

LIVE WIRE

Celebrating
80
1938 2018
Years of Service



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JULY 2018

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Toll Free:
1-877-892-0001

Outage Reporting:
1-800-410-4790,
toll free,
24 hours/day,
7 days/week.

Automated Member
Service Line:
1-866-999-4574, toll free

www.choptankelectric.coop

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Choptank Electric Supports New St. Michaels YMCA Construction



Left to Right: Mike Wheatley, President and CEO of Choptank Electric Cooperative; Curtis Short, Manager of Regional Operations for our St. Michaels District office; Jan Thorkelson, St. Michaels YMCA Board Member; Tracy Cohee, St. Michaels YMCA Executive Director; Robbie Gill, YMCA of the Chesapeake CEO; Kerry Foxwell, YMCA of the Chesapeake Director of Capital and Planned Giving; Jeffrey Rathell, Chairman & Director of Talbot County; Derek White, YMCA of the Chesapeake Group Executive.

Choptank Electric Cooperative presents YMCA staff with a \$4,000 check toward the construction of the new YMCA St. Michaels location.

Choptank Electric Cooperative has pledged to donate \$20,000 over a five-year period to the YMCA of the Chesapeake. The donation will go towards the construction of the new YMCA St. Michaels location.

Located behind the St. Michaels Middle and High School, this new facility will have a wellness area with weights and cardio equipment, group exercise rooms, a swimming pool with lap lanes and water fitness space, a basketball gymnasium, kitchen, childcare, office space, and multipurpose space. This facility will also double as a Senior Center so that seniors can participate in activities and meals together.

“Investing in the local communities we serve is at the core of what co-ops do. We are committed to improving the lives of our members here in St. Michaels,” said Mike Wheatley, President and CEO of Choptank Electric Cooperative. “One of the 7 Cooperative Principles is Commitment to Community, so it’s a natural fit for us to invest in the community’s health, wellness, and safety.”



Straight Talk with your CEO

by Mike Wheatley

How to Become a Choptank Electric Board of Director

At Choptank Electric's recent Annual Meeting, our members exercised their right to vote by electing three board members. As we look forward to the 2019 Annual Meeting, we would like to remind our members how to apply for a Director of the Board position.

Requirements and qualifications can be found on our website at www.choptankelectric.coop, under the “About Us” tab, “Cooperative Bylaws.” In the Bylaws, Article IV explains the procedure. Members may also request a paper copy by calling our Member Service Center at 1-877-892-0001.

The board currently is comprised of 10 members. Each year, at least three seats are up for election on a rotational basis. The Bylaws also dictate that the Cooperative give notice at least 165 days prior to the next Annual Meeting of which seats are available for election that year.

See Board of Director
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Outage Map Features: Information at your Fingertips

The Outage Map is a great tool we offer to our members to use during outage situations. During this hurricane season use these features to stay informed with up-to-date information.

Estimated Time of Restoration (ETR): This feature helps members estimate when their power should be restored. This information is located in a grey box that appears when you click on any colored dot that is located on the Outage Map.

County/Zip Code Tally: A county tally tells the membership how many members in that particular county are without power. This is on the right side of the map in the grey tool box. When you click on the particular county that is being affected, the map will automatically bring you to that county and then display how many members are without power. If you would like to see this information in zip code format, simply click on the drop down menu

that says “County” and it will automatically change to zip code format.

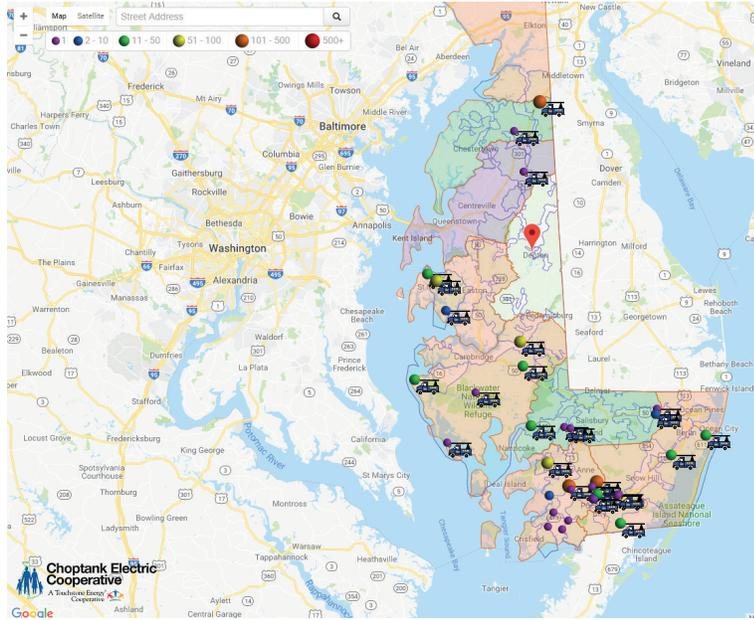
Color-Coded Dots: These dots represent the amount of people who are without power according to color and size. When these dots are on the map, you can click on them and display details on that particular outage like how many members are without power, where are they located, and what is the estimated time of restoration.

Trucks: When a truck is on the map this icon means that a crew has been dispatched to the outage.

During outages we encourage our members to use this map as a resource for information. The Outage Map is

just another way Choptank Electric Cooperative is communicating with its members.

Check out all of these features and more at www.choptankelectric.coop and click on the “Outage Map” button at the top right corner.



Choptank Electric Board of Director Earns Director Gold Credential Program (DGC)



Jeffrey Rathell (left) awards Olin Davis (right) with his Director Gold credential.

Olin S. Davis III, Director of Kent County, recently received his certification for completing the Director Gold Credential Program (DGC). The Director Gold credential program recognizes directors committed to continuing their education beyond the Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCD) and Board Leadership Certification (BLC). This credential demonstrates their ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.

“As part of this community, we strive to be better for our member-owners. Education is important now more than ever to ensure we are serving our members to the best of our ability,” said Jeffrey Rathell, Chairman of the Board and Director for Talbot County, “Mr. Davis has gone above and beyond to make sure he is prepared to serve our members and we are proud of his accomplishment.”

Board of Director

Continued from Page 1

For the 2018 Annual Meeting, Choptank Electric provided this notice to the membership in the October 2017 newsletter, in order to be in compliance with the Bylaws.

To keep this process separate from the Board of Directors, Choptank Electric has a Credentials and Election Committee that is responsible for the election process. The Committee is independent of the Board and has member representation from each of the nine counties. This represents a continuous effort to be transparent and to

encourage member participation. One of the guiding principles of an electric cooperative is that it is a democratic organization, controlled by its members who actively participate.

The Director Districts that will be up for election in 2019 are the Caroline County District, Wicomico County District, and the Worcester County District.

For more information about how to become a board member, feel free to call me at 1-877-892-0001 ext. 8552.

Questions to Ask your Solar Contractor: The Bid/Contract

As most members are probably aware from the number of blue panels springing up everywhere, renewable generation, in particular, solar, is becoming a prevalent part of the landscape here on the Delmarva Peninsula.

Choptank Electric receives close to seven applications per week from members interested in applying for renewable generation interconnects. The majority of the applications are for solar systems.

There are approximately two dozen solar installers/contractors companies represented on Maryland's Eastern Shore, vying for your business to sell, lease or install these systems on your property. Choptank Electric would like to point out some important questions that should be a part of the decision making process when considering solar.

As with any major home improvement project, purchasing from the right installer/contractor is every bit as important as the product you are purchasing. Due diligence is critical to ensure you get the best system, for a fair price, and that it's installed correctly and on time.

Why you should ask these questions about the bid or contract? All of this information should be included in both your bid and on the contract you sign. Check these details carefully, then compare to other bids you obtain. (Get at least three bids, all in writing.) Be wary of any really low bids. If the contractor can't supply the information, ask why not. After checking any contract to be sure this information is included, have a contract expert or lawyer review the contract before signing it.

1. Is this bid an estimate or a fixed price? What is the process you will follow if you find unexpected problems with this installation and want to charge extra to fix the problems?
2. Does the bid include the total cost of the project, including components, materials and labor?
3. Does the bid include a breakdown of each of the components (make and model number, size/kWh per year, as well as price of each) so I can see what each portion will cost?
4. Does the bid include details about permits?
5. Does the bid include the time frame for beginning and ending the installation?
6. Does the bid include warranty information, as well as how to place a claim?
7. Does the bid include expected operation and maintenance costs; projected monthly, annual and lifetime costs and savings; and projected energy production?
8. Does the bid include payment options, as well as financing details?
9. Does the bid include details about who will file paperwork for tax credits, rebates and other incentives?
10. What documentation will I receive when the project is done? (This may include lien releases and other contract-related paperwork, as well as warranties, operating manuals and more.)

For more information about solar and net metering, visit our website at www.choptankelectric.coop.

Choptank Electric Revises Power Cost Adjustment

Effective July 1, 2018 Choptank Electric will revise its Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) for all members.

The revised PCA will be a credit of \$0.00308/kilowatt hour (kWh). Prior to July 1, the PCA was a credit of \$0.00852/kWh.

In addition to the PCA credit change, on June 1 the power supply rates were reduced. The net impact of the two rate changes will result in an overall increase of \$8.04 for a residential member using 1,000 kWh per month.

The PCA is a separate line item on each Choptank

Electric bill which reflects the increases or decreases in the Co-op's cost of wholesale power purchased from Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC). Any fluctuation in the PCA is mainly caused by changes in the cost of purchased power driven by the fuel used to generate electricity.

ODEC continues to work diligently to produce and procure the power required by its members with affordability and reliability as their primary concerns. Without Power Cost Adjustments, utility base rates would be constantly changing to reflect increases and decreases in the cost of power.

New Manager of Marketing, Communications, and Member Engagement



Elizabeth Gertsch, previously the Communications Specialist at Choptank Electric Cooperative, was awarded the position of Manager of Marketing, Communications, and Member Engagement on April 16, 2018.

Mrs. Gertsch started working for the Co-op in November 2013 as the Communications Specialist. In 2016 she earned her Certified Cooperative Communicator certification through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). The Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) Program offers co-op communications staff the opportunity

to test and enhance their professional skills and earning this credential demonstrates professional competence within the communication field and detailed knowledge of the cooperative industry. She was recently appointed by the NRECA to the CONNECT Advisory Committee which plans content for the CONNECT conference. The CONNECT Conference is the annual national conference for electric cooperative communications, marketing and member services professionals.

Born and raised on the Eastern Shore, Mrs. Gertsch graduated from Salisbury University with a B.A. in Communication Arts and English. She has previously worked as the Public Relations Specialist for the Benedictine Sisters of Ridgely, MD.

She resides in Easton, MD where she spends her time with her husband, Russell, two dogs, Belle and Doug, and her extended family.

May 2018 Trust Awards

- Ben Layton Memorial 5K - \$500 shirts
- Easton Choral Society - \$750 riser repair
- Humane Society of Somerset - \$312 water system
- Upper Shore Aging - \$2,000 program funding
- Harvesting Hope Youth and Family Wellness - \$704 program expenses
- Caroline North Little League - \$589.99 seating
- Caroline Fellowship of Christian Athletes - \$709 travel expenses

The total of approved applications for May was \$18,104.75 which included \$12,539.75 for individual home and medical expenses.

Electric Trust is a 501-c-3 charitable foundation funded by Operation Round-Up donations from members of Choptank Electric. Funds from the Trust are distributed in all nine counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore.

