

# NEWS Central

JULY 2021

Monthly newsletter from Central Electric Membership Corp.

## Stay vigilant against scams posing as utilities

There is a constant uptick in reports of scam attempts from individuals stating that they have been contacted by someone stating their power is about to be turned off. Especially as of recent during these uncertain and stressful times. The caller instructs that you need to make an immediate payment through a money transfer, a certain website or prepaid credit card.

Remember this important information to prevent yourself from falling victim to a utility scam:

- Central Electric will NEVER call and demand an instant payment or ask for personal information to prevent immediate disconnection.
- A mailed notice will be sent advising of an overdue account, followed by a second mailed notice around two weeks later. You may also receive a phone call from an automated system the night before a disconnection as a reminder of the overdue balance.



**AVOID UTILITY SCAMS**

Scammers will threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.

If you are ever unsure of the status of your account or the party you are speaking with, hang up and call the cooperative immediately. Cooperative representatives are readily available to you by calling 1-800-446-7752. You can also quickly check the status of your account online by using the member services portal found at CEMCPower.com by clicking on the "My Account" tab in the top left hand corner of the page.

**JULY 5** the Central Electric office will be closed for Independence Day. Crews will be on-call.

**JULY 15** is the deadline for third-quarter Operation Round Up® grants. Recipients will be announced following the August Trust board meeting.



# POINT OF VIEW

## YOU are co-op's mission

*From the desk of CEO & General Manager Eddie Oldham*

“Our promise to you remains that same today that it was 80 years ago; to continue working hard on your behalf day-in and day-out and always finding ways to improve the service we provide to you.”

I don't usually share the emails, letters and comments we get from our members with you because I don't want you to ever think that we are trying to “pat our own back.” However, I recently received the email on the right from a member and it really left an impression on me as well as with our employees here at the co-op.

Again, I'm not sharing this to “toot our own horn,” but this message embodies what we are all about; YOU, the member. As a not-for-profit cooperative, founded and based right here in the communities we serve, everything we do is with you the member at heart. Whether it is establishing programs and services for our members, addressing rates or the cost of service, system work plans to improve service reliability, answering your questions over the phone or getting the lights back on after a storm, you are what motivates us each and every day.

We are very thankful to be able to serve such wonderful individuals and communities. We love hearing from you and interacting with you. That's what makes the cooperative model so great and sets it apart from other utility models. We are all in this together.

Thank you to everyone for the kind messages you send us and for your support during difficult times, especially when Mother Nature decides to take the lights out. Please know that if your lights go out, we won't stop until they are back on. Our promise to you remains the same today that it was 80 years ago; to continue working hard on your behalf day-in and day-out and always finding ways to improve the service we provide to you.

*Eddie B. Oldham*

Good morning, Eddie.

I am writing to say “THANK YOU” to you and the CEMC team for outstanding performance! On Sunday, May 9th, I called in a power outage around 1:30 p.m. I soon learned that a downed tree had torn down a string of power lines & snapped a utility pole completely in half. In approximately 3 hours, a CEMC “crew” had completely restored power – task 100% finished! I mentioned this was Sunday afternoon. Also noteworthy, is the fact that this was Mother's Day! While almost everyone else was enjoying lunch with “Mom” & family, the CEMC crew was working diligently to take care of us! Wow – in record time!

In the May 2021 Carolina Country publication, your Point of View article states ... “Our most recent service reliability rating was 99.96%, which means our members are rarely without power and that is what we want to achieve.” That is phenomenal to say the least & speaks highly of the management and each team member. I appreciate what the CEMC team does all year long, including working / operating in the worst weather conditions to keep us comfortable at a very low cost. I am proud to be a member (grateful & spoiled!) of a co-op that is second to none! Central Electric is the best ... keep up the good work – it is noticed & appreciated!

Thanks for spoiling your members.

Be safe, may God bless each of you!



## Annual Meeting to be held virtually

Due to the lingering impacts of COVID-19, this year we will once again be hosting a “Virtual Annual Meeting.” During the planning process of the meeting, there were still uncertainties at that time as to whether or not we would be able to hold an in-person meeting, especially given that we typically host over 1,500 people at the event. In order to protect the safety of our members and employees, and also to avoid the risk and uncertainty of hosting an in-person meeting, we will live-stream the business portion of the meeting. While we are disappointed to not host a typical Annual Meeting this year, we are very excited about the opportunity to bring the business of the co-op directly to you in your home on Friday, Oct. 1.

Members will be able to view the meeting at [Facebook.com/CEMCPower](https://www.facebook.com/CEMCPower). You will also have two EASY ways to register and vote again this



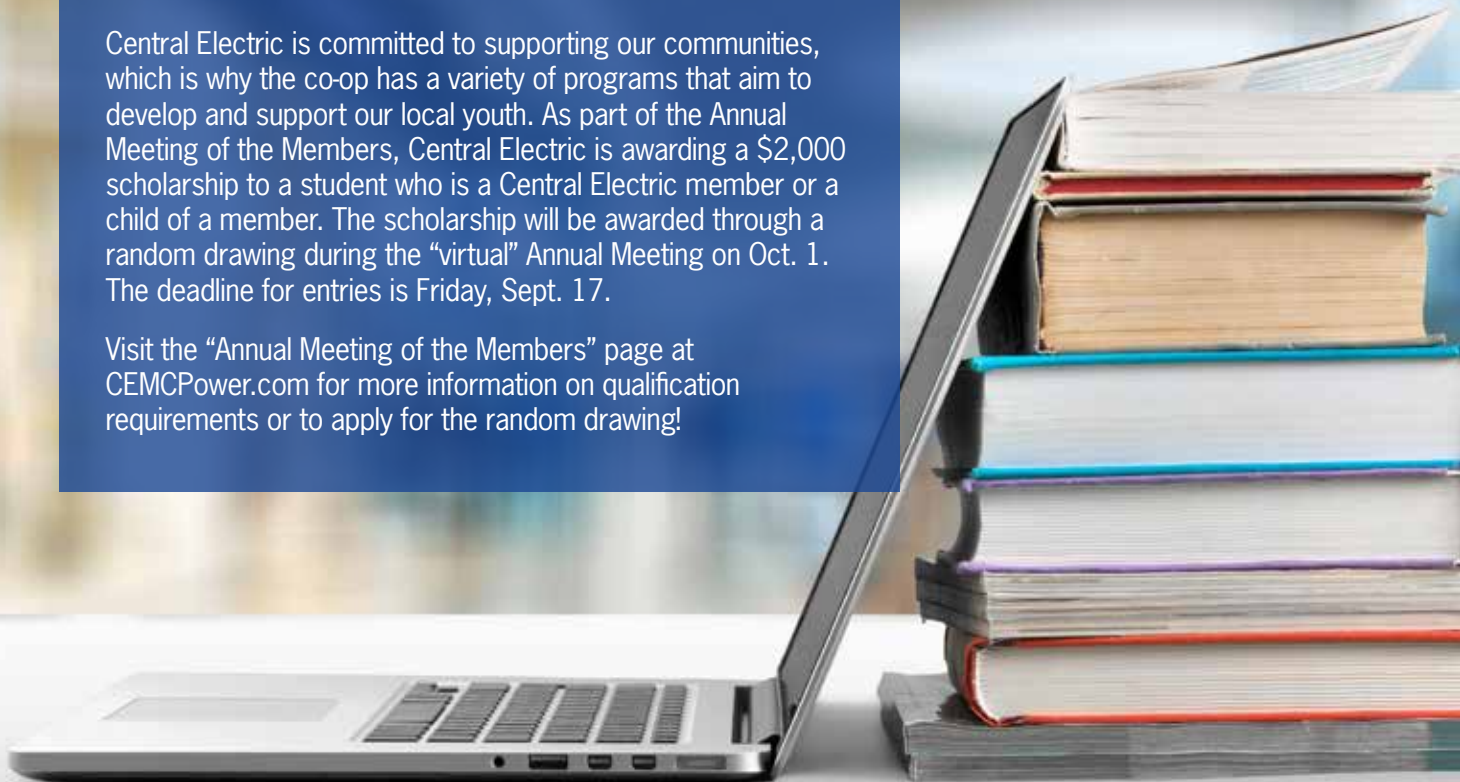
year. You can either vote online at [directvote.net/cemc](https://directvote.net/cemc) or mail in a prepaid ballot postcard. Look for your ballot and voting login instructions in the September edition of Carolina Country. Registration/voting begins on Aug. 28 and runs through Sept. 24.

We hope to “see” you there once again this year!

## Annual Meeting scholarship

Central Electric is committed to supporting our communities, which is why the co-op has a variety of programs that aim to develop and support our local youth. As part of the Annual Meeting of the Members, Central Electric is awarding a \$2,000 scholarship to a student who is a Central Electric member or a child of a member. The scholarship will be awarded through a random drawing during the “virtual” Annual Meeting on Oct. 1. The deadline for entries is Friday, Sept. 17.

Visit the “Annual Meeting of the Members” page at [CEMCPower.com](https://www.cemcpower.com) for more information on qualification requirements or to apply for the random drawing!



# Tips for maintaining your HVAC system

Ah, summer. Cookouts, swimming pools, camping—it's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. And when it's time to come back indoors, there's nothing better than that cool blast you feel from your home's air conditioning unit.

Your heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) system is essential to keeping your home comfortable during summer months, and if it breaks down, it's also the most expensive equipment to repair or replace. Luckily, there are simple steps you can take to lengthen the life of your HVAC system.

**Change or clean filters.** Dirty filters block airflow, which can greatly decrease the efficiency of your system. The Department of Energy recommends changing or cleaning filters every month or two during the cooling season. If your unit is in constant use or is subjected to dusty conditions or pet hair, consider checking filters more frequently.

**Clean the HVAC unit.** Outdoor condenser coils can become clogged with pollen, dirt and small debris. Use a hose to spray the HVAC unit once each season to ensure maximum airflow. (Warning: Do not use a pressure washer to do this, as it can damage the equipment.)

**Are you ever unsure of how your home is using electricity on a daily basis?**

**To help, the cooperative has a trained staff of energy experts available to help you become more energy-efficient and understand just where your energy dollars are being spent.**

**Our experts can help you determine the right steps for maximizing the efficiency of your home, including whether an in-home energy audit will help find more savings and reduce your energy costs each month. Contact us at 919-774-4900 to schedule an appointment.**

**Clear space around the HVAC unit.** Dryer vents, falling leaves and grass left behind from the lawnmower can create buildup. Remove any debris around the HVAC unit. If you have foliage near the unit, trim it back at least 2 feet around the condenser to increase airflow.

You should also have your HVAC system periodically inspected by a licensed professional. The frequency of inspections depends on the age of your unit, but the Department of Energy recommends scheduling tune-ups during the spring and fall, when contractors aren't as busy. With a little maintenance along the way, you can add years to your system's lifespan.



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