

# CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

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A Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperative 



**CHELCO CEO Steve Rhodes delivers donation check to Pepito's restaurant**

## Helping our community the co-op way

At CHELCO, we love our community and wanted to show our support for those affected by the coronavirus. In the last three months, CHELCO and our employees, along with our subsidiary Southland Utility Services, contributed over \$24,000 to help the restaurants and employees whose hours and tips were drastically reduced. CHELCO also showed its support for healthcare workers and first responders in our community during the pandemic.

"This is the co-op spirit," CEO Steve Rhodes said. "When we see that our community is faced with hard times, we do what we can to help. These gestures were simply a way to tell the people in our community that we see them and appreciate them."

In addition to financial support for local restaurants, CHELCO acknowledged the essential workers in our community with a simple gesture: delivering pizza to first responders and cookies to healthcare workers in nursing facilities.

"Their dedication, especially in recent months, has not gone unnoticed," Rhodes said. "Between our support for restaurants and our recognition of frontline workers, we hope that our efforts have helped mitigate some of the local effects of this pandemic."

As part of our initiative to recognize and thank our community's frontline employees, CHELCO delivered pizza

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### Announcement

#### **Same news, new look**

You may notice this month's CHELCO News looks a bit different - we hope for the better. We recently updated our publications and website to make them easier to navigate and more engaging.



## CEO Insights: Stay alert, cautious and safe

As the coronavirus continues to impact us all, scammers are taking advantage of the fears many of us are facing around the country. Right now, the last thing you should have to worry about is your electric service, but scammers are actively targeting co-op members and utility customers. Knowing who to trust and staying cautious will help you protect yourself and your family from becoming victims of a utility scam.

### Beware of suspicious phone calls

A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will likely claim you have a past due account and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. He or she will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a very short, urgent timeframe to pay the "past due" amount.

You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account and knowing that CHELCO will never call to demand immediate payment to avoid service shut off. As a rule, never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have

a question regarding your energy bill, call us directly at (850) 892-2111.

### Know who to trust on your property

Regarding your electric service, it's especially important to know who you can trust on and around your property. Be careful letting strangers into your home; CHELCO employees will schedule an appointment with you beforehand, so you'll know when to expect us.

Our CHELCO vehicles and uniforms will be easily identified by our logos, and if you see them in the field, you know you can trust them.

There are some tasks that CHELCO must contract out, and it's important to treat our contract crews with the same level of trust as our own linemen and field workers. Below are some of our partners you might see out and about in our service territory.

Southland Utility Services is a wholly-owned subsidiary of CHELCO, and they perform our right-of-way clearing, underground construction and other utility services.

PowerSouth is our generation and transmission cooperative, and they inspect our transmission lines annually and work in our substations

at least once a month.

Osmose Utilities Services inspects the poles on our system on an eight-year cycle and ensures they are in proper condition to support our lines and other equipment.

Volt Power and Panhandle Power Solutions are general contractors, and they each assist our crews with system maintenance when necessary.

Patterson and Dewar Engineering evaluates our power delivery infrastructure, including substations, lines and other technology.

All of these partners provide an essential service to our members, and it's important to know they can be trusted just as much as our CHELCO crews.

At CHELCO, we protect our members and strive for clarity in our interactions with you. We encourage you to be cautious and mindful that scammers are out there waiting to target innocent victims. In these uncertain times, it's important to remember you have a trusted energy advisor in CHELCO.

**Steve Rhodes,**  
Chief Executive Officer



Panhandle Power Solutions

## Struggling to pay your monthly bill?



### CHELCO is working with members who are struggling due to COVID-19

Since March, we have suspended disconnects for nonpayment in response to community and member need due to COVID-19. As we begin to resume regular account management, it's important to catch up on any unpaid balances members may owe.

We know the past few months have been hard for many of our members; that's why we're offering lenient payment arrangements to help those

who are behind on their bills get caught up.

If you have an unpaid balance, please call us at (850) 892-2111 to discuss a payment arrangement. We are here to work with you and help you get back on your feet as we continue to navigate through uncertain times together.

Thank you all for your patience, perseverance and determination. We're proud to serve our members!

## In Brief

### Our payment offices reopened June 15

Thank you for your perseverance during the past several weeks and months. It is a joy to serve you, and we take pride in calling you our members.

### Fun Fact: Solar Energy

Did you know that 179 CHELCO members have personal solar arrays and are participating in our Net Metering program? In the last month, we've connected five new solar arrays to our system. If you are interested in learning more about solar energy, call our Energy Services Department at (850) 307-1122.

## Helping our community the co-op way

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to the Walton County Sheriff's Office and the DeFuniak Springs Police and Fire Departments to show our support. In partnership with local caterer I Cook You Eat, CHELCO provided homemade cookies to healthcare workers at the Chautauqua Rehabilitation and Nursing Center and The Manor at Bluewater Bay.



SVP of Engineering and Operations Matthew Avery (left) presents cookies and a letter of appreciation to the workers of The Manor at Bluewater Bay.

CHELCO is governed by a nine-member board of trustees: Lee Perry, District 1; Terry Pilcher, District 2; Jim Bishop, 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; Burt Cosson, District 9.



## Summer tips to help you save



During the hot summer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures than throughout the rest of the year. Follow these simple tips to save energy and money and make your home more efficient this summer.

In the mornings, shut your blinds to hold in the cool air and keep out hot humid air.

Replacing any older incandescent bulbs with LEDs is also important during these months. The waste heat from the old bulbs not only affects energy use, but also creates unwanted heat.

Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can block the heat from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for your house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to

close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two, and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. CHELCO recommends setting your thermostat to 78 degrees in the summer. You can also install a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home.

Using a ceiling fan is also beneficial, as it can allow you to increase your thermostat settings, almost four degrees on average, without changing your comfort level.

For more energy saving tips or questions, please call our Energy Services department at (850) 307-1122. Our Energy Advisors will be happy to help you save on energy costs this summer.

## Connections Corner

The Co-op Connections discount program is another benefit of being a CHELCO member. Local businesses, participating pharmacies and thousands nationally, offer discounts to co-op members. Don't forget to download the Co-op Connections app!

This month, we highlight and thank the following businesses:

**That Pizza Place**  
(850) 520-4505  
DeFuniak Springs  
10% off excluding beer & wine

**Beach Brother's  
Beach Service**  
(850) 737-1499  
Santa Rosa Beach  
15% off total rental charge

**Walton Music**  
(850) 892-7073  
DeFuniak Springs  
10% off any one regular  
priced item

For more information, visit  
CHELCO.com, email  
marketingservices@chelco.com  
or call CHELCO's marketing  
department at (850) 307-1122.

## 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.

**Whittle - 970081998**