



**Choptank Electric
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative 

SEPTEMBER 2020

Members First. Every Day.



Congratulations to Speaker Pro Tem Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes and State Senator Steve Hershey for being awarded the 2020 Distinguished Friend of the Electric Cooperative Award. Their determination made it possible for Choptank Electric to pass House Bill 999 so that we could pursue the possibility of broadband for our members.



By Valerie Connelly
Vice President of Government Affairs
and Public Relations

During Choptank Electric Cooperative’s Annual Meeting, two lawmakers from the Eastern Shore Delegation were presented with the 2020 Distinguished Friend of the Electric Cooperative award. Speaker Pro Tem Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes and State Senator Steve Hershey were nominated and received the award because of their tireless efforts to pass House Bill 999, “The Rural Broadband for the Eastern Shore Act of 2020,” during the 2020 Maryland General Assembly.

The Distinguished Friend of the Electric Cooperative Award, established in 2004, was created to honor legislators and regulators in the Virginia, Maryland and Delaware region who have been vigilant in protecting the interests of electric cooperative members.

During the 2020 Maryland General Assembly, Delegate Sample-Hughes and Senator Hershey were able to guide HB 999 over the finish line in a shortened amount of legislative time, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their leadership at committee hearings and the full chamber level led to HB 999 passing unanimously in both the House and Senate.

RECOGNITION WHERE IT’S DUE

Choptank Electric Cooperative honors two trailblazers in the broadband arena.

Passage of HB 999 was also made possible with the full support of the Eastern Shore Delegation, county leaders, a strong community coalition, and Choptank Electric’s grassroots members.

Speaker Pro Tem Delegate Sample-Hughes represents District 37A, which includes part of Dorchester and Wicomico Counties. She worked closely with Economic Matters Committee

session,” explained Valerie Connelly, Vice President of Government Affairs and Public Relations for Choptank Electric. “She leveraged her new leadership position in the House in a way that delivered amazing results for her constituents.”

Senator Steve Hershey represents District 36, which includes the entire upper shore. He is a trusted and knowledgeable member of the Senate Finance Committee who is viewed by colleagues as an authority on utility issues.

“On the final day of session, Senator Hershey maneuvered the bill through his committee, worked a deal with House members, and then expedited floor calendars to get the amended bill back to the House for final approval,” explained Matt Tefteau, Manager of Government Affairs. “It was impressive to watch – and really meaningful for Choptank members.”

With the presentation of the 2020 awards, Senator Hershey and Delegate Sample-Hughes become the first Maryland lawmakers recognized in this way by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives.



Chairman Dereck Davis of Prince George’s County to promote the bill. During the Committee hearing, she outlined the “desperate” need for high-speed internet access and presented HB 999 as “a local bill to solve a local problem.”

“Del. Sheree Sample-Hughes made clear that broadband for the Eastern Shore was a priority this



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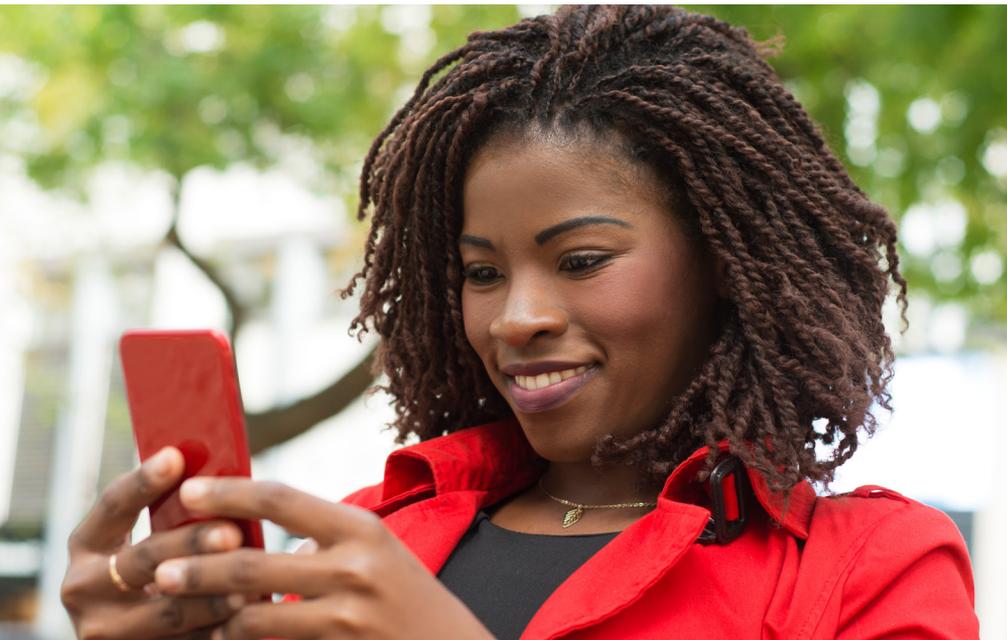
Toll-Free: 1-877-892-0001

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Automated Member Service: 1-866-999-4574

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Update how we contact you, make SmartHub work for you, and more!



Stay connected by updating your contact information

By keeping your contact information up to date, you can help get the power on faster and take full advantage of the services Choptank Electric Cooperative offers.

- If we do not have the correct phone number linked to your home address, it may be more difficult for you to report an outage.
- For planned outages, you may not receive the automated call or email we provide if your information is out of date.
- Help speed up the power restoration process. We may need to contact you for more information regarding an outage or service issue.
- Keep your mailing address up to date. Even if you have opted for paperless billing, there are still occasions when we need to send you important documents, like capital credit checks, by mail.

You can update your information in one of three ways:

1. Log in to SmartHub and click “My Profile” in the top menu to update your contact information.
2. Call our Member Service Center toll-free at 1-877-892-0001 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
3. Complete the contact update section on the back of your electric bill stub.

Take advantage of SmartHub’s many features

- **Multiple Users:** Are you taking care of an elderly relative and need to keep track of their Choptank Electric account? SmartHub now offers the ability to add multiple users to manage a single account. To add secondary users to your SmartHub account, visit www.choptankelectric.coop, and log in to SmartHub. Go to My Profile > My Information > Manage my

Registered Accounts Screen > Manage Additional Users. From there, you can add additional users — as many as you would like!

- **Smart Home:** Connect your SmartHub accounts to a Google Home or Alexa device to make inquiries about your bill, hear outage information, and more.
- **Monitor Your Usage:** Use SmartHub’s Usage Management tools to keep track of your usage; set alerts based on your specifications; view and print usage graphs; view your usage in kWh or dollars.

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- E-news
- Outage information
- Beat the Peak voluntary load management program
- Broadband information

To sign up, complete the form at <https://choptankelectric.com/e-news-form>.

Do you need help setting up any of these features? Contact our Member Service Center toll-free at 1-877-892-0001 to speak with a Member Service Representative.

Choptank Electric Receives Safety Evaluation

The evaluation helps the Co-op improve upon their company-wide safety goals.

Choptank Electric Cooperative was inspected for the 2020 Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) during the week of June 29. This inspection was conducted by three accredited safety members of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC), on behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). This certification is required and is performed every three years.

Annually, we create company-wide safety goals and we update our NRECA Safety Improvement Plan. The 2020 safety goals are:

1. Improve field first-aid safety – So far, we have implemented AED training with all our crews and placed 40 AEDs in our company vehicles, and upgraded all of our first aid medical kits.
2. Expand safety communications and improve safety meetings – due to COVID-19, we haven't been able to fully implement these practices, but we will be including all employees in safety meetings, and have VMDAEC participate and present



topics in all of our future safety meetings.

3. Improve safety forms and record keeping for our co-op by creating an electronic form platform.

Due to Choptank Electric's commitment to the safety of our members and employees, we passed our inspection with minor areas of improvement.

"Safety is always at the forefront of our minds, and every employee plays a vital role in creating an accident-free, safe work environment. We thank all of them for always making safety a top priority," said Lance Lockerman, Vice President of Operations at Choptank Electric Cooperative.

Welcome to the Co-op!



Choptank Electric Cooperative is excited to welcome Michael Bender Jr., our newest Electronics Technician I, who started on July 13. Bender has a bachelor's degree in engineering technology from DeVry University.

Bender worked previously for Delaware Tech Community College as an Education Lab Technician. Bender will be responsible to install, test, repair, and maintain our internal outage equipment, in addition to other tasks as part of our Metering department.

Bender resides in Georgetown, Delaware with his family.

Welcome to our Co-op, Michael!



Worcester County Director Earns Valuable Credentials

Director Richardson West completed the accreditation to better serve our members.



(Left to Right) Mike Malandro, President and CEO, Donna Richardson West, Worcester County Director, and Jeff Rathell, Chairman of the Board and Talbot County Director.

Congratulations to Worcester County Director Donna Richardson West for earning her CCD — Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate. Members of our Board of Directors are required to obtain this accreditation within three years of being appointed. Richardson West had to complete five courses designed to provide essential knowledge and skills required of cooperative directors through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

“Donna has been such an asset, and a true voice of Worcester County. This accreditation will enable her to serve our members according to the highest Co-op standards across the nation,” said Jeff Rathell, Chairman of Choptank Electric’s Board of Directors and Talbot County Director.

Manager of Government Affairs Recognized

Matthew Tefteau is recognized for his impressive track record and achievements.



Matthew Tefteau
Manager of Government Affairs

Choptank Electric’s Manager of Government Affairs, Matthew Tefteau, was recently selected as part of the Daily Record’s VIP list. The VIP list recognizes Maryland’s leaders who are 40 years old or younger based on their professional accomplishments, community service, and a commitment to inspiring change.

Tefteau, who began with the Co-op on July 1, 2019, is a lifelong Marylander and native of Preston, MD. Tefteau was inspired to pursue politics and advocacy when he visited Washington, D.C. during the 2005 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour his junior year of high school, which he attended as a Choptank

Electric member. After graduating from Salisbury University in 2010, he worked for Congressman Andy Harris (MD-01) on Capitol Hill as a Legislative Assistant, and later joined the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Tefteau is a 2017 graduate from the LEAD Maryland program. Most recently, he collaborated with the executive team at Choptank Electric and local officials to advocate and pass HB 999, “The Rural Broadband for the Eastern Shore Act of 2020,” which will enable the Co-op to pursue broadband through member regulation.

“I am here to make a difference, and Choptank Electric empowers me to do just that,” said Tefteau.

When It Comes to Generator Safety, Don't Wait!

Now is the time to ensure you are ready for future emergencies.



By Kris Amsel
Key Accounts Specialist

While a power outage can happen regardless of bad weather or season, it's always a good time to perform the annual maintenance on your generator. Owners of standby generators should be running their generators regularly throughout the year, but portable generator owners may not be performing their tests regularly. Portable generators can be neglected in this regard as many owners only pull them out when faced with the threat of an outage. That makes today a great time to get generators ready for future use.

Proper planning goes hand in hand with proper maintenance. Generators that run on fossil fuels exhaust carbon monoxide fumes. Carbon Monoxide is known as the "silent killer." It is a poisonous gas that is colorless and odorless.

The effects of carbon monoxide range from dizziness, headaches, and nausea, to unconsciousness and death. Due to this danger, a generator should never run indoors, not even in an attached garage. When using your generator, it must be located outside away from windows or vents that could draw the exhaust indoors. Proper planning for your generator includes selecting a safe location outside of your home to run your generator.

Another important reason for planning is to prevent tragedy, not just for your families, but also for lineworkers. Backfeeding the electricity from your generator to the



grid energizes the electric distribution lines and jeopardizes the lives and safety of our lineworkers.

The electric transformer outside your home steps down the line voltage from the grid to feed your house. The transformer does not recognize the direction of the electric current. If your generator backfeeds to the grid, the transformer will step that voltage up. It is possible to see 120 volts output from a generator stepped up to 7,200 volts on the electric lines.

This creates a dangerous situation for lineworkers attempting to

Another important reason for planning is to prevent tragedy – not just for your families, but also for line workers.

repair an outage. The best way to take care of this is to make sure your generator transfer switch or interlock device is installed by a licensed electrician so that your generator does not backfeed into our electric lines.

Additionally, you should avoid connecting any appliances directly to the generator using an extension cord, which can cause everything from power drops to overheating.

Some members might have a standby generator that is permanently mounted and tied into their home's electrical system. This type of generator should be installed by a qualified electrician with a disconnect switch that separates your home from the grid during its use.

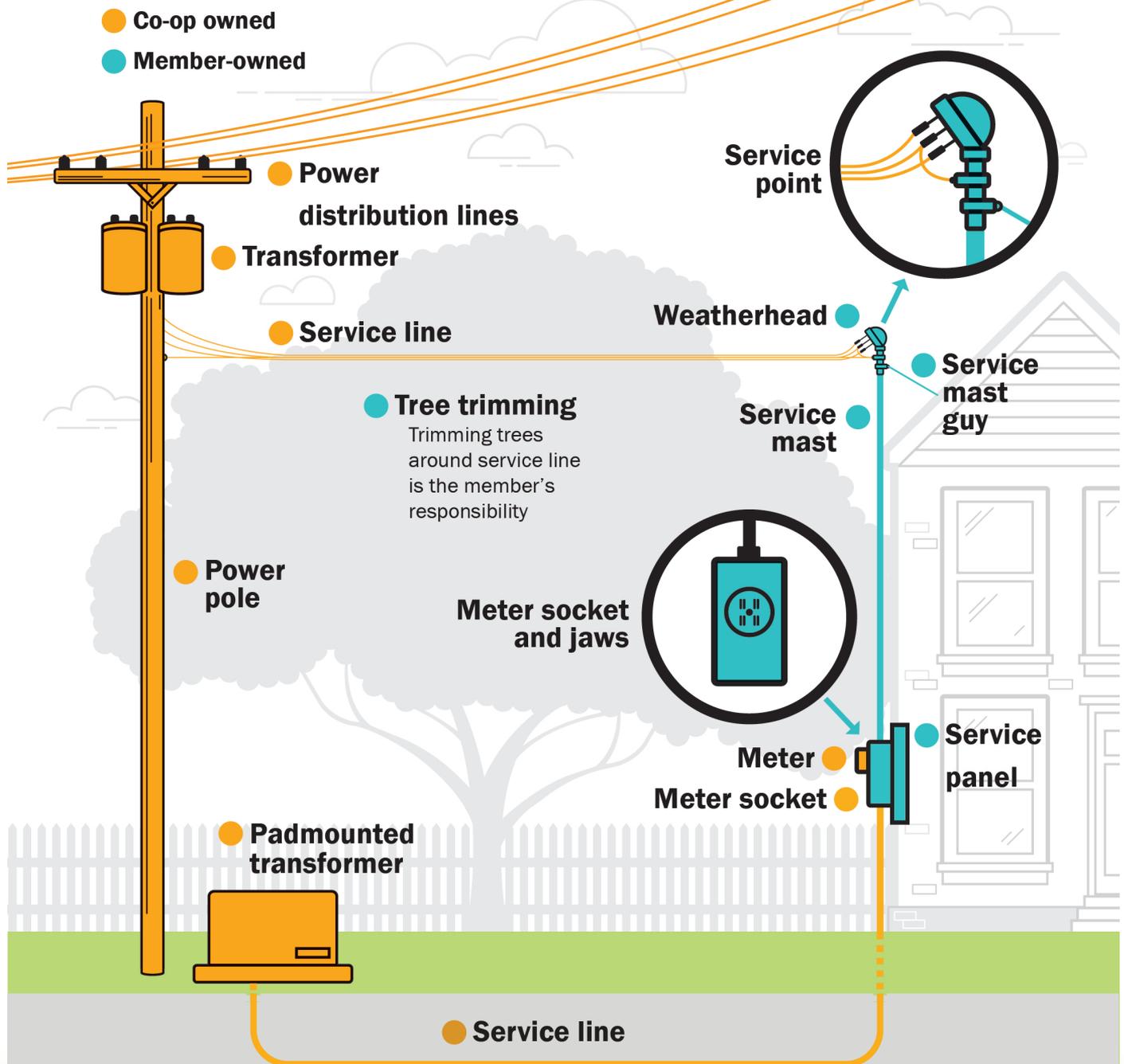
Electric generators are useful appliances that provide us with off-the-grid electricity. They deliver energy to our homes in the event of an outage and can be real life-savers. Knowing and addressing the threats of carbon monoxide poisoning and backfeeding electricity to the grid can help protect our family members and friends. Following these guidelines can ensure the safe use of your generator for years to come.

For more information about generators and their safety features, ask for Kris Amsel, our Key Accounts Specialist, at 1-877-892-0001.

Who Owns What?

Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



Member Notes

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Without their support, it would be hard for us to move forward with current or new initiatives. Whether on social media, on the phone, or via old-fashioned letters sent along with their paper bills, our members love to let us know when their Co-op is doing a good job!

"Thank you for the wonderful surprise of no money due! I will pass to someone in need."

Mary L. — Worcester County

Thank you for sending this note! Paying it forward is a great way to spread goodwill in these uncertain times.

"I want to thank this company so much for your generosity and help. This reduction does mean a lot to us. So we want you to know that we acknowledge and appreciate this very much!"

Ronnie W. — Talbot County

We appreciate this comment very much! Capital Credits are a great benefit of being a member.

*"Thank you for the credit on this month's electric bill!
Greatly appreciated!"*

Jane A. — Kent County

Thank you for the note! Your Board of Directors and staff worked very hard to make this Capital Credit distribution possible.

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution Co-op serving approximately 54,000 residential, commercial, and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

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Worcester Co.

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Somerset Co.

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. Funds from the Trust are distributed in all nine counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore.

July 2020

- Christian Shelter - \$918 (computer upgrades)
- St. Stephens Episcopal Church - \$500 (LED lightning)
- Caroline County Dept. of Social Services - \$1,380 (school supplies)
- Fruitland Volunteer Fire Department - \$2,408 (portable radios)

The total of approved applications was \$22,418.55, which included \$17,212.55 for individual home and medical expenses.

