

# CHELCO news



*CHELCO Crews restoring power after Hurricane Michael.*

NOVEMBER 2018 | VOL. 23 NO. 11

## INSIDE

PAGE 2

**What is a capital Credit?**

PAGE 3

**We're thankful for your membership.**

PAGE 4

**Give with Members Helping Members**

## ONLINE NOW

Don't forget to download the CHELCO Connect app.



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



## The aftermath of Hurricane Michael

*Thank you for your understanding and support*

Hurricane Michael hit the Florida panhandle Oct. 10 at 1 p.m. with the greatest hurricane force winds in U.S. history to affect our area. The devastation left in its path will take our neighbors months, and in some cases, years to clean up and rebuild. After the storm, CHELCO's outages peaked at about 21,000 member-accounts without power in the first 24 hours, which is 40 percent of our system. Fortunately, CHELCO's system was fully restored by 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 13.

Restoration efforts began once conditions were no longer extremely hazardous. Crews worked through the night Oct. 10 and were augmented with over 70 line workers from sister cooperatives and contractors. The cooperative crews from Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association and Coast Electric both from southern Mississippi arrived on Oct. 11.

Damage was mainly caused by downed trees and blowing debris in our area, which is heavily rural, wooded and difficult to get. Power lines were wrapped around enormous trees which took time to cut away before repairing the lines.

"CHELCO and our members thank the outstanding crews who helped us in our time of crisis. These Mississippi based crews from Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association, Coast Electric and our local contractors worked around the clock alongside our crews, and we are proud to be a part of the electric cooperative family," said CHELCO CEO Steve Rhodes.

The afternoon of Oct. 13, augmentation crews shifted their support to West Florida Electric Cooperative. After CHELCO's restoration was complete, CHELCO also sent crews and support personnel to aid West Florida and Gulf Coast



*CHELCO staff and crews from Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association (MS) working to restore power in the Redbay area.*



*Oct. 12, 2019 - Josh Reasoner, a CHELCO contractor, left, and Curtis King, CHELCO lineman, right, walk out of a swamp in Freeport, Fla., after repairing power poles damaged by Hurricane Michael.*

Electric Cooperative, whose service areas were devastated by the hurricane.

"It's impossible to fully prepare for a category four hurricane, especially one that develops as quickly and rapidly as Hurricane Michael.

*Continued on page 2*

## IN BRIEF

### Beat the Peak season is here

If you get a phone call from CHELCO this winter, you can “Beat the Peak” and help save money on electric bills.

Peak hours are the times of the day when most consumers are using electricity at the same time. At certain times of year, the demand is exceptionally high. CHELCO members have historically peaked on the coldest mornings during winter months. Curbing demand for electricity during these hours reduces CHELCO wholesale power costs, and these savings are passed on to members through the wholesale power cost adjustment.

Members can “Beat the Peak” by postponing showers, dishes and laundry, adjusting the thermostat to a lower setting and turning off unnecessary lights and appliances the morning after receiving a call from CHELCO.

### CHELCO invites students to check out Youth Tour 2019

CHELCO is gearing up for Youth Tour 2019!

High school juniors who live on CHELCO lines are invited to apply. Two students from each high school in our service area will spend two days touring the state capital, Tallahassee, and also compete for a free weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., in June. For more information, students should contact their guidance counselor or Youth Tour Coordinator Bonnie Whitfield at [bwhitfield@chelco.com](mailto:bwhitfield@chelco.com). Students are selected by their school.

### Holiday closures

CHELCO offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 22-23, for Thanksgiving.

CHELCO offices will be closed Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 24- 25, for Christmas.

# What is a capital credit?

Electric cooperatives are not like other utilities. We are not-for-profit businesses, and you are a member and an owner. Per cooperative bylaws, the CHELCO board of trustees determines the amount of capital credits to be retired each year based on the co-op's financial condition and other considerations.

### So what are capital credits?

At the end of each year, after expenses are paid, CHELCO usually has money (margins) remaining. These margins are allocated to each person who was a member during that year thereby becoming capital credits. The amount depends on how much business that member did with CHELCO. Normally, capital credits are used to build and replace electrical facilities and are not returned to members immediately.

These capital credits become the members' ownership in the co-op. CHELCO invests the money in capital items, mainly electrical facilities. Using member capital reduces CHELCO's interest costs because the co-op borrows less money.

CHELCO keeps any unclaimed capital credit retirement funds for a period of time. If you ever move off CHELCO's lines, it's important to keep CHELCO advised of your address so that we can contact you when there is a retirement.

We hope you enjoy this benefit of being a member of a not-for-profit cooperative!

### The aftermath of Hurricane Michael *from page 1*

I'm proud of our employees, contractors and sister cooperatives who worked quickly and safely to restore power to our members," said CEO Steve Rhodes. "And, thank you to our members for your patience and support as we worked through the restoration process. Our hearts go out to the communities affected by the direct path of Hurricane Michael. Our neighbors still need our help and support."

Proud to be CHELCO and proud to be Panhandle Strong!



CHELCO is asking members to send in their photos so we can showcase our beautiful community in our publications. Photos may be historical, landscapes, nature or easily identifiable places within our area. We will not be able to use photos of people unless they are part of a public event. Please email your photo entries to [newsletter@chelco.com](mailto:newsletter@chelco.com).



## We're thankful for your membership

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

In the spirit of this quote by author William Arthur Ward, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your membership in our electric cooperative. Because of your connection to CHELCO, we are able to make our community a better place.

I generally use this space to provide updates on new projects and developments and report about the progress of ongoing initiatives. We share these updates so that all of our members have a window into our priorities, progress and challenges. However, during this season of giving thanks, and in light of recent storm events, I think it's equally important to let you know just what an impact you have on our co-op and the greater community, likely in ways you may not even realize.

As part of the cooperative business model, one of our core principles is "Concern for Community." While our priority is always to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy, we view our role in the community as a catalyst for good.

We partner with local economic development opportunity organizations, such as the chambers of commerce and local charity organizations. We hope you will consider joining our Operation Round Up (ORU) program, which allows members to round-up their monthly bill to the nearest dollar. Your monthly change is placed in an account, which will fund donations to worthy organizations. The average annual donation is \$6. As ORU grows, we hope to have far greater means to support more organizations and at greater levels than we have in the past.

We also work closely with our local schools to provide safety demonstrations, award college scholarships and sponsor an annual Youth Tour, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a weeklong immersion to experience democracy in action. Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you! You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

On a more personal note, we appreciate your countless acts of kindness our line workers and other employees recently received while working in severe weather and dangerous conditions due to Hurricane Michael. We are thankful for your patience and consideration while we restored power during our crisis. We are proud to serve our members who showed incredible understanding and patience in the aftermath of this hurricane. When the power went off, it reminded me why we work so hard each year to prepare for events like this. When the power came back on, the joy from our members reminded me why I love my job. All of your kind comments; the heartfelt gestures of offering water and food to our team; and the patience shown by you uplifted our employees during this tough time.

We are also thankful for how our communities have reached out to our neighbors to our east who've taken a devastating direct hit from the storm. We will also continue to help our neighboring communities and cooperatives where we can. We can't do it without you, and, we're thankful for your membership.



Please contact CHELCO if your phone number or email address has changed since you became a member. CHELCO contacts members about planned outages, bill updates and more. It is important that the contact information is accurate at all times.

This is especially important if you have changed your cell number. Also, having a correct phone number helps us handle calls more quickly in power outages. Check your bill to ensure your contact number is correct.

# CONNECTIONS CORNER

The Co-op Connections discount program is another benefit of being a CHELCO member. Dozens of local businesses, plus thousands nationally, offer discounts to co-op members. There are also discounts available on prescriptions at participating pharmacies. Don't forget to download the Co-op Connections app.

This month, we highlight and thank the following businesses.

## Rhodes Jewelers, Inc.

- (850) 892-3621
- DeFuniak Springs
- 20% off regular priced items.

## Northwest Florida Golf Carts

- (850) 398-8795
- Crestview
- 10% off annual golf cart service.

## Sarge's Cellular Repair, Inc.

- Sargescellular.com
- (850) 389-4301
- Valparaiso
- 10% off any repair.

For more information, or, if you own a business and want to sign-up to offer CHELCO's 50,000+ member accounts a discount, email [marketingservices@chelco.com](mailto:marketingservices@chelco.com) or call CHELCO's marketing department at (850) 307-1122. You can find all the local and national deals by searching co-op connections at [CHELCO.com](http://CHELCO.com) or download the Co-op Connections app.



## IS \$25 YOURS?

If the account number below matches yours, sign this page and mail it with your bill to CHELCO or drop it off at any office. You'll win a \$25 credit on your next bill.

**Brown – 90000107827**

## CHELCO employees have a heart for our community

CHELCO and Southland Utility Services Employees raised over \$8,600 for the American Heart Association Heart Walk. Steve Rhodes and Southland Utility Services COO Mike Morris were both top walkers, which is a distinction given to community members who raise over \$1,000 individually.



**CHELCO CEO Steve Rhodes and his wife, Tami, at the 2018 Heart Walk.**

## Give with Members Helping Members

If you are in the position to give this holiday season, CHELCO offers two programs for giving. Operation Round Up is a way to give back through organizations that serve a wide variety of needs in our community. We also have Members Helping Members (MHM), which is a way you can help a CHELCO member who needs a helping hand.

MHM is an option for our members to donate \$2 or more on a one-time or recurring basis to help individuals and families who are struggling to pay their electric bill. The support is granted on a one time basis and is not a subsidy. It is needs-based and administrated by the Walton Okaloosa Council on Aging. Members can participate in MHM by filling out the online form at [CHELCO.com](http://CHELCO.com) or calling (800) 342-0990.

## POSITIVE ENERGY

### Lighting Labels and Lingo

These days, consumers have endless options when it comes to purchasing light bulbs, but the labels can be confusing! Use the information below as a helpful guide for browsing bulbs.

Lighting Facts	
Per Bulb	
Brightness	655 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$1.08
<small>Based on 3 hrs/day 11c/kWh Cost depends on rates and use</small>	
Life	22.8 years
<small>Based on 3 hrs/day</small>	
Light Appearance	
<small>Warm 2700 K   Cool</small>	
Energy Used	9 watts

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

#### Read the Label

Under the Energy Labeling Rule, all light bulb manufacturers are required to give consumers key, easy-to-understand information on bulb efficiency. Take advantage of the Lighting Facts label, which gives you the information you need to buy the most energy-efficient bulb to meet your lighting needs. The label includes information on the bulb's **brightness, energy cost, life, light appearance and energy used** (wattage).

#### Save Energy

Bulbs are available in many shapes and sizes to fit your home's needs. Choosing more efficient bulbs can help reduce energy consumption and save you money!

- LEDs use 25%-30% of the energy and last eight to 25 times longer than halogen incandescent bulbs.
- Purchase ENERGY STAR-rated bulbs to maximize energy efficiency.



### Buy Lumens, not Watts

Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption.  
*Tip: To replace a 100-watt incandescent bulb, look for a bulb that produces about 1,600 lumens.*



Incandescent  
100 watt  
1,600 lumens



LED  
14 - 20 watt  
1,600 lumens