory in the future.

If you are interested in joining the ElecTel credit union, visit ElecTelCCU.org to start the application process. All you need to do is complete a brief application and submit a minimum deposit of \$1 to take advantage of their great services. You can also contact the branch office at 800-849-5600.

Anyone can offer financial services, but credit union