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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



CHELCO members visit Tech Center for Open House event

Over 120 CHELCO members and their guests attended CHELCO's Member Appreciation Open House at our new Technology Center in DeFuniak Springs, which opened in May.

Members enjoyed tours through the new facilities, refreshments and visits with departments to learn more about how CHELCO serves its members.

"The event was a great way to showcase all the many ways we serve our members," said CEO Steve Rhodes. "Most people don't realize everything that happens behind the scenes to keep their power on, so this event was a great way to share that with our members."

While this wasn't the Tech Center's first major public event, it was the first open house in which members were invited to

visit areas of the co-op that would otherwise be restricted for non-employees.

"We're very happy to be able to show our members our new Tech Center," said VP of Member Services Emily Cowan.

The Christmas -themed event featured holiday décor, soft Christmas music, a crackling fire display and warm greetings from fellow members and CHELCO employees.

"At CHELCO, we like to treat everyone like family," Cowan said. "Even though I've been here for just less than a year, I've seen all the great things our employees and members do for each other, and it just feels like home. To be able to share our work home with our members was very special and we look forward to hosting more events like this in the future."



CHELCO members tour our new Technology Center at Member Appreciation Open House

A change to CHELCO's College Scholarship program

CHELCO has changed the CHELCO Scholarship selection process for 2020. We will select winners in a lottery-style drawing at our Annual Meeting on April 18 at Freeport High School. We believe this change will benefit a diverse group of students in the years to come.

CHELCO will award six \$1,000 scholarships to members and member dependents who will attend trade school or college as an undergraduate student in the summer or fall semester of 2020. Those seeking graduate degrees will not be eligible for the scholarship.



To apply, students can contact their guidance counselor or fill out the application at CHELCO.com. To win, applicants must apply by March 2 and be present at the Annual Meeting. Applications will be available Jan. 17. For more information, visit CHELCO.com.

2020 election season is here

Democratic member control is one of the seven cooperative principles that separates CHELCO from privately owned businesses. Each member has a vote, and members are elected to represent their district on the Board of Trustees that governs CHELCO. The Board of Trustees establishes CHELCO policies and rates.

Each year, three of the nine positions on CHELCO's Board of Trustees are open for election. This year, members will elect trustees representing Districts 3, 5 and 8 through mail-in balloting. All members may vote in the election regardless of their membership district. Results will be announced at our Annual Meeting on April 18 at Freeport High School.

Each trustee represents a geographic area of CHELCO's service territory, and they must live in the district they represent. Trustee election application packets are available at any area office or CHELCO.com. A nominating

committee reviews the applications and selects candidates. Members may also use a petition process, which is described in the bylaws on our website, to become a candidate. Your district number can be found on your bill to see if you are eligible to run this year. The deadline for applications is Feb. 6.

Important Dates:

- **Feb. 6:** Applications to CHELCO by 5 p.m.
- **Feb. 17:** Candidates' names posted in offices
- **Feb. 27:** Deadline for nominating by petition
- **March 13:** Elections ballots mailed
- **April 13:** Ballots must be returned
- **April 18:** Annual Meeting

CHELCO's 2019 ACSI score is an 88

CHELCO's new American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score is 88 for 2019, maintaining the same level of service you have come to expect. This puts us in the top 25 percent of electric co-ops in the United States for member satisfaction.

CHELCO continues to improve on all benchmarks of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and is proud to be in the top 25 percent in seven of the nine metrics. The BSC rates electric cooperatives on reliability, safety, cost control and member satisfaction.



Reflecting on an active 2019

As we begin a new year at CHELCO, we look forward to the innovations in the energy field that await our industry in the coming months and years. However, we could not begin a new year at CHELCO without first reflecting on a successful year in 2019.

Expanding with new facilities

Last year, CHELCO opened three new facilities to expand and prepare for growth. CHELCO's Eglin Operations Center opened in January and is home to CHELCO's operations, engineering and support staff who serve Eglin Air Force Base.

CHELCO's Technology Center on Hwy. 331 N. in DeFuniak Springs opened in May and is home to the energy control center, engineering, geographic information systems, power quality, metering and call center. At the heart of the Tech Center is our storm-safe operations command center, where executives, communicators and energy control operators will stay around the clock in the event of a hurricane or other significant unplanned outages. This major innovation will help us stay in contact with you and get your power on as quickly as possible if the unforeseen happens.

Southland Utility Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of CHELCO, opened the doors on its new headquarters building in 2019. Southland performs all right-of-way clearing, underground construction and other utility services for CHELCO.

These new buildings replaced very old, inefficient and undersized facilities and are equipped with the latest technology and innovations geared toward serving you, our members, in the most efficient ways possible. Each building was constructed without any rate changes for our members, which can be attributed to our efforts at reducing costs in recent years.

Maximizing our efficiency and maintaining balance to serve you

In 2013, CHELCO's member-to-employee ratio was 306-to-1. Staff reductions through retirements and attrition combined with a growth of 6,500 new meters in service have increased the ratio to 392-to-1 in 2019.

CHELCO has made great progress in controlling costs in the past several years while maintaining our high standards of safety, reliability and customer service. CHELCO's most recent Balanced Scorecard (BSC) results show improvement in five of the nine metrics and rank CHELCO in the top quartile in seven metrics.

Going the extra mile to serve our community

Efficient power distribution and maintenance of lines is one of CHELCO's obvious priorities, but we also go above and beyond to help those in our communities in many situations. In 2019, our new member-funded Operation Round-Up program raised \$12,782.56 for non-

profits in our service territory that positively impact our communities.

CHELCO employees have always done far more than their job descriptions require them to, and 2019 was no different. Dozens of members had great things to say about employees going above and beyond their duties last year. Whether it was a member services representative making someone's day in an area office, a lineman working through a thunderstorm to restore power, or a facilities maintenance technician changing a young lady's tire on the side of a busy road, our employees continued to go the extra mile to help those around us.

Thank you, members

Above all, we could not have made it through a busy and productive year without you. Each one of our more than 53,000 member accounts helps us achieve our goals and maintain our high standards for service. With 2019 in the books, it's time to once again look forward to another successful year at CHELCO as we strive to make this year even better than the last!



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.

Smith – 201006798

POSITIVE ENERGY

Personalized video bill helps you save energy and money

As the weather changes, so do the costs to heat and cool your home. This can occasionally lead to an unexpected high bill. Understanding the impact of the weather, causes of energy consumption and billing period can help you reduce your energy usage and avoid high bills without sacrificing comfort in your home.

CHELCO, looking for ways to help our members save on their bills, recently began providing a free personalized video bill service. The service is delivered by email and is triggered by your bill varying by at least \$50 from the previous month.

Energy analysis just for you

Your home and family are unique, and so is your energy use. These entertaining personal video messages explain your home's energy use by using your actual billing data. If there is an increase or decrease in your energy use, the video will explain which factors may have contributed to the change. The video will explain the impact of local weather and the number of days in the billing period, broken down in easy-to-understand terms. The explanation can also include factors such as guests in the home, thermostat settings and recommendations on how to save energy.

To participate in the messaging service, CHELCO needs to link an email address to your account. Should you wish to provide your current email, please contact us at (800) 342-0990 or online through the account portal. The account portal also allows members to see their statement, pay their bill and monitor their energy usage.



Your bill amount has changed from last month.

[Click Here to See Why](#)



Rushing achieves Energy Management Certification

CHELCO Energy Advisor Tina Rushing recently achieved her Certification in Energy Management (CEM) and has joined the ranks of over 16,000 CEMs worldwide.

Tina met the board-approved list of pre-qualifications of field experience and educational achievement and passed the CEM exam in order to earn her CEM certification, which will help her be an excellent consultant in the energy field.

If you have questions for our Energy Advisors on how you can be more energy efficient and save on your energy bill, call the Energy Services Department at (850) 307-1122.



Tina Rushing

No DCA collection in December: Each month, CHELCO collects a Distribution Cost Adjustment (DCA) fee from members, which helps pay for operation and energy distribution. CHELCO did not collect the DCA for the month of December to help members have an enjoyable holiday with their loved ones without the extra fee on their energy bills. The DCA line in the billing summary will reflect no charges, saving members nearly \$200,000.