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KORNER**

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OCTOBER 2024

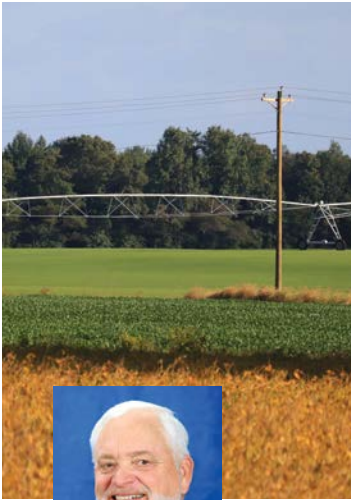
CHOPTANK ELECTRIC **Cooperative** *Living*

**FALL
HARVEST
SAFETY**

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**Farmland north of
Federalsburg prepares
for the Autumn harvest.**

For changes of address, please contact Choptank Electric Cooperative.



GO ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR A SAFE HARVEST

By Douglas D. Scott, Chairman of the Board

Autumn on the Eastern Shore is a beautiful sight, especially with on-farm activities and harvest. I have been farming and involved in the agriculture community most of my life, and safety has always been our top priority. The same standard applies here at Choptank Electric Cooperative.

Modern farming often relies on data and equipment with GPS and auto-guidance systems. However, even with these modern conveniences, farm workers must remain vigilant while operating harvest equipment.

Massive machinery is indispensable to farming, but the same impressive size, height and extensions make them particularly vulnerable to contacting power lines. That's why staying alert, focused and knowledgeable about potential hazards and safety procedures is crucial.

During a busy harvest season, the familiar sights around the farm can easily fade into the background, and farm workers can overlook the power lines overhead. Failing to notice them can lead to deadly accidents on the farm.

Awareness of your surroundings around, above and below, and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce the risk of accidents. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's imperative that farm workers keep a close eye on the equipment's location and are ready to take action if necessary.

Exposed underground powerlines, defective wiring in farm buildings and extension cords are also hazards. Grain bins can pose a potential danger as well. The National Electrical Safety Code requires power lines to be at least 18 feet above the highest point on any grain bin with which portable augers or other portable filling equipment are used.

To ensure a safer harvest season, SafeElectricity.org recommends the following tips to avoid electrical accidents on the farm:

- Exercise caution when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines. Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines.

(continued on next page)



Choptank Electric Cooperative

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Large farming equipment is driven down the road in Ridgely, Md. Please give farmers time and space when they are traveling on roads and highways.

(continued from previous page)

- Lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators before moving or transporting equipment. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember that non-metallic materials like lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.
- Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path. Doing so could result in electric shock or death.
- Avoid using metal poles inside or around grain bins.
- Hire qualified electricians who work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.
- Never enter a grain bin while equipment is operating in that bin.

While rare, the only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire. If this happens, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the machinery and the ground at the same time. Then, keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

We appreciate the hard work our farm community puts in all year to provide the food, fuel and fiber for our region. I wish you all a safe and bountiful harvest.



Sincerely, Doug Scott

Board Chairman Choptank Electric Co-op

Doug Scott was the Maryland Assistant Secretary of Agriculture from 2004-2007, and has served as a Director at Choptank since 2013. He is active in his family's 1,800-acre grain farm in Dorchester County that his son now operates.

Choptank Electric Cooperative BUZZ

CHOPTANK WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES ----->

⚡ Congratulations to **Luke Turner**, who has been promoted to Apprentice Lineman 4th Class. Luke's new duties began in June.

⚡ Congratulations to **Michael Bender**, who has been promoted to Communication and Relay Technician. Michael's new duties began in July.

⚡ Congratulations to **Colby Benton**, who has been promoted to Apprentice Lineman 4th Class. Colby's new duties began in June.

⚡ Congratulations to **Camden Stinson**, who has been promoted to Apprentice Lineman 4th Class. Camden's new duties began in June.

⚡ Congratulations to **Cody Biddle**, who has been promoted to Serviceman. Cody's new duties began in July.

⚡ Congratulations to **Dylan Perdue**, who has been promoted to Engineering Fieldman 2nd Class. Dylan's new duties began in July.

⚡ Congratulations to **Hunter Rodgers**, who has been promoted to Apprentice Lineman 5th class. Hunter's new duties began in July.



Punit Patel
IT Support Technician I

Experience: Talbot County Public Schools

Hobbies: DIY, drawing, online gaming and cooking

Looking Forward To: Learning new technology



Colby Gebhardt
RSC Work Order & Material Coordinator

Experience: Berlin Electric, Choptank Electric Co-op and Paradise Energy

Hobbies: Fishing and spending time with family on the farm

Looking Forward To: Reconnecting with co-workers & continuing my career in power delivery



Curtis Short photo from the Talbot County Fair

2024 FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

So many smiling faces — we can't wait to see you all again soon!

2025 Notice of Election of the Board of Directors

The deadline to deliver completed petitions is December 20, 2024

In conjunction with the 2025 Annual Meeting of Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc. there will be held an election of directors for Caroline County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County.

If you are interested in being a candidate for one of these positions, please complete, sign, and deliver a 2025 Petition for Nomination of Candidate for Director by 4 p.m. on Friday, December 20, 2024.

The completed petition must be delivered to the attention of the Credentials & Election Committee, c/o Dawn Bowie, Choptank Electric Cooperative either: (a) by hand delivery or courier to the headquarters office, 10384 River Road, Denton, MD 21629; (b) by mail to P.O. Box 430, Denton, MD 21629; or (c) by email to Dawn Bowie at dawnb@choptankelectric.coop. Any

applications received after Friday, December 20, 2024, will not be reviewed by the committee.

Members can obtain a copy of the 2025 Petition for Nomination of Candidate for Director, beginning November 4, 2024, on our website at www.choptankelectric.coop under Member Benefits, Annual Meeting or by calling our Member Service Center at 1.877.892.0001 to request a mailed copy.

Please review the Bylaws (under Governance on the website) for additional requirements regarding Board of Director positions. The election results will be announced at the 2025 annual member meeting, which will be held on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at the Fountains Wedding & Conference Center located at 1800 Sweetbay Dr., Salisbury, MD 21804.

CHOPTANK KIDS KORNER

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

By Bobby Schaller, MultiMedia Manager

October means HALLOWEEN, YAY! Soon, swarms of little super heroes, cartoon characters, ghosts, goblins, and TRAFFIC will be out in our neighborhoods for trick or treat fun. Here are some tips kids and adults can follow to help keep everyone SAFE and HAVE A GREAT HALLOWEEN!

1. DO NOT TRICK OR TREAT IN THE STREET! USE THE SIDEWALK OR GRASS

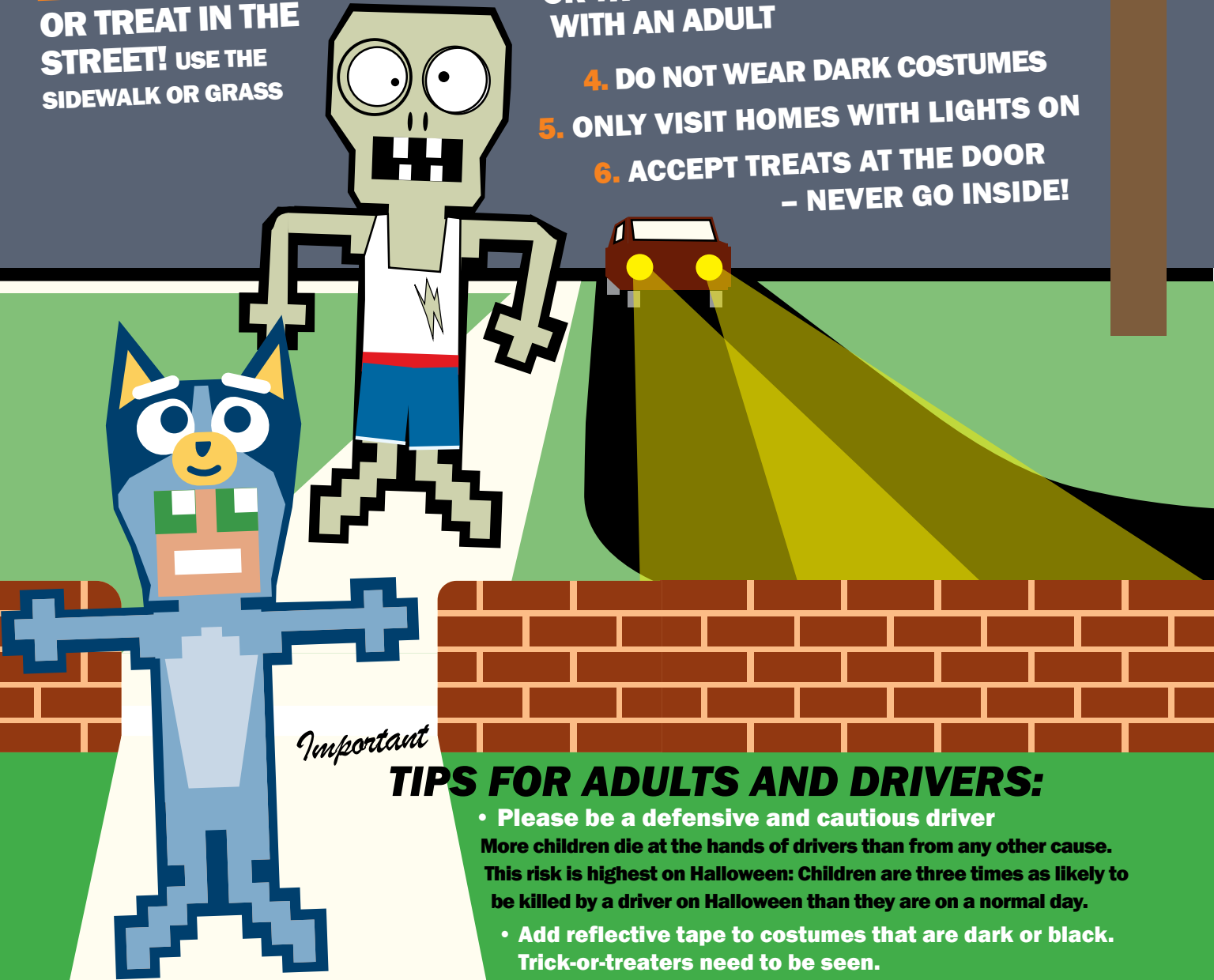
2. GO TRICK-OR-TREATING WITH AN ADULT

3. USE A FLASHLIGHT TO LIGHT YOUR WAY

4. DO NOT WEAR DARK COSTUMES

5. ONLY VISIT HOMES WITH LIGHTS ON

6. ACCEPT TREATS AT THE DOOR – NEVER GO INSIDE!



Important

TIPS FOR ADULTS AND DRIVERS:

- **Please be a defensive and cautious driver**
More children die at the hands of drivers than from any other cause. This risk is highest on Halloween: Children are three times as likely to be killed by a driver on Halloween than they are on a normal day.
- **Add reflective tape to costumes that are dark or black.**
Trick-or-treaters need to be seen.
- **Light your home and yard well so visitors can see.**
- **Clean debris from your sidewalks, steps, yard, and porch of obstacles someone could trip over, including power cords, yard ornaments and tie downs.**
- **Parents, remove loose candy, open packages and choking hazards.**

Retiree Kevin Wright as Phantom Of The Load educating members about unnecessary power use and how to easily cut costs. Playing The Phantom was one of Kevin's fondest memories here at the Co-op.



BEWARE OF THE PHANTOM LOAD

By McKayla Kiernan,
Communications Specialist

Are phantom loads lurking in your home? Phantom loads are devices that consume electricity even when you are not using them. The primary culprits are chargers, set-top television boxes and gaming systems. There are others, but these few represent the major offenders.

Chargers take the 120 VAC (volts alternating current) power at the outlet and reduce it down to the voltage required by the connected device, usually 5 to 12 VDC (volts direct current). Obviously, when your device is charging, the charger is using electricity, but you might be surprised to learn that chargers are still using small amounts of energy even when they're not connected to a device.

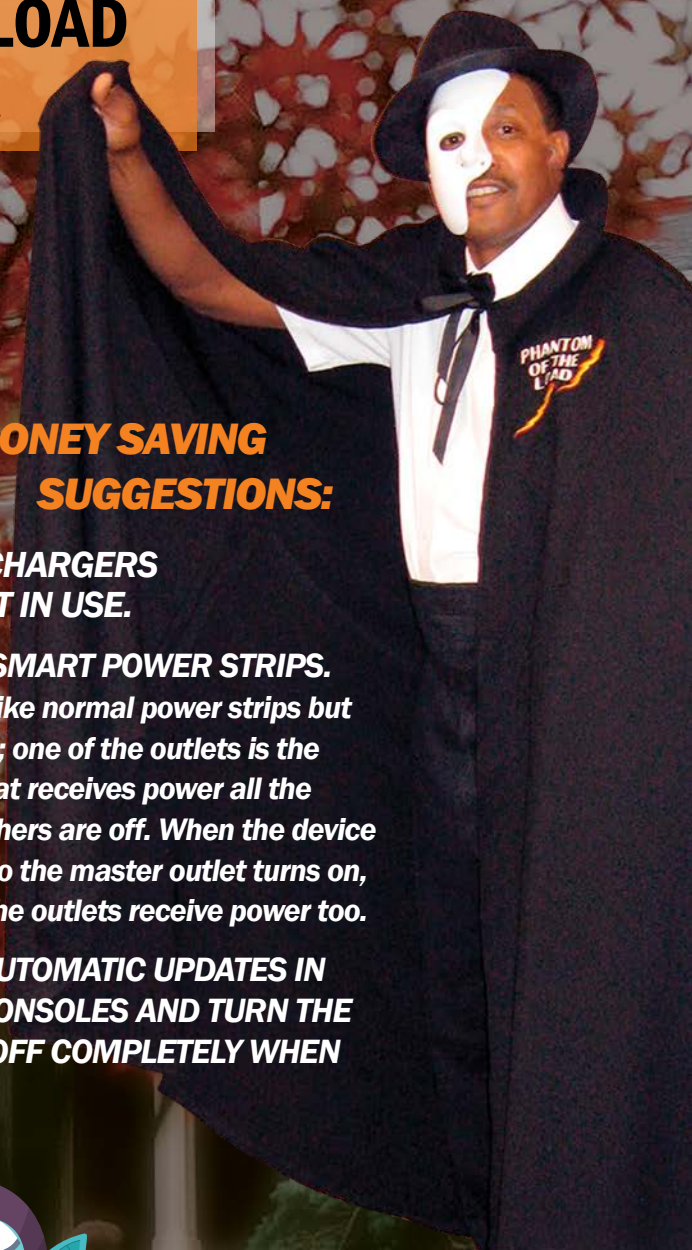
The typical gaming console can use as much energy as a regular refrigerator even when it's not being used. Make sure to check the console settings and disable automatic updates, which is where the energy drain comes from. Games on the console are frequently updated, which requires a lot of electricity.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that phantom energy can make up 10% of your electricity bill. So how does the average family combat these dreaded phantom loads? Garlic garlands? Silver bullets?

Fortunately, none of the remedies of fable are necessary. You just need to change how you handle these energy-sucking electronics.

A FEW MONEY SAVING SUGGESTIONS:

- **UNPLUG CHARGERS WHEN NOT IN USE.**
- **INVEST IN SMART POWER STRIPS.** *These look like normal power strips but have a twist; one of the outlets is the "master" that receives power all the time. The others are off. When the device connected to the master outlet turns on, the rest of the outlets receive power too.*
- **DISABLE AUTOMATIC UPDATES IN GAMING CONSOLES AND TURN THE CONSOLE OFF COMPLETELY WHEN PLAYING.**



IT IS TIME TO SCARE OFF THOSE WASTEFUL PHANTOM LOADS AND SAVE MONEY! THIS FALL!



Graduates of our second lineworker apprenticeship program pose for a photo with officials and instructors of Wor-Wic Community College, the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives and Choptank Electric Cooperative.



Choptank Continues to Grow Partnerships and Support Workforce Development

By Matt Teffeau, Manager of Government Affairs and Economic Development

Following the successful partnership with Wor-Wic Community College and the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, the Powerline Worker Pre-Apprenticeship program continues to be fully funded and provides opportunities to successful applicants.

The next step for many graduates is employment in the workforce and completion of an apprenticeship. Choptank Electric Cooperative has an established, registered apprenticeship program through the State of Maryland and a lineworker training facility in Salisbury, Md. Utilizing these existing resources,

Choptank Electric Cooperative partnered with the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board (USWIB) to provide additional financial resources for Choptank employees who are enrolled in the Lineman Technician Apprenticeship Program (LTAP) classes.

The Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board, a U.S. Department of Labor Title I workforce training partner, has invested in Choptank’s electrical apprenticeship program by paying the training expenses related to the registered apprenticeship education. “We are pleased to support Choptank Electric Cooperative’s electrical registered apprenticeship

program, as the four-year program results in excellent worker retention and a journeyman electrical license in an industry that continues to grow and demand qualified electricians in the Upper Shore of Maryland,” says Dan Schneckenburger, Executive Director of the USWIB.

To put everything into full perspective, Choptank Electric Cooperative is supporting the current and future workforce development needs to provide pathways for employment opportunities in the communities we serve. This alignment of employers, local workforce boards and the Governor’s Workforce Development Board (GWDB) implement the



The GWDB is a business-led board that includes Choptank Electric Cooperative Wicomico Board member, Matt Holloway. Matt represents the agriculture industry on the GWDB with leadership roles through the Career Technical Education committee.

“I have served on the Governor’s Workforce Development Board since 2022,” explains Matt. “The Governor has approved the proposed state workforce plan and we are starting implementation. This four-pillar strategic approach will supercharge key sectors and advance access and equity while preparing the future workforce. Choptank and our local workforce investment boards are key to the fourth pillar of improving system alignment and accountability.”

“This four-pillar strategic approach will supercharge key sectors and advance access and equity while preparing the future workforce. Choptank and our local workforce investment boards are key to the fourth pillar of improving system alignment and accountability.”

- Matt Holloway,
Wicomico County Board Member



Brian Postles (above) and Hunter Rogers (below) graduated from our pre-apprenticeship program before joining the Choptank workforce.



serve. Our investment starts at the grade school-level through the Junior Achievement Center and continues with the Powerline Worker Pre-Apprenticeship program at Wor-Wic Community College and finally, employment-based apprenticeships. Successful partnerships are advancing access to workforce opportunities here on Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

strategies put forward by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.

Investing in and partnering with our local community is important to Choptank Electric Cooperative and the members we

Happy Co-op Month to all of our members!

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MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

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AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

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EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

1

VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

2

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

6

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

7

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

MEMBER'S NOTES

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Whether on social media, by phone, or through handwritten letters, we appreciate when members let us know that we are doing a good job!

Thank you, all!

REGARDING CHOPTANK FIBER:

“It’s the best ever!! I can work from home part time now and my kids can do their school work at home easily. Thank you so much!!!!”
- Alison Kucera

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 MD’s Eastern Shore. To apply, or to find out more about this program:

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

August 2024

The total of approved applications for Aug. was \$28,264, which included \$6,353 for individual home and medical expenses.

- Eastern Shore Ballet Theatre..... \$1,000
- Comm. Foundation of the Eastern Shore \$2,000
- Price Community Club..... \$1,497
- Faith Baptist Church\$2,000
- Spirit Kitchen\$2,000
- United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore.... \$1,000
- Maryland Concerns of Police Survivors..... \$1,000
- Women & Girls Fund of the Mid Shore..... \$2,500



Choptank Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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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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 of our unserved members on the Eastern Shore.