

NEWS Central

MAR 2020

Monthly newsletter from Central Electric Membership Corp.

Plant the seeds for an energy-efficient spring

The ground is beginning to thaw, the birds are chirping and the sun is setting a little later each day; spring is just around the corner! With the weather changing, it's important to remember that your energy habits should change as well. Here are a few actions you can take to save energy (and money) during the new season:

Use your blinds

Window coverings such as blinds or shades provide protection from sunlight that causes your home to heat up. These coverings allow you to reduce the need to run your air conditioner and lower your energy use.

Swap out filters

Change the air filters in your home to help your system run more efficiently. We recommend doing this once a month.

Turn on the fan

During the warmer days of spring, set your ceiling fan to turn counterclockwise and turn it on instead of your air conditioner. Just remember that fans cool people, not rooms. Fans should be turned off when you leave the room to save energy.

Install a programmable thermostat

You can save money on your heating and cooling bills by simply controlling the temperature of your home when you are asleep or away. You can do this automatically by installing a programmable thermostat, which will allow you to adjust your thermostat on a pre-set schedule. By installing a programmable thermostat, you can save as much as 10% a year on heating and cooling costs by automatically turning your thermostat back for 8 hours a day from its normal setting.

For even more ways to save, visit the "Energy Efficiency" section at CEMCPower.com.



MARCH 31 is the deadline to apply for either the Roy Williams or Wolfpack Women's basketball camp scholarships.

MAY 1 is when applications for Central Carolina or Sandhills Community College scholarships are due. Visit CEMCPower.com for more details.



POINT OF VIEW

System maintenance

From the desk of CEO & General Manager Eddie Oldham

“While these are just a few of the many ways we keep your lives powered, we are working hard each and every day to continue providing the superior service you have come to expect. Our commitment to you, our members, is unwavering; to be your trusted energy partner now, and well into the future.”

The spring and summer months are right around the corner, and while maintaining reliable service to our members is a top priority year-round, the warmer months bring more daylight and opportunity to complete important work projects.

There are many ways the co-op provides its members with safe and reliable service. One of the most common ways is right-of-way (ROW) clearing. ROW refers to a strip of land underneath or around power lines that the co-op has the right and 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 accomplish this with bucket trucks, chainsaws, chippers and mowers to 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 and 10 feet of clearance below the neutral line. This ensures a safe distance between trees on your property and the dangerous lines carrying electricity to your home.

While ROW clearing is an important and visible component in keeping your lights on, the co-op is also active in other areas that might not be quite as noticeable but are just as important in maintaining a reliable service. In addition to investments in physical assets that you may notice, such as substations, poles, lines, transformers and meters, there are also investments in technology behind the scenes that help maintain the critical physical infrastructure necessary in providing electricity to your homes.

For many years we have utilized a SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system to communicate directly with our substation equipment. SCADA is essentially a communications system that collects data from major equipment inside our substations and gives us the ability to send control commands to the equipment. The data allows us to monitor the system to make sure it is operating efficiently and make changes as needed to improve reliability.

In 2013, we also became a pioneer of sorts in the utility world and made the decision to upgrade to radio frequency advanced metering infrastructure, or AMI, to complement our SCADA system. AMI is an integrated system of advanced meters and



Benefits of tree trimming

Clearing trees and overgrown vegetation is vital to provide safe, reliable power to our consumer-members.

We clear certain areas in our service territory, known as rights of way, to:

- Keep power lines clear of tree limbs
- Restore power outages more quickly
- Keep crews and members of our community safe
- Reduce unexpected costs for repairs

Vegetation management improves service reliability for you – our members!

data management systems that enables two-way communication between the co-op and members. In addition to timely energy use information for our members, our AMI system also improves the resiliency of our system. Rather than relying on members to report power outages, the meters automatically report outages back to the co-op. This drastically improves our outage response times and allows us to get your power back on much quicker following an outage.

These two technological systems work hand-in-hand to simultaneously monitor and keep electricity supplied to your home. As you know, in today's world technology is improving at such a rapid pace and what is considered advanced technology today, is out of date by tomorrow. That's why we are committed to constantly making technological improvements on our system to make sure we are providing you with the most reliable service possible.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, a service technician will be coming by your home to make an update to your meter and our AMI system. Advanced metering technology has been a critical

technological addition to our system and has improved our ability to keep your lights on, and most importantly to quickly restore your service after a major storm. The update to our meters will allow us to continue improving outage tracking and response times across our system. It also serves as our unwavering commitment to the reliability and resiliency of our system, and to you, our members.

While these are just a few of the many ways we keep your lives powered, we are working hard each and every day to continue providing the superior service you have come to expect. This not only includes the reliability of the electricity going to your home, but also the programs and services we provide to you and the service you receive when you interact with the co-op. Our commitment to you, our members, is unwavering; to be your trusted energy partner now and well into the future.

Until next time,

Youth Leadership Opportunity

This summer, Central Electric is sending a rising sophomore, junior or senior to Cooperative Leadership Camp hosted by the N.C. Cooperative Council. The week-long, overnight camp will be held at White Lake, N.C. June 15-19. It will feature energetic and interactive workshops, presentations, outdoor recreation and leadership building exercises.

The camp is designed to provide a learning experience that concentrates on the cooperative way of doing business, building a better understanding and appreciation for the cooperative model. Each year, five campers are selected to receive leadership awards for their unique leadership abilities and receive an all-expense paid trip to the National Institute on Co-op Education at Virginia Tech University. All campers will also be eligible to apply for the \$1,000 Jim Graham Cooperative Leadership scholarship their senior year of high school.

The deadline to apply is quickly approaching. All applications must be received by May 15. For more information or to apply, visit the "Cooperative Leadership Camp" section at CEMCPower.com.

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The person responsible for coordinating this organization's non-discrimination compliance effort is the General Manager. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at https://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter ad-dressed to USDA and provide in the letter all the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442 or (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.



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