

CHELCO NEWS

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CHELCO upgrades Eglin's Duke Field



After being awarded the utility privatization (UP) contract for Eglin Air Force Base (Eglin AFB) in 2016, CHELCO completed all initial system deficiency corrections. Now, the focus is on improving and rebuilding the system as repairs and replacements are due.

In August, CHELCO and Southland Utility Services, our wholly-owned subsidiary, completed upgrades on Eglin's military airport, Duke Field, to improve resiliency and capacity.

Resiliency Upgrade

Currently, Duke Field's loads are served from Eglin's Valparaiso substation, approximately 14 miles away. Work has begun to prepare to transfer the loads to a closer source to alleviate potential issues and increase reliability and resiliency.

Rocky Hudson, CHELCO's Director of Operations at Eglin AFB, explains

the grueling preparation process for the transfer.

"Having set the groundwork weeks prior, crews began before sunrise one Saturday and worked under hot and humid conditions into the evening to remove and install nearly half a mile of underground primary conductor," Hudson said.

Increasing Feeder Capacity

In anticipation of additional loads coming to Duke Field in the future, crews removed and replaced roughly 3,500 feet of underground cable with a higher-capacity cable.

"Projects such as these truly demonstrate the teamwork necessary between departments to bring jobs from concept to completion," Hudson said. "Our efforts help ensure that Duke Field has dependable power for years to come."



A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative 

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Did You Know...

Modern technology and well-trained Energy Control Operators provide a great service to our members. Recently, we experienced a substation outage that would have caused thousands of members to be without power for several hours. However, within minutes, our Energy Control Operators were able to utilize smart grid technology to temporarily connect affected members to other substations while technicians worked to get the outage repaired.



CEO Insights: CHELCO assists co-ops affected by Hurricane Idalia

Cooperatives nationwide celebrate National Co-op Month in October.

CHELCO is a distribution cooperative democratically controlled by its member-owners, who vote to elect the Board of Trustees.

Based on the needs of their members, cooperatives vary in size, range in industries or sectors and can take multiple forms based on who their member-owners are. However, they all share one common and very important trait: all co-ops are committed to the Seven Cooperative Principles:

1. **Voluntary and Open Membership**
2. **Democratic Member Control**
3. **Member Economic Participation**
4. **Autonomy and Independence**
5. **Education, Training and Information**
6. **Cooperation Among Cooperatives**
7. **Concern for Community**

We talk about these values quite a bit, but it really hits home when you see them in action.

In late August, CHELCO closely watched Hurricane Idalia, preparing our internal hurricane response plan in case it turned our way. Fortunately for our area, the storm avoided us. Sadly, for our neighbors to the east, however, the Category 3 hurricane brought extensive damage to the Big Bend area of Florida.

After making landfall in Keaton Beach, Florida, on August 30, Idalia left hundreds of thousands without power. That morning, we sent 10 linemen and one supervisor east to assist in storm response. A prime example of Cooperation Among Cooperatives.

Our crews first assisted Talquin Electric Cooperative before moving on to assist Suwannee Valley Electric Cooperative in the area of Live Oak.

For 10 consecutive days, our crews were able to help restore power to thousands of families and businesses, selflessly leaving their own families behind and assisting those they had never met before.

Later in the week, we dispatched our warehouse supervisor to assist in materials distribution at Tri-County Electric Cooperative, proving it takes all hands on deck to complete a safe and efficient restoration.

While we were sending crews this time, we've been on the other side of the assistance requests many times before. We send crews to cooperatives in need whenever we can spare them because we appreciate the co-ops who never hesitate to send aid when requested. This mutual aid is core to what it means.

I'm proud of each of our employees who worked to safely and efficiently restore power to our fellow cooperative members. I'm also proud of the countless other co-ops who joined the effort. It's a great reminder of the cooperative difference.

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer



Our crew of 11 departed for Talquin Electric Cooperative on August 30, before moving on to Suwannee Valley Electric Cooperative. After 10 days helping restore power to thousands of members, they returned home safely. Thank you for your hard work!

Pink Hard Hat tradition continues this October



Pictured Above: CHELCO Working Foreman Caleb Garrett wears his pink hard hat.

In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, CHELCO is proud to join organizations nationwide in raising awareness of the disease and the importance of early detection.

Now in its fifth year, our "Pink Out" tradition continues. Look for CHELCO linemen wearing pink hard hats as a symbol of support to those in our cooperative family and community fighting breast cancer.

According to the World Cancer Research Fund, breast cancer is the most commonly occurring cancer in women and the most common cancer overall.

"Nearly everyone knows someone who has fought cancer. My mother and sister fought breast cancer," said CHELCO Vice President of Member Services and External Affairs Emily Cowan. "We hope our efforts serve as a reminder to talk with your healthcare provider about the best screening tests, recommendations, and timelines for screening."

Want to get involved? Join CHELCO at the Making Strides of the Emerald Coast on Saturday, October 14 at 9:00 a.m. at Northwest Florida State College. Find more information at makingstrideswalk.org/emeraldcoast.



**Making Strides of the Emerald Coast Walk
10.14.23 @ 9:00 AM
Northwest Florida State College**

Youth Tour around the corner

Each year in February, CHELCO and other electric co-ops from around the state participate in Youth Tour, which brings high school juniors to Tallahassee to learn about co-ops, the state government and how the two interact.

In addition to the two-day trip to Tallahassee, participants can compete for a weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., in June.

Applications will be sent to school guidance counselors in early November. For more info, scan the QR code below or visit CHELCO.com/Youth-Tour.



Recipe of the Month



Carrot Cake

A delicious cake to add to your dessert list! Learn this recipe at CHELCO.com/recipes.

CHELCO is governed by a nine-member board of trustees: Lee Perry, District 1; Terry Pilcher, District 2; Reese Harrison, District 3; Brady Bearden, Vice President, District 4; Ronald Jones, District 5; Gerald Edmondson, President, District 6; Bert Prutzman, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, District 7; Gayle Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer, District 8; Dwayne Davis, District 9.

CHELCO a supporter of economic development



Pictured Above: CEO Steve Rhodes (fourth from left) with the One Okaloosa Economic Development Council Executive Committee.

CHELCO's vision is to continuously promote the quality of life for our members, employees and communities within the scope of our core business. To do so, we must play an active role in the economic development of our service area. Through the attraction and support of good corporate partners, our community thrives because of the strong local economy.

Primarily, CHELCO supports local economic development efforts by providing safe, reliable and affordable power to its members, both commercial and residential. While utilities can make up a significant portion of business expenses, CHELCO's affordable rates make our service area attractive for businesses.

Traditionally, many think of economic development as the recruitment of large industries, but we believe successful economic development requires a balance. We are regularly involved with large-scale businesses interested in coming to our area, but equally as important is our focus on business retention. Through our key account program, we foster and support tenured business accounts in our area.

Along with our key accounts program, CHELCO is represented on

our area's two economic development organizations. CEO Steve Rhodes serves as an ex officio member on the Okaloosa County Economic Development Council. Senior Vice President of Engineering and Operations Matthew Avery serves as a board member on the Walton County Economic Development Alliance. Emily Cowan, Vice President of Member Services and External Affairs, serves as CHELCO's economic development liaison.

"By staying heavily involved in the development of our local economy, CHELCO is helping bolster our region as a great place to settle down, work, open a business and raise a family," Rhodes said. "We are proud of the steady growth that our area has been able to attract, and CHELCO will continue to support sensible growth and economic development through our core services and other involvement efforts."

This is Part 1 of a three-part series on economic development. Over the next two parts, we'll highlight economic development efforts in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

For more information, please visit chelco.com/economic-development.

Download Co-op Connections App

Did you know that as a member of CHELCO, you can access hundreds of discounts at local and nationwide businesses?

The Co-op Connections app offers discounts at restaurants, stores, pharmacies and more! To download the app, search for "Co-op Connections" in your smart device's app store.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

As the weather begins to cool, now is a great time to do some essential prep work to make sure your home is ready for winter.

Sealing cracks, leaks and drafts will contribute to significant savings in the coming months. Even here in the Florida Panhandle, heating typically takes up the most energy usage in the average household. By weatherstripping and caulking the gaps in your doors and windows, you'll be ready for whatever winter brings your way.

IS \$25 YOURS?

If the account number below matches yours, call us at (850) 892-2111 or stop by any CHELCO office to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill! This month's winner is:

Hodges - 9000137222

For unclaimed capital credits, visit CHELCO.com/capital-credits.