

CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

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CHELCO sends crews to assist in Hurricane relief



After monitoring Hurricane Ian closely, CHELCO was fortunate to avoid the storm's destructive path. Sadly for our fellow Floridians in the Fort Myers and Tampa areas, they were the victims of one of the most destructive hurricanes in Florida's history.

After the storm passed, CHELCO deployed 13 linemen to assist Peace River Electric Cooperative (PRECO) in Wauchula, Florida. PRECO initially lost 88% of its system due to fallen wires, damaged poles and severe flooding.

Our linemen worked for more than one week at PRECO along with hundreds of other out-of-town linemen, restoring power as quickly as safely possible.

The crew then moved to Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) in North Fort Myers, which faced a near-total loss of its system. CHELCO deployed an additional nine linemen to assist

in their restoration efforts. After many hours of dedicated work, CHELCO's final crew returned home safely Oct. 17.

In addition to sending line crews to assist in restoration efforts, CHELCO donated to a disaster relief fund to help employees of co-ops impacted by Hurricane Ian.

"Mutual aid is a critically important part of being an electric cooperative," CEO Steve Rhodes said. "In fact, 'Cooperation Among Cooperatives' is one of the seven guiding principles that all cooperative models follow. We know that the co-ops affected by Hurricane Ian would just as willingly send their own crews to help us restore power if the situations were reversed. I'm proud of our crews for working safely to restore power to thousands of people they will probably never meet. We continue to pray for the communities so tragically impacted by this storm."



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Inside

Page 2

CEO Insights: Thankful for Eglin AFB and the U.S. Military

Page 3

CHELCO's local rates stable despite inflation

Page 4

Operation Round Up continues to make an impact

Did you know...

There are several types of heat pumps, including two that are eligible for rebates of up to \$1,750! CHELCO offers rebates on highly efficient dual fuel and mini split heat pumps when installed in manufactured homes. For more information about dual fuel or mini split heat pumps and CHELCO's rebates, please contact CHELCO's Energy Services Department at energyservices@chelco.com or by calling 850-307-1122.



CEO Insights: Thankful for Eglin AFB and the U.S. Military

November's two most widely celebrated holidays are a great reminder of two things: There is a lot to be thankful for (Thanksgiving), and one of those things is our strong and dedicated military and all those who have served (Veterans Day).

I'd like to extend my appreciation – both personally and on behalf of CHELCO – to all of our military and its millions of members, past and present. So many of you reading this column served and defended our nation, and I'd simply like to say, "Thank you." Thank you not only to those who served directly, but to the spouses and families who sacrificed months or even years together so their loved ones could fulfill their

duties. And we give the biggest thanks of all to those who laid down their lives so that we might remain free.

One of the best things about my job is that CHELCO is a proud mission partner of Eglin Air Force Base, a partnership that started long before the utility privatization (UP) contract began five years ago. Since the 1960s, CHELCO has supported the military's missions by providing safe and reliable electricity to Site C-6 near Freeport. Then, in 2017, our relationship with the military was taken to a new level when we began serving the entirety of Eglin AFB. I'm thankful for Eglin's mission and for the relationships we've developed on base over the past five years.

At CHELCO, we are grateful to have veterans on our staff, including two currently serving in the reserves. It's always a pleasure to welcome aboard military veterans, not only to provide them with a lasting career, but to lean on their professional and leadership skills developed during their military service.

This month, I hope you have a chance to spend lots of time with your family and truly reflect on everything we have to be thankful for. And while you're at it, please take time to think of those who are unable to be with their families because they answered the call to protect our freedom.

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer

CHELCO's Youth Tour program is just around the corner!



It's that time again: Youth Tour is just around the corner! Each year in mid-February, CHELCO and other electric co-ops from around the state participate in this program, 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.

If you are interested in participating, or for more information, please visit CHELCO.com/Youth-Tour or speak with your guidance counselor.

Important Dates

- **Nov. 1:** Applications will be sent to guidance counselors
- **Dec. 16:** Deadline for applications to guidance counselor
- **Feb. 15-16:** Tallahassee trip
- **March, TBD:** Banquet and competition for Washington trip
- **June 13-18:** Washington trip



CHELCO's local rates stable despite inflation



With headlines like “Energy prices expected to stay at historic highs” and “Florida electric bills likely to increase in 2023”, it’s understandable to think that this may affect you, too. **Fortunately, CHELCO does not anticipate the need to raise local distribution rates in the near future.**

CHELCO’s local rates – the standard rate (per kWh), distribution cost adjustment (DCA) and basic service charge (\$26 per month) – have not increased since 2013. In fact, CHELCO’s last rate adjustment was a DCA **decrease** in May 2021.

The only portion of your monthly bill that CHELCO does not directly control is the wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA). The WPCA is a direct pass-through cost from our wholesale power provider,

PowerSouth, and is an adjustment for the cost of generating or purchasing wholesale electricity. With significant price increases in natural gas – PowerSouth’s primary generation source – **the WPCA has increased moderately in the past year.** However, PowerSouth has always strategically planned for the future, and that plan has helped limit wholesale power cost increases for CHELCO.

“Since we have continued to use members’ money efficiently, we have not seen the need to increase our local rates,” said CEO Steve Rhodes. “During these uncertain times of high inflation and supply chain disruptions, anything is possible, but at this time, CHELCO does not anticipate raising local distribution rates in the near future.”

ACRE supports co-ops nationwide

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) is a grassroots political action committee (PAC) that supports and advocates for co-ops around the country. Co-ops just like CHELCO have ACRE’s support to help implement policies at the state and federal level that are beneficial to cooperatives and their members. ACRE contributions to candidates are backed by over 36,000 eligible members across 47 states, with an average contribution of \$65.

For more information, and to learn how you can get involved to make sure your co-op is fairly represented in office, visit electric.coop/acre.

Recipe of the Month



Turkey Pot Pie

Of course we’d share a turkey recipe in November! If you like turkey and chicken pot pie, then this is the recipe for you! Learn this recipe and more at CHELCO.com/recipes.

Happy Thanksgiving

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.

Operation Round Up continues to make an impact



CHELCO Communications and Community Affairs Supervisor Bonnie Whitfield (center) presents a check to Backpack Buddies of Baker.

CHELCO's Operation Round Up program continues to make an impact on our communities nearly four years after its introduction.

Through Operation Round Up, a member-funded program that gives back to local non-profit organizations, CHELCO recently presented a \$5,000 grant to Backpack Buddies of Baker.

Backpack Buddies is a free ministry sponsored by local community organizations to help bridge the meal gap between Friday and Monday for students in Baker. They also provide food boxes during holiday breaks, provide snacks for classrooms and host community food distributions.

Each week, bags are prepped on Wednesday night, and on Thursday night, a team meets to pack bags and load them into a van for distribution. On Friday mornings, volunteers meet in front of Baker

School, unload the van and distribute bags to classrooms. However, any child in need, not just those at Baker School, can participate. To learn more, or to see how you can get involved, check out Backpack Buddies of Baker on Facebook.

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program that allows members to round up their monthly bill to the next whole dollar amount, and the spare change is given back to local non-profits in the form of grants. Since the program's introduction in 2019, we have awarded 80 grants totaling more than \$164,000!

To opt in, call us at (850) 892-2111 or visit CHELCO.com and fill out a short form on our Operation Round Up page. If you run a non-profit organization and would be interested in applying for a grant, please visit our Operation Round Up page on CHELCO.com.

CHELCO Holiday Schedule

Thanksgiving: Offices closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 24-25

Christmas: Offices closed Friday and Monday, Dec. 23 and 26

Download Co-op Connections App

We're discontinuing highlighting specific businesses in this section. Instead, we'll remind you to download the Co-op Connections app, where you can find hundreds of deals for local and nationwide products, businesses, pharmacies and more.

To download the Co-op Connections app, simply search for "Co-op Connections" in your smart phone's app store.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you're planning on decking the halls, do so with high-efficiency LED lights. LED Christmas lights are relatively inexpensive and use 90% less electricity than traditional Christmas lights.



IS \$25 YOURS?

If the account number below matches yours, sign this page and mail it with your bill to CHELCO or drop it off at any office. You'll win a \$25 credit on your next bill.

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For unclaimed capital credits, visit [CHELCO.com/capital-credits](https://www.chelco.com/capital-credits).