

CHOPTANK FIBER IS NOW OFFERING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Good News ...

Choptank Fiber is offering financial assistance to customers. We have been declared an approved Internet Service Provider (ISP) for federal and state programs that help families pay their monthly internet bills. Combining all three programs can reduce your internet subscription by \$60 per month. Choptank Fiber's 100 Mbps plan is marketed at \$84.95 per month. Once approved for the discounts, a family could get that for less than \$25 per month. That's very fast internet with no data caps. Faster packages are also available and applicable for the same discounts. Don't let economic stress prevent you and your family from participating in the wonders

of high-speed internet when Choptank Fiber gets to your rural address. Check out ways to qualify by logging onto the Choptank Fiber Discount page or call our Member Service Center. This is one more way the leaders and staff here at Choptank Electric Cooperative are working to serve our community.



Mike Malandro,
President & CEO
Choptank Electric
Cooperative

For more information and to see if you qualify
> www.choptankfiber.com/discounts

Chop-A-Watt Brings Relief to Low-to-Moderate Income Families

Members who qualify could receive up to \$7,000 in weatherization improvements to their home. This includes upgrades to water heaters, appliances, insulation and heating and cooling systems.

For more information and to see if you qualify > www.choptankelectric.coop/chop-a-watt

2024 Annual Meeting Date Announced

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 25, 2024, in Salisbury, MD. Location details are pending and will be announced later this fall.



Offices Will Be Closed Monday, September 4, 2023

HAPPY LABOR DAY!!!



Choptank Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Choptank Fiber

P.O. Box 430 | Denton, MD | 21629
Member Service Center: 1-877-892-0001
Automated Member Service: 1-866-999-4574
Automated Outage Reporting: 1-800-410-4790
Text "OUT" to: 1-800-410-4790
Use SmartHub to Manage Account,
Track Usage and Report Outages —>



WWW.CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP

I am the summer intern for the Marketing and Communications department here at Choptank Electric Cooperative. As such, I've been asked to write a little about what I'm studying, what I'm doing here at the Co-op and report on the activities of the other summer interns. When my internship is over, I will be a sophomore at Salisbury University studying business management and communications. I've lived on the Eastern Shore of Maryland my whole life. Choptank Electric Cooperative has always been active in my community, so I decided that I wanted to intern here when I was making decisions last winter.



Samantha Casale,
Government Affairs and
Public Relations Intern

As a business management major and communications minor, I knew that interning at Choptank Electric Cooperative would give me real-world experience that will help with job opportunities after I graduate.

During my brief time as the communications intern, I've already experienced so many great opportunities. I've been on jobsites and got to see how quickly and safely our crews are at restoring power to our members. Of course, I had the appropriate attire (a hard hat and a neon vest)! On my first day, I traveled to Cecil County to attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony

to celebrate a Choptank Fiber expansion. I have also attended and worked at the exhibit booth at fairs and festivals in Choptank's service territory.

I have always liked writing, especially about a topic I enjoy. When I was asked to draft this article, I was over the moon. All these opportunities have been wonderful, but the most amazing parts about working at this Cooperative are the people. From day one, I have witnessed just how much we put our members first here at Choptank Electric Cooperative.

My positive experience is mirrored by the four engineering interns spending the summer with us:



Owen Mank,
Engineering Intern

Owen Mank attends the University of Maryland, where he studies electrical engineering. He plans to specialize in renewable energy harvesting. He is interning for the RGrid fiber optic design team.

Owen heard about Choptank Electric through the school's student representative program, and he applied for this internship to get a more personal understanding of how power is distributed to regions.

His favorite parts of the internship so far are seeing the steps that go into designing the fiber optic grid and contributing to it by going into the field to get distances for

designing and tagging for pole change outs. He appreciates learning everything that must be considered in the design process. He hopes his internship experience will give him a more direct understanding of how power and internet distribution is achieved, which will be helpful if he decides to go into researching ways to improve it.

Owen hopes to go on to graduate school to achieve a doctorate in power systems/harvesting. He would also like to do research for the U.S. Department of Energy to further the ability to transition into cleaner energy sources to better protect our environment that we inhabit.



Justin Thompson,
Engineering Intern

Justin Thompson attends the University of Maryland, College Park, where he studies electrical engineering. Here at Choptank Electric, Justin interns with RGrid contractors and works on the fiber project.

As an engineering intern, Justin goes out into the field to get pole measurements and underground distances for the fiber construction and comes back into the office to design it. His favorite part of the internship so far is witnessing "behind the scenes" how power and fiber/internet gets delivered into homes. Justin finds it rewarding



Cooperative Interns

Summer of 2023

By Samantha Casale, Government Affairs and Public Relations Intern

to see our members get excited when they see our crew. “If we are out around their homes, they know it means they are getting close to fiber,” he explains.

Justin hopes his internship experience brings more knowledge about power and fiber distribution. He also hopes to gain a better understanding of the business side of things and how co-ops and contractors work together.

Justin plans to graduate from the University of Maryland, College Park, next year and assume a position as an electrical engineer soon after.



Jordan Figueroa,
Engineering Intern

Jordan Figueroa attends Elizabethtown College where he studies electrical engineering. While at school, Jordan enjoys being a pole vaulter on the men’s track team. He is interning for the engineering department working with RGrid contractors.

He believes interning at Choptank will be beneficial as he works to gain experience in his field of study.

Jordan’s favorite parts about this internship so far has been building

professional relationships with Choptank and RGrid staff as well as developing skills for when he begins his career. Throughout the rest of his internship, Jordan hopes to learn more about how Choptank

“We have been very impressed with this group of local interns. These students are completing valuable work, bringing high speed internet to the Eastern Shore. One of the objectives of our internship program is to expose students to rewarding careers within the utility industry allowing them to stay in our local communities. We hope these students will consider keeping their incredible talent on the Shore.”

– Leroy Sverduk,
Vice President of Engineering
Choptank Electric Cooperative

Fiber works. He would also like to learn more about the electrical distribution side of the business.

Jordan plans to graduate from Elizabethtown College in May of 2024.



Isaac Dressler,
Engineering Intern

Isaac Dressler attends Penn State where he studies electrical engineering. While looking for a way into the electrical engineering world, he got word that Choptank Electric would be a great place to start. Isaac says, “A co-op with a great reputation would be a great start to get my hands dirty.” Isaac is interning for the electrical engineering department.

Isaac enjoys seeing the process unfold from the computer work and design, to witnessing that design become developed. He also enjoys the balance of fieldwork and office work, therefore being able to enjoy the outdoors as well. He hopes to learn more about how the infrastructure for power generation is designed and more about fiber optic communication.

Isaac plans to finish his degree in electrical engineering at Penn State and to explore jobs in that field of study. Though he is not specific on any field of this degree, Isaac says, “For now, I am happy receiving quality experience at Choptank Electric that will benefit me in the long run.”



Dan Worell explains the different stages of an oyster's growth and how electricity plays an important role in his farming

Dan Worrell, founder and operator of Fallen Pine Oyster Farm, took a leap of faith right before the Covid-19 outbreak to start an oyster catering company, Shell and Barrell. Worell's passion started when he worked for the Oyster Recovery Partnership as a shell recovery technician, and as a nationally ranked competitive oyster shucker after college. "Being on the water, in intense environmental conditions, and producing a high-quality product can be overwhelming much of the time. However, improving overall water quality, highlighting the importance of this growing industry, and working the water like my great grandparents is well worth it," says

Worell. During 2021, he changed gears from catering to farming, when he found a gemstone of an existing oyster lease located in a remote area of Worcester County. Worell's oyster farm sits on the north shore of Brockatorton Bay, which is a stone's throw away from Chincoteague Bay.

Requiring the use of single-phase and reliable power for his on-site refrigeration and oyster tumblers, Choptank Electric Cooperative was there to take the call. On a hot and humid August day in 2022, Worell was to receive a full truck load of 4' by 6' floating oyster cages that look like upside down pontoon boats. Employing a small army of



Nick Tyler takes great care in working the land and growing oysters

Separating the oysters by size, the tumbler is an important piece of Fallen Pines's equipment



Oyster Farming on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Fuels Member's Passion

By Matthew Teffeau, Manager Government Affairs and Economic Development

Fallen Pine's end product makes it all worth it

friends and family that day, he could not believe what transpired as a fuse box blew due to the harsh salty marsh environment. Within minutes, an outage was reported to Choptank and a crew was dispatched to his location. "If I were to pick one day I could not have a repair vehicle blocking our road, it was that specific day," Worell recalls. Deciding to break for lunch, Worell and his flotilla of large trucks returned to find that Choptank Electric's crew had completed the repair and restored power. "Not only was I relieved, but I have rarely been as impressed with the cooperation, and customer service that CEC provided."

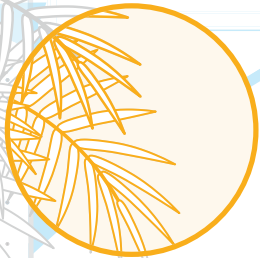
Keeping the lights on and operating a small business like Fallen Pine Oyster Farm in a remote area is a 24/7 undertaking. Worell, like many, is driven to succeed in his endeavor to grow the oyster farming industry and build future infrastructure to help it grow. Maintaining the increase in demand for his oysters is his biggest challenge right now. The typical market-size oyster takes over two growing seasons (May to November) to achieve. "Growing oysters is a labor-intensive job, and nature doesn't always cooperate with market demands," Worell explains. "We must cultivate and check on the oysters daily before they are ready to go to market. Not

having reliable sources of energy would make the job impossible."

Worell's oysters, Salt Buoys and Wild Ass Ponies, come with a distinctive oceanic taste being so close to the Chincoteague Bay and Atlantic Ocean. He has labeled them as Maryland's saltiest oysters due to the elevated salinity levels from evaporation in the coastal bay. Bringing fresh products to local markets has been a long-standing tradition on Maryland's Eastern Shore. If you would like to learn more about Worell's operation, please visit www.fallenpineoystercompany.com.

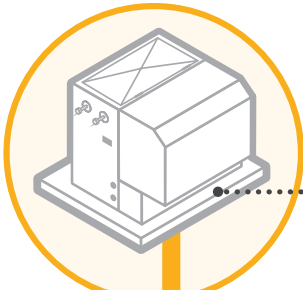
HURRICANE HARDENING

Hurricane season in the United States runs June 1 through November 30. As the intensity and frequency of storms have increased over the past decade, electric cooperatives whose territories are vulnerable to hurricanes have worked to improve their systems to minimize damage and disruptions from high winds and flooding and speed recovery times. Here are some of the key measures that Choptank Electric Cooperative has taken to harden the grid.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Conduct regular trimming and removal of trees within rights-of-way



Pad-mounted transformer

Pole

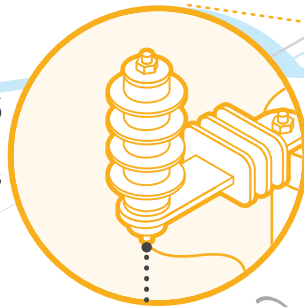
Underground power lines

UNDERGROUNDING

Move vulnerable sections of line underground to protect them from high winds and falling trees

LIGHTNING ARRESTERS

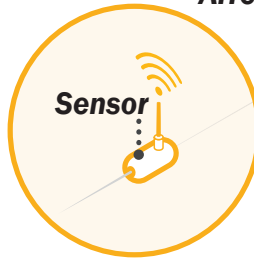
Install devices that divert surges from lightning strikes to keep power flowing



Arrester

DA/FLISR

Deploy “self-healing” systems like distribution automation and fault location, isolation and service restoration to minimize the scope and duration of outages

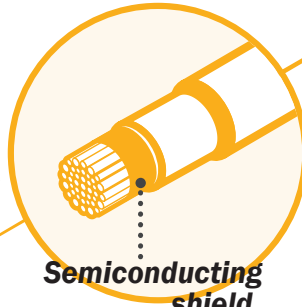


Sensor

Cutout fuse

WIRE UPGRADES

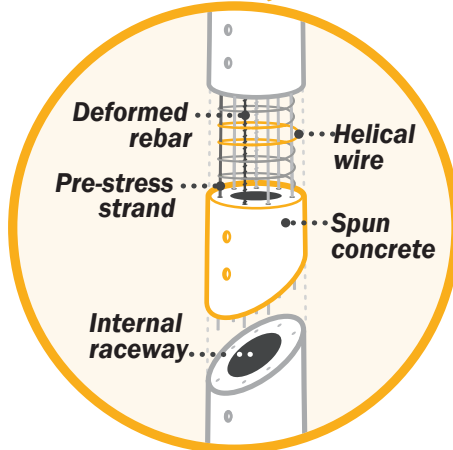
Replace standard conductor with larger-diameter, coated “tree wire” to resist damage from wind and tree limbs



Semiconducting shield

POLE MANAGEMENT

Increase pole inspections and repairs and replace wood poles with higher-class wood, metal or concrete to better withstand strong winds



Deformed rebar

Helical wire

Pre-stress strand

Spun concrete

Internal raceway

Source: NRECA; Design by Kevin Kepple



Mobile Substation Ready

By Bobby Schaller, MultiMedia Manager

Our number one priority is to provide reliable, safe and affordable power to all of our 56,000 - plus members. With 6,369 miles of power line spanning The Eastern Shore of Maryland, there is no shortage of challenges to overcome in accomplishing our mission. Because of that, we are always preparing to meet those challenges that lie ahead.

This could mean changing out a damaged pole, clearing trees from out of a right-of-way or taking part in important training. Earlier this summer Choptank Electric Co-op, Delaware Electric Co-op and A&N Electric Co-op came together for training related to the connection of our mobile substation. In the event that we were to experience a substation transformer failure, this mobile substation provides us with the ability to move in, connect to the existing substation bus work and restore power to our members.

Sharing equipment and knowledge

among other cooperatives is important. Cooperation among cooperatives is one of the seven founding principles of co-ops. Simply put, we are able to serve our members most effectively by working together. Sharing

“We share this mobile substation with Delaware Electric Cooperative, so when they had a need for it, it just made perfect sense to use this as a training opportunity for all involved.”

– Lance Lockerman,
Vice President of Operations
Choptank Electric Cooperative

this mobile substation and the knowledge to run it makes the whole Delmarva Peninsula stronger.

Fortunately, we have only had to use



the mobile substation a handful of times over the years, and because of that we regularly familiarize and train with it to keep the knowledge fresh. With training, education and adopting new innovations, we have kept our work environment compliant and safe, making it easier for us to keep our members first, every day.

“Not only was I relieved, but I have rarely been as impressed with the cooperation and customer service that Choptank Electric Cooperative provided.”

– Choptank member Dan Worrell, of Fallen Pine Oyster Farm, speaking of a quick and timely repair.



Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution co-op serving approximately 56,000 residential, commercial and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

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Worcester Co.



Choptank Fiber, LLC

Choptank Fiber, LLC, is a wholly owned broadband subsidiary of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Choptank Fiber’s goal is to install true gigabit broadband with no data caps one community at a time until we serve all our members on the Eastern Shore.

Choptank Electric Trust Awards



The Choptank Electric Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation funded by Operation Round Up donations from members of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Funds from the Trust are distributed in all nine counties of MD’s Eastern Shore. To apply or to find out more about this program:

> www.choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund

July 2023

- Betterton VFC - \$2,374
- Tides of Grace - \$5,000

The total of approved applications for July was \$20,640, which included \$13,265 for individual home and medical expenses.