



CHOPTANK ELECTRIC

# Cooperative Living

## Cooperative Teamwork During Winter Storm Hernando Page 17





**Choptank Electric  
Cooperative**

**Choptank  
Fiber**

## **FROM THE DESK TO THE POWER LINES A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO**

### **April showers bring...possible disruptions.**

**S**pring has arrived and like many of you, I'm looking forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather. Unfortunately, spring weather can also create perfect conditions for severe storms.

Choptank Electric Cooperative crews are always prepared and standing by to respond should power outages occur in your area. Our System Control office is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year to receive outage reports, coordinate with emergency personnel and line crews, and ensure restoration updates are shared with you.

When severe storms cause power disruptions, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work. I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from potential power surges and prevent overloading circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

If you plan to use a portable generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely. Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for emergency information and check Choptank Electric's outage map on our website for restoration updates at [choptankelectric.coop/outages](http://choptankelectric.coop/outages). If you experience an outage, please don't report it on Facebook. Call or text 'OUT' to our outage reporting number: 1-800-410-4790 or use your SmartHub app.

I hope we don't experience severe storms over the spring months, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At Choptank Electric Cooperative, we recommend that you make a plan today — because storm preparedness is always our best defense. Visit [choptankelectric.coop/prepare](http://choptankelectric.coop/prepare) to learn more.



*Mike Malandro,  
President & CEO  
Choptank Electric Co-op*

**Write to us:** P.O. Box 430 | Denton, MD | 21629

**Member Service Center:** 1-877-892-0001

**Automated Member Service:** 844-975-2746 **Outage Reporting:** 1-800-410-4790

**CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP**



# Lineworkers are Ready When it Matters Most



**E**ach April, we take time to pause and recognize the brave men and women who keep your lights on every single day – our lineworkers.

When storms impact our communities and outages occur, many people experience the inconvenience, but our lineworkers see a call to action. Our crews are always ready when it matters most, leaving family dinners, working through the night and heading into challenging conditions to restore power as safely and quickly as possible. That readiness is not accidental. It comes from rigorous training, deep experience and a shared commitment to serving others.

The cold weather this winter brought outages across our territory; all of which were restored within a few hours thanks to the dedication of Choptank Electric Cooperative's lineworkers.

What makes lineworkers especially remarkable is that they aren't just restoring power to a system – they're restoring power to their own communities. They live here and raise their families here. They understand that electricity is more than a convenience; it's essential to daily life, to local businesses, to schools, farms and emergency services. Powering the places we call home is personal to lineworkers.

Electric cooperatives like Choptank were built on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors, and our lineworkers embody that spirit every day. At times, serving our neighbors means going beyond our own service territory through a process known as mutual aid. During major outage events, Choptank crews travel to assist neighboring co-ops if our members all

have power. This spirit of mutual aid strengthens all cooperatives and ultimately benefits the members we serve.

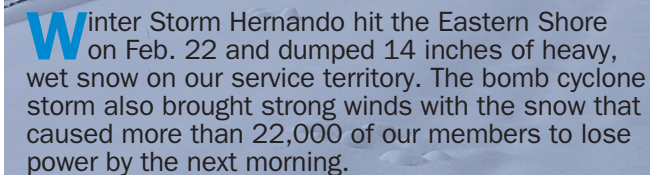
We understand any time the lights go out it can be frustrating, bringing everyday life to a halt. We are incredibly grateful to our members for their patience and encouragement during these times. Linework is demanding, physical and at times, dangerous. Our crews approach each job with a focus on safety and teamwork. They take pride in their craft and in the trust our members place in them.

On April 13, we will celebrate **Lineworker Appreciation Day**, but one day is hardly enough. Every day, we thank lineworkers for their service and dedication, which are the backbone of our cooperative.

To our lineworkers: Thank you for your hard work, your readiness and your unwavering commitment to the communities we serve. We are proud to stand behind you and grateful for all that you do.

**- The Choptank Electric Cooperative family and membership**

# CHOPTANK CHOPTANK CHOPTANK *Choptank* OUT IN THE **FIELD**



**W**inter Storm Hernando hit the Eastern Shore on Feb. 22 and dumped 14 inches of heavy, wet snow on our service territory. The bomb cyclone storm also brought strong winds with the snow that caused more than 22,000 of our members to lose power by the next morning.



Choptank Electric crews immediately went to work repairing damage and restoring power on Sunday evening, cutting down trees and plowing paths to access broken poles and downed power lines. We were fortunate to have seven additional electric cooperatives and utilities come to our aid on Feb. 23 and 24, bringing an additional 50-plus lineworkers to assist our restoration efforts:

- Adams Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- BARC Electric Cooperative
- Central Virginia Electric Cooperative
- Easton Utilities
- Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative
- Rock Creek Line Construction
- S&S Utilities
- Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative

Thanks to the dedication of our employees and those who traveled to help, all of our impacted members had power by Feb. 25. Choptank Electric's lineworkers, engineers, system control operators and member service representatives worked nonstop for three days until everyone had power.





# Rural Living Meets High-Speed Internet for Local Families

By Katie Lockett, Director of Marketing, Communications and Education



*“Choptank Fiber has made it possible for us to truly enjoy rural living while staying connected to what matters most.”*

- Erin Williamson

**W**hen Jordan and Erin Williamson, along with their two children, moved to Mardela Springs, Md., in 2019, they were looking forward to a life of peace, enjoying the beautiful rural landscape. They loved everything about the area except for the lack of reliable, high-speed internet; a convenience they had grown used to in their previous home.

They settled with the only service available to them at the time – a fixed wireless product that couldn't keep up with the demands of their connected family. Erin Williamson, Sr. Advancement Manager and Interim President at Junior Achievement of the Eastern Shore, described the internet experience in their home as a huge source of frustration for the entire family.

“During COVID, we were balancing my work-from-home needs and our son's remote learning. There were days we had to alternate usage, and our internet never worked if my husband also tried to work from home, or even if it was a cloudy or rainy day,” Erin shares.

The unreliability was also a big deal for staying connected to family members when they moved away, as their cell phone service was not dependable inside the home, so the family relied on Wi-Fi calling to talk with loved ones.

“Then came Choptank Fiber,” adds Erin. “It was the first service introduced to us that truly felt like a solution and was a no-brainer to sign up.”

The Williamson family was connected in 2024 after receiving notice from Choptank Fiber's pre-registration list that service had become available at their address. Erin and her husband were set up with the complimentary CommandIQ mobile app on their phones at installation, enabling them to manage all their home's devices and profiles connected to Wi-Fi.

“It has completely changed how we're able to live and work. As a family of four with very different needs, we can now work from home, stream, learn and stay connected without stress. And the

amazing customer service is a bonus.”

Their package also comes equipped with ProtectIQ – a security software that allows you to manage the sites your devices have access while blocking web threats in real time.

“It's nice to know there's something out there looking out for my kids on the internet,” says Erin.

“Choptank Fiber has made it possible for us to truly enjoy rural living while staying connected to what matters most,” she concluded.

That connectivity is especially important as the Williamsons plan for their future. The family is looking forward to upgrading their forever home, starting a business on the farm and continuing to support their kids' learning journey – all with reliable, high-speed internet from Choptank Fiber at their fingertips.



Choptank Electric Cooperative

# Get paid by Choptank for reducing electric use during peak periods this summer!



## Sign up for Choptank Electric's Load Control Rider program before June 1.

**C**ooperative members can receive credit for controlling their electric load during peak periods through our voluntary Load Control Rider program. Members billed under the General Service – Irrigation (FI) rate or a rate that includes a demand component (outlined below) can enroll in this free program. There is no penalty for not curtailing your use during the designated peak periods – but a big benefit if you can control your electric load!

Members enrolled will receive a payout at the end of the year for each kilowatt curtailed during a designated PJM 5-High peak or a designated transmission peak. Notice of peak periods will be issued by Choptank Electric via text message (members may opt in through SmartHub) and our website under “Your Power”.

### Load Control Rider (LC)

- Can be paired with rates that include a demand component: Small Power (S), Medium Power (M) and Primary (P) rates
- Must have a curtailable load of at least 50kW

### Load Control Rider – Irrigation (LC-FI)

- Can be paired only with General Service – Irrigation (FI) rate
- Must have a curtailable load of at least 25kW

If you would like to enroll in the Load Control Rider program, email

[rates@choptankelectric.coop](mailto:rates@choptankelectric.coop)

or give us a call at

**877-892-0001.**



## CHOPTANK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 88TH

# ANNUAL MEETING

**THE FOUNTAINS WEDDING & CONFERENCE CENTER**  
1800 Sweetbay Drive in Salisbury, Maryland

**THURSDAY, APRIL 23**  
Doors open at 4:30 p.m.  
Business meeting begins at 6 p.m.

Meal and gift for members who attend

10 Luck of the Draw Scholarships will be awarded!

> [www.choptankelectric.coop/annual-meeting-0](http://www.choptankelectric.coop/annual-meeting-0)

# Call Before You Dig!



**A**pril is Safe Digging Month — a timely reminder that a simple step can prevent serious outages, injuries and costly repairs. Whether you're planting a tree, installing a fence or starting a larger project, safe digging begins before the first shovel hits the ground.

Underground utility lines carry electricity, fiber, water and gas to homes and businesses. Striking one of these lines can disrupt essential services, create safety hazards and lead to unexpected expenses. Fortunately, damage is easy to avoid.

Before you dig, always request a utility locate. This free service ensures buried lines are clearly marked so you can work safely and confidently. Even small projects require locates — many utility lines are buried just inches below the surface.

After you submit your request, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to respond, so please plan ahead and be patient. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all utilities have responded to your request.






Safe digging is everyone's responsibility. Protect yourself, your neighbors, and your community by planning ahead.


Before starting any digging project, be sure to submit a locate request at Miss Utility:

<https://www.missutility.net/>

A few minutes of preparation can prevent hours of trouble.

## Can You Dig It?

-  An underground utility line is **damaged once every few minutes** because someone didn't call 811.
-  Call 811, the "Call Before You Dig Number," at least **3 business days** prior to digging.
-  811 locators **do not detect** underground sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems, or gas piping to a garage.
-  Even if you have previously had underground utilities marked, **utilities can shift**, so it's best to call before starting a new project.
-  Once **all of your utilities** have been located, then you can start your digging project!



**Choptank Electric Cooperative**

## Dig safe and stay safe!

## Choptank congratulates the following employees on their promotions:

**Colby Benton**  
Apprentice Lineman  
2nd Class

**Aaron Blazejak**  
Operations Technician II  
-Chestertown

**Jimmy Creighton**  
Apprentice Lineman  
5th Class

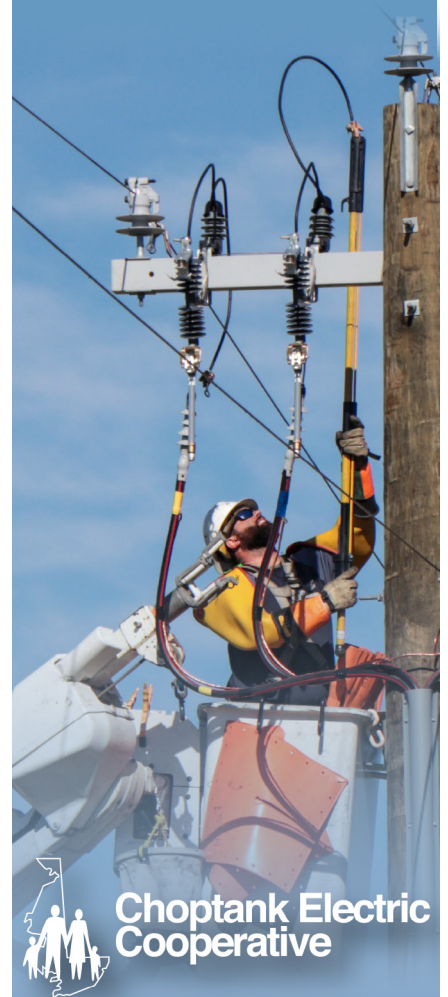
**Todd Anderson**  
Chief Lineman  
-Denton

**Colby Gebhardt**  
Apprentice Lineman  
3rd Class

**Chas Fisher**  
Journeyman Lineman  
-Denton

**Judi White**  
Member Service  
Specialist 2nd Class

**Tyler Parker**  
Chief Lineman  
-Chestertown



Choptank Electric  
Cooperative



Your account at your  
fingertips.

- Track use
- Pay your bill
- Report outages



## Happy Easter to our Members!

Our offices will be closed in  
observance of Good Friday on  
April 3, 2026.

# THANK YOU FOR ROUNDING UP!



**Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
Choptank Fiber, LLC

Choptank Electric and Choptank Fiber exist to provide reliable and cost-effective services that improve the quality of life for our communities.

### President & CEO

Micheal E. Malandro

### Board of Directors

John J. Burke Jr.  
Chairman, Cecil Co.

Robert B. Thompson  
Vice Chairman, Ocean Pines District

Donna Richardson West  
Secretary, Worcester Co.

Amy Ireland Brandt  
Treasurer, Caroline Co.

Douglas D. Scott  
Dorchester Co.

Kristen E. Nickerson  
Kent Co.

Robert E. Arnold  
Queen Anne's Co.

Craig N. Mathies Sr.  
Somerset Co.

Jeffery D. Rathell Sr.  
Talbot Co.

Matthew R. Holloway  
Wicomico Co.



Last fall, the Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company received a \$3,000 grant from the Choptank Trust to purchase supplemental gear for its firefighters. Supplemental gear is described as specialized Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and tools that go beyond standard turnout gear, such as fire-resistant coats and pants, to improve safety and operational efficiency.

With the grant funds, the company purchased essential protective items, including gloves, helmets, boots and Nomex hoods.

**The Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company is an all-volunteer organization** whose members provide EMS, Fire and Rescue services to the Town of Rock Hall and mutual aid assistance to surrounding communities.

“This donation helps protect our firefighters from smoke and flames, which directly supports our ability to serve and protect the community,” says Robert Younger, Assistant Chief of the Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company.

The Choptank Trust, a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation, awards organizations and individuals in all nine counties on the Eastern Shore with funds from Choptank Electric Cooperative’s Operation Round Up program. View recent awards below and learn more at:

[choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund](http://choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund).

### February 2026 Choptank Trust Awards

- DuPont Fish & Game Association . . . . . \$1,500
- HomePorts . . . . . \$500
- St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church . . . . . \$500

The total of approved applications for February was \$9,850.51, which included \$7,350.51 for individual home and medical expenses.