

CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

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CHELCO Concern for Community highlighted at local events



From L to R: Kisha Brinson, Energy Services; Glenn Garrett, Power Quality, Linda Sinwelski, Human Resources & Training; Cole Hatcher, Operations; Nathan Hobbs, Communications

At CHELCO, it takes a coordinated effort from various departments to provide reliable and efficient service to our members. Recently, staff attended Maude Saunders' **Career Exploration Day**, where they spoke with elementary students about their unique roles and responsibilities. Whether it's maintaining power quality or developing training programs for employees, each department contributes to the overall mission of providing exceptional service to our members. It was a fantastic opportunity to engage with the next generation and show them how teamwork and commitment are at the heart of everything we do.

CHELCO was proud to sponsor the United Way Emerald Coast's inaugural **Non-Profit Summit** held on October 17. CHELCO Communications Specialist Tyler Wood (pictured above, left) had the honor of introducing the opening keynote speaker Gregory Haile, J.D. - Deputy Chair, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Later in the day, Vice President of Member Services & External Affairs Emily Cowan sat on a collaborative panel of local businesses including Eglin Federal Credit Union, Florida Power & Light and Harley-Davidson to discuss what drives their companies' support of non-profits in our community.



From L to R: Tyler Wood, Communications Specialist and Emily Cowan, VP of Member Services & External Affairs

To learn more about CHELCO's Community Programs visit CHELCO.com.



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Upcoming Office Closures

All CHELCO offices will be closed on Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29, 2024, to allow our staff time to spend Thanksgiving with their loved ones.

Additionally, we will be closed the following dates in December and January.

- Dec. 12 - Employee Training
- Dec. 24 and 25 - Christmas
- Jan. 01, 2025 - New Years



CEO Insights: 1,000 Days of Safety: A Milestone Worth Celebrating

“Working safely may get old, but so do those who practice it.”

I heard this quote recently, and although its author is unknown, I thought it was a fitting statement for the way we work at CHELCO. Although I don't think that working safely “gets old” to our team, it certainly does keep them safe and, in turn, living to see more and more days.

As of Oct. 3, we have just celebrated a major milestone: **1,000 days without a lost-time injury.**

At CHELCO, safety is a core value... I'd even say it's *the* core value. Our employees, whether working in the field or in the office, understand its importance and put safety first in all that they do. The result? For 1,000 consecutive days, our employees have worked safely, without the need for any team member to miss time due to injury.

This achievement is even more meaningful when we consider our safety timeline. From August 2019 to January 2022, CHELCO set a record

of 885 days without a lost-time injury. It was certainly a high bar, but by continuing to focus on safety, we've now surpassed that record by a significant margin.

At CHELCO, we have historical records of lost-time injuries dating back to 2002. Over the past 20-plus years, we have had several streaks of 500 or more days without a lost-time injury. However, our team doesn't see this new mark as a finish line. Instead, we view it as a reminder that we're doing things the right way.

Reaching this milestone also puts us in an elite group when compared to other electric cooperatives. In recent safety metrics, CHELCO ranked in the top quartile of similarly sized cooperatives in every measured category.

Another exciting benchmark is on the horizon. Soon, barring any injuries in the near future, we will surpass 1 million employee hours worked without a lost-time injury. These numbers don't just reflect data – they are a testament to the culture of safety that we've built together, one that ensures everyone gets home

safely to their families at the end of each day.

I'd like to celebrate our team for this tremendous accomplishment. Given that we are a rapidly-growing co-op in both members and employees, 1,000 days is truly worth recognizing. If you see some of our folks out and about in our community, I encourage you to congratulate them, because it truly is a tremendous achievement.

In celebration of the milestone, our Communications Department created a video showcasing our staff and the roles every department has played in getting us here. I invite you to watch it on our YouTube page or scan the QR code below. The video, narrated by members of our Safety Team, is a great archive of this achievement that we are proud to share with everyone.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving, and I hope you get to spend some extra time with those you love this holiday season!

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer



Happy Thanksgiving from the Rhodes Family and my granddaughters, Evelyn and Charlotte!

Less than two weeks apart, Hurricanes Helene and Milton devastate; CHELCO sends help

According to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), Hurricane Helene knocked out power to an estimated 1.25 million co-op members, proving to be one of the most consequential storms in the 87-year history of electric cooperatives.

Within 36 hours of landfall, CHELCO, accompanied by Southland Utility Services, sent 25 individuals from various departments who would end up traveling along Florida's big bend assisting Talquin Electric Cooperative (Quincy), Tri-County Electric Cooperative (Madison), and Clay Electric Cooperative (Keystone Heights).

As Hurricane Helene's damage extended beyond the state lines, so did CHELCO's mutual aid efforts. Over a week after the storm's September 26 landfall, a group of line technicians traveled to Little Ocmulgee Electric Membership Cooperative in Alamo, GA.

Narrowly shy of two weeks after Helene made landfall, Hurricane Milton was barreling towards our beloved state again before making landfall near Sarasota on October 9.

The five NRECA member co-ops that sustained the most damage from Hurricane Milton reported nearly 330,000 outages initially. 65,450 of those outages were located in Wachula, Florida, home to Peace River Electric Cooperatives. CHELCO sent 24 employees to aid as damage assessors, warehouse staff and line technicians.

These employees represented CHELCO incredibly well, and we are grateful to have them back home.

Recently, we sat down with some of the staff who assisted our sister cooperatives following Hurricane Helene and Milton.

Watch the video by scanning the QR code below.



CHELCO and Southland Utility Services crews gather for a safety briefing and moment of prayer before departing CHELCO Headquarters Saturday, September 28, for Clay Electric Cooperative.

STAY IN THE KNOW

You can sign up for reminders and other notifications in your online account. Simply login to our online member portal and navigate to "Notifications" under the "My Account" tab. There, you can sign up for 7-day due date reminders, bill creation notifications, cutoff notices and payment receipts. To add your preferred contact methods, navigate to "Manage Contacts" under the "My Account" tab.

EPA POWER PLANT RULE

The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) recently finalized a new power plant rule that unfairly targets coal and natural gas plants by forcing a rapid reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through the use of technology that is both costly and speculative. The rule will lead to plant closures, higher power prices and significant reliability challenges as demand for electricity grows. To read more including the key parts of the EPA rule and the likely impacts, visit www.chelco.com/epa-power-plant-rule.

2004 CAPITAL CREDITS TO BE RETIRED

CHELCO's Board of Trustees has approved a retirement of nearly \$1.5 million in capital credits to cooperative members from 2004, which will be disbursed in December. To learn more, visit www.chelco.com/capital-credits.

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.

Youth Tour applications are now available



CHELCO's 2024 Youth Tour group on the steps of the Florida Historic Capitol Building.

Are you a junior in high school? Are you the dependent of a CHELCO member? If so, you are eligible to apply for Youth Tour!

What is Youth Tour?

Youth Tour is a free program sponsored by CHELCO that brings local high school juniors to Tallahassee in February to visit our state's capital and to learn more about electric co-ops, meet with state officials and meet other co-op students from around the state.

All students from CHELCO who attend the two-day Tallahassee trip are eligible to compete for a week-long, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June.

How can I participate?

Schools are responsible for selecting up to two representatives to attend Youth Tour with CHELCO. Speak with your guidance counselor if you are interested.

How are winners for the D.C. trip selected?

Students who participate in the Tallahassee trip in February are given a prompt to create a 2-4 minute video on their Youth Tour experience, their extracurricular activities and themselves. The videos are sent to three judges unaffiliated with CHELCO, and the top four scorers are chosen to represent CHELCO in Washington, D.C. in June.

What's next?

If you would like to participate in Youth Tour, please visit CHELCO.com/Youth-Tour or speak with your guidance counselor for an application packet.

To learn more about Youth Tour and some of the great experiences that students had in 2024, check out the latest episode of our podcast, On The Grid, by scanning the QR code below.

Important Dates

Dec. 20, 2024: Deadline to apply

Feb. 12-13, 2025: Tallahassee trip

June 16-21, 2025: Washington trip



AEC PAC Supports Co-ops Nationwide

America's Electric Cooperative's PAC (formerly known as the Action Committee for Rural Electrification/ACRE) is a grassroots political action committee (PAC) that supports and advocates for electric cooperatives around the country. Co-ops just like CHELCO have AEC PAC's support to help implement policies at the state and federal level that are beneficial to cooperatives and their members. AEC PAC contributions to candidates are backed by around 40,000 eligible members across 47 states.

For more information, and to learn how you can get involved to make sure your co-op is fairly represented in office, visit electric.coop/pac.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

As cooler weather approaches, seal windows and doors to prevent drafts, and ensure your home is properly insulated to maintain warmth. Also, consider installing a smart thermostat to take control of your heating and save big on energy costs.

IS \$25 YOURS?

If the account number below matches yours, call us at (850) 892-2111 or stop by any CHELCO office to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill! This month's winner is:

Johnson - 202008843