

CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

AUGUST 2021 | VOL. 26 NO. 8



A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

A day in the life of an Energy Control Operator



Energy Control Operator Rolan Hernandez watches for alarms, monitors weather, dispatches crews and more from CHELCO's Energy Control Center.

While most people are asleep, not giving much thought to their electricity, there's always a CHELCO Energy Control Operator awake, alert and prepared to respond to anything that might interrupt the electric grid.

These Energy Control Operators are responsible for making decisions and restoring electrical power, monitoring and controlling the distribution system and operating the outage management system. In other words, they are our ever-present and ever-watching eyes, always ready to do what must be done to keep the lights on.

"What really sets us apart is when everyone else goes home at the end

of the day," said Energy Control Operator Rolan Hernandez. "There is always an operator on duty 24/7."

The day starts at midnight with consumer updates on CHELCO's outage monitoring system, with regular health checks on the SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system, which monitors the entire CHELCO electrical grid.

Later in the morning, Energy Control Operators perform remote work on members' meters, and they provide safety SCADA tags so Line Technicians can work in a safer environment.

"We also monitor the weather and keep an eye out for any unusual alarms," Hernandez said. "If alarms

Inside

Page 2

CEO Insights: Education is key for CHELCO's success

Page 3

How to stay safe after major storms

Page 4

Surge protection prevents lightning damage

Announcement

Office Closure

CHELCO offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 6, in observance of Labor Day.

September

6



CEO Insights: Education is key for CHELCO's success

When many people think of August, they think of hot days, afternoon storms and back to school season. Summer provides a well-deserved break for students, teachers and other school personnel, and it's hard to believe this break is already over.

CHELCO can't take the summer off like our wonderful educators, but we do understand the importance of education. My mother taught fifth and sixth grade for 35 years. She worked many hours beyond what was required, and without complaint, because she truly cared about her students and wanted to make a difference in their lives. Her former students still tell me how much they enjoyed having her as a teacher to this day. Today, many teachers just like her continue to impact countless lives in and out of the classroom.

We take pride in helping local teachers provide a positive learning environment through teacher grants in Okaloosa and Walton counties. These \$6,000 grants can be used to upgrade classroom technology, purchase essential supplies and make teaching and learning easier.

CHELCO also supports education through our scholarship program, which benefits six members or their dependents who are pursuing their undergraduate degrees. With the cost of books, housing and course fees, we are more than happy to help ease the financial burden of a college education.

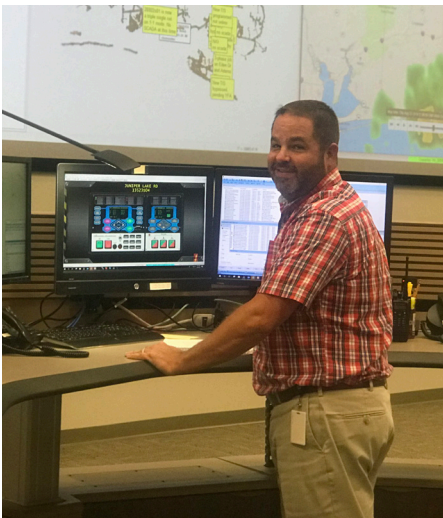
Education is important to each of us at CHELCO, too. Our employees attend trainings frequently, even adapting to virtual formats during the pandemic. Many employees

cross-train with other departments to get a more comprehensive understanding of the entire company and why each job is essential. From hurricane preparation training to customer service courses, we continually learn new ways to improve our ability to serve.

While you and your family get ready for the new school year, we will be here to support local students, teachers and all school personnel to help you have the best year possible. At CHELCO, we'll be studying hard too, because there's always something new to learn. I believe author Anthony J. D'Angelo put it best: "Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow."

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer

A day in the life of an Energy Control Operator (cont. from p. 1)



Energy Control Operators like Jeff Sloan (above) work with many applications, using up to five monitors at once.

do come in, we try and pinpoint where the problem could be in order to reduce troubleshooting time, which in turn reduces the outage time."

Energy Control is responsible for dispatching Line Technicians to respond to power outages. They also dispatch other departments, including Power Quality, Engineering, Metering and more.

"Our Energy Control Operators really have to know a little bit about every department," said Matthew Rushing, Manager of Energy Control Center. "In addition to their other duties, they also field after-hours calls from members, so it's an asset

to the cooperative that they are able to answer questions on various topics, such as billing and payment options."

The next time you lay your head down at night, or when you're enjoying a nice Saturday afternoon, or even while making lifelong memories with your family on Christmas morning, remember that there's always someone in the Energy Control Center ready to perform whatever tasks necessary to keep your lights on and your life powered. Please join us in thanking our Energy Control Operators for their continuous dedication!

How to stay safe after major storms



A fallen power line leans over the highway following Hurricane Sally in September 2020. Always stay away from downed lines and call 911.

Thunderstorms, hurricanes, tornadoes and flooding often leave behind more than damage. In many cases, they can leave hidden dangers that could be life-threatening.

When cleaning up after a storm or flood damage, stay away from downed power lines and watch out for tree limbs or debris that may be hiding electrical hazards. As a rule of thumb, always treat downed power lines as if they are energized, stay away and call 911.

Additionally, you should always stay away from objects or standing water near downed power lines. Encountering these objects can be as hazardous as coming into contact with a downed power line itself.

If your home is flooded, never step into an area where water is covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Never attempt to turn power

on or off at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so, and never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water.

If your power is out for a long period of time following a storm or other disaster, know important safety rules, such as never using a charcoal or gas grill inside. If you use a generator, make sure a transfer safety switch has been installed, or connect appliances directly to the generator. This prevents electricity from traveling through the home back to the power lines, which creates a danger for anyone near lines, especially crews working to restore power.

For more storm safety tips, visit [CHELCO.com/storm-prep](https://www.chelco.com/storm-prep) to get ready before, during and after a hurricane or other disaster.

Online tools can help improve efficiency

Understanding how your home uses energy could help you save on your monthly bills. With the tools we provide online, you can check how much you can save with our in-depth energy calculators, energy efficiency cost benefit analysis and more. From appliances, heating and cooling to electric vehicles, all of our tools are designed to help you understand your home's energy and how you can make the most of the energy you use. Visit [CHELCO.com](https://www.chelco.com) and explore all of our helpful tools under the Energy Efficiency tab.

Recipe of the Month



Cafeteria Sloppy Joes

Many of us remember eating sloppy joes in school. With back-to-school season in full swing, "Cafeteria Sloppy Joes" are the perfect late-summer recipe to try! Visit [CHELCO.com/recipes](https://www.chelco.com/recipes) to learn this delicious and simple recipe.

CHELCO is governed by a nine-member board of trustees: Lee Perry, District 1; Terry Pilcher, District 2; Reese Harrison, District 3; Brady Bearden, Vice President, District 4; Ronald Jones, District 5; Gerald Edmondson, President, District 6; Bert Prutzman, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, District 7; Gayle Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer, District 8; Dwayne Davis, District 9.

Surge protection prevents lightning damage



One CHELCO survey indicated that over 50% of respondents have experienced damage caused by lightning. CHELCO provides our members an option to help reduce the chances of lightning damage through our surge protection program.

Our energy advisors will conduct a site evaluation of your home and provide recommendations to mitigate your risks from lightning damage. Following the evaluation, if you agree to do so, our trained technicians will install a meter-based surge protector designed to divert transient lightning's energy before it enters your home. When coupled with our point-of-use surge

protectors, they together provide excellent protection for all of your valuable and important electronic devices.

The meter-based surge protector is installed for a small fee of \$6.95 per month, conveniently added to your electric bill. Similar to taking an umbrella when you anticipate rain, adding the surge protection devices to your home protects the investment in your appliances when thunderstorms approach.

If you're interested in learning more about our residential or commercial surge protection programs, call our Energy Services department at 850-307-1122.

Connections Corner

The Co-op Connections discount program is another benefit of being a CHELCO member. Local businesses, participating pharmacies and thousands nationally offer discounts to co-op members. Don't forget to download the Co-op Connections app!

This month, we highlight and thank the following businesses:

Ron's Appliance & Antique
1095 S Ferdon Blvd, Crestview
(850) 689-1007
15% off total bill (excluding tax)

Northwest Florida Golf Cars
823 W James Lee Blvd, Crestview
(850) 737-1499
10% annual golf cart service

Sarge's Cellular Repair, Inc.
98 S John Sims Pkwy, Valparaiso
(850) 892-5111
10% off any repair (not including prepaid refills, not in combination with any other offer)

For more information, visit CHELCO.com, email energyservices@chelco.com or call CHELCO's Energy Services department at (850) 307-1122.

Special Needs Registry offers storm assistance

The Florida Department of Health, in coordination with its county health departments and each local emergency management agency in the state, developed a registry for those with special needs to register with their local emergency management agency to receive assistance during a disaster. The statewide registry provides first responders with valuable information to prepare for disasters or other emergencies. To register, visit the Florida Special Needs Registry online.

To find unclaimed capital credits, visit CHELCO.com/capital-credits.

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.

Foster - 9000093252