



LIVE WIRE

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc. Vol. 13, No. 5

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MAY 2008

Live Wire is a monthly newsletter published for members of Choptank Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 430, Denton, MD 21629

Toll Free:
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Outage Reporting:
1-800-410-4790,
toll free,
24 hours/day,
7 days/week.

Automated Customer Service Line:
1-800-311-8556, toll free
410-479-4206
(Caroline Co.)

Internet site:
www.choptankelectric.coop

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A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative

**Celebrating
70 years of service
to our members
1938-2008**

Electrical Safety: Protect Your Children

Approximately 2,400 children receive emergency room treatment every year for injuries caused by inserting objects into electrical receptacles, according to a 10-year report released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). This equates to about seven children each day. Even more alarming is that the report found that over 70% of these electrical incidents occur at home, with adult supervision typically present.

Objects children insert are everyday, easily accessible household items with the hairpin the number one culprit. Other items include keys, a finger, a pin, wire, screw or nail, paper clips or staples tweezers, a file or knife, and jewelry or a belt buckle.

CPSC reported almost 95 percent of injuries involve burns. These range in severity, but a significant number of serious and fatal incidents result. Pediatric burns can be particularly serious, because the skin is thin and offers little resistance to electric flow or heat. With infants and toddlers, burns and scars are even more severe.

Using a plastic outlet cap is a common solution to prevent children from sticking objects into outlets. Unfortunately, plastic caps are not the safest option and can be easily removed by a young child. A safer solution is installing tamper resistant outlets. These specialized outlets have been so effective in preventing injuries to children that the 2008 National Electrical Code requires that tamper resistant outlets be installed

in all new homes constructed. These inexpensive products can easily be incorporated into older homes as well.

Tamper Proof Outlets are standard wall outlets that feature a shutter mechanism that protects children from sticking foreign objects into the receptacle. The spring-loaded shutter system in the outlet only allows electricity to flow when equal pressure is applied simultaneously to both shutters such as when an electrical plug is inserted. During unused conditions, both shutters are closed, and openings are covered.

It is easy to retrofit an older home with tamper-resistant receptacles, and installation is identical to installation of standard receptacles.

Take the time to replace your outlets. For as little as \$2 an outlet you can help avoid many preventable home injuries. Make your home a safer environment for your child by installing Tamper Proof Outlets.

The revision takes effect with the 2008 National Electrical Code, and states and municipalities will have to adopt the Code. NEC Article 406.11 states that all 125-volt, 15- and 20-ampere receptacles shall be listed tamper-resistant receptacles.

The new Code will affect all new construction installations for single- and multi-family homes.

Historical adoption rates indicate about 50 percent of the states will likely adopt the Code in 2008, and 80 percent will likely adopt by 2009.

For more information: www.childoutletsafety.org.



QA senior enthusiastic about cooperatives

A trip to Anaheim, California, as a member of the Youth Leadership Council (YLC) of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) was "one of the most important things I've done in high school," says Hilary Staver, a senior at Queen Anne's County High in Centreville.

Representing Maryland and sponsored by Choptank Electric Cooperative, Hilary joined young people from 44 other states in assisting the NRECA during its 66th Annual Meeting, which drew more than 10,000 electric co-op leaders. In addition to performing specific jobs at the event, YLC members were able to increase their knowledge of national energy issues affecting electric cooperatives and the members they serve.

Hilary especially enjoyed working at the Congressional Action Center, where YLC students encouraged cooperative members to contact their Senators and U.S. Representatives on key issues, including protecting electric consumers and global warming. "It was up to the YLC to keep the computers and information booth manned and that worked really well," says Hilary. "We signed up 16,000 people, which broke the record."

Other YLC duties included assisting NRECA staff, participating in educational forums and staffing the information booth. The opening general session cere-

mony showcased council members carrying their state flag to the stage during the Parade of States. "That was my favorite part of the whole meeting," says Hilary. "The whole place was full and you really felt like you were part of something big. I had no idea co-ops are such a strong force nationally and they have a strong influence in Washington."

"I'm really glad the theme was climate change and it was great NRECA is addressing it," says Hilary, who is contemplating a career focused on environmental issues. "There is a whole other side to the issue. In order for the idea of saving energy to work, everyone has to be involved, so it's good co-ops have influence across the nation."

She also enjoyed the NRECA business meeting, where YLC members worked with NRECA staff.



HILARY STAVER

Continued on p. 3

When the REA brought electric to life on the ‘Shore

It’s difficult to imagine a time when electricity wasn’t available to everyone, but prior to 1935 and the Rural Electrification Act, that was the case in rural America. It wasn’t until 1938 people in rural areas of the Eastern Shore of Maryland were able to “hook up to the REA.”

This year, Choptank Electric Cooperative is celebrating its 70th anniversary, having grown from less than 500 members in Caroline County in 1938 to over 52,000 in all nine counties of the Shore.

A number of our current members recall when they “hooked up to the REA.” We have heard from a number of our members about how life changed when Choptank Electric built its poles and lines and will feature these memories in the coming months.

“I remember hooking up to the REA in 1946. Those were hard and good times on the farm where my family moved in 1939. I was 14 years old and pumped water for cows and mules, cut wood for the cook stove and heater. There was an outside toilet and pump and an oil lamp to read by. There was no refrigerator so mom canned meat and made scrapple in the winter, hams and other meat were cured with salt, pepper and sugar. All

the washing was done by hand, and the iron and water were heated on the stove.

“Yes, it was a hard time, but the good time came in 1946 when the REA started to cut a path for poles for electric. My brother Roy got a job with them. The foreman came to the house and told pop and mom ‘it will not be long before you have REA electric.’ Pop got the wires put in, and put a bathroom and sink in the house. My parents lived a long time to enjoy electric thanks to the REA.”

Harry Harding, age 83, Vienna

“I was born upstairs in this house in 1923, and Rt. 404 was a shell road then. A few years after I was born, we moved to town and we had electricity. Just before the depression, my father moved us back to the farm – there were three brothers – because he said we got into too much trouble in town. In town we had electricity, a toy train, Christmas lights, a vacuum cleaner, but when we got here – nothin’!

“There used to be a big water tower and we pumped water with a John Deere gas engine. Everything was done with a team – horses and mules – or by hand.

“My mother was not happy about the



Wayne Cawley

move. Electricity was right down at Mr. Donovan’s house, which was right across the road and dad was going to put it in our house, but said it cost too much (\$500).
“So when Choptank showed up, my father went around to get farmers to sign up. When we got electricity, there was one bulb in each room. We’ve been using Choptank ever since. Electricity is the cheapest tool we have in farming, bar none, including tractors or any other machine or energy use.”

Wayne Cawley, Denton

Former Md. Secretary of Agriculture

We’re still looking for memories, so write a letter or a short note, send an email or fax, and if you’ve got photos, we’d like to have those as well. We’ll feature the stories throughout the year on our website and in the Live Wire. Send your memories to: Anne Whaples, Choptank Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Denton MD 21629; email annew@choptankelectric.coop; fax to 410-479-1014; or call 877-892-0001, ext. 8640. We’d love to hear from you!

Many thanks to Mr. Harding and Mr. Cawley for sharing their memories this month.

“Straight Talk” for our members



By Bob Behlke
*Vice President,
Consumer Affairs*

The 425th General Assembly of Maryland came to a close on April 7 at the stroke of midnight. As you know, this year’s session was mainly about

two things: what to do about energy, and the budget. I can’t help you with the budget, but I can tell you a bit about the energy bills that affected Choptank.

I mentioned in an earlier column we were “working” about 80 bills that would have an impact on your co-op. The Governor’s EmPower Maryland bills (HB 374 and SB 205) were passed with a few amendments that were quite favorable to Choptank. We will still be required to have an energy conservation plan, but it will not be as demanding as originally drafted.

We are still concerned about adequate capacity, and have an extensive plan before the Public Service Commission to help curb consumption. The new language in the bill gives us more latitude and flexibility which translates to a lower financial impact to you, our owners, while still reducing overall consumption.

A number of bills were aimed at the environmental impact of power plant emissions. Since Choptank does not own any power production facilities in the state this did not have a direct impact on us. We did have many discussions with our supplier,

Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, about the proactive environmental stance Maryland was taking on emissions. We suggested they consider these new regulations and start moving in that direction with their own plant, and the ones with which they contract.

What about the rest of the bills that were directed at the electric industry? Some died because they lacked support, some were killed by industry lobbyists because they were bad legislation, and some were passed with the intention of making Maryland a better place to live. For instance, poultry litter was elevated to a tier one renewable fuel resource (HB 1166) for electric generation. By moving it to a tier one status, it becomes more economically feasible as a fuel source.

Maryland’s energy problems will not be solved as a result of the legislative session, but steps are being taken by the legislators in conjunction with Choptank and other electric utilities in Maryland to insure reliability and capacity issues are mitigated in the future.

Basically it comes down to everyone taking ownership in being a positive contributor to our energy future such as turning off lights and appliances when not in use, and turning down the thermostat a degree or two in winter and up a degree or two in summer. These simple steps could have a substantial impact if we all participate.

Many times I have heard this wonderful planet referred to as “Spaceship Earth.” If you subscribe to that description, then you are faced with a choice — are you a passenger or are you part of the crew?

Slight decrease expected for power cost adjustment

Choptank Electric members will see a slight decrease in the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) portion of their bills effective July 1. The PCA is a line item on all electric bills that is a direct reflection of the fluctuating costs of fuel used to make electricity.

The current PCA on member bills is now \$0.02193 per kilowatt hour. Pending approval of the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC), the PCA will drop to just under \$0.02 per kilowatt hour. A hearing on this proposal amount is scheduled before the PSC in Baltimore on June 9.

Choptank does not profit from this charge. 218487900 The PCA is used solely to meet the cost of purchasing fuel used for electricity generation. The Maryland Public Service Commission reviews our cost data to ensure that the charge reflects our actual purchased power costs.

**Choptank offices will close
May 26 for Memorial Day.**



Fred Hubbard, president and CEO of Choptank Electric, center, is presented with a certificate of recognition from Major General Bruce F. Tuxill, Adjutant General for the State of Maryland, left, and George L. Doestch Jr., state chair of the Maryland Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Committee, at an employer awards program. Mr. Hubbard and Choptank Electric were honored for their support of National Guard and Reserve employees. Over 28,000 Guard and Reserve members live in Maryland and work for 4,800 employers in the state.

Choptank Trust March Awards

- American Legion Auxiliary Unit 29 – \$250 to sponsor a girl to Girls State
- Col. Richardson High School After Prom Party 2008 – \$300 gift card
- Worcester County Garden Club – \$1,000 to purchase trees for planting at schools on Arbor Day
- Classic Yacht Restoration - \$1,675 for transport of yacht and keel attachment
- St. Michaels Community Center – \$2,395.80 for carpeting
- Crossroads Community – \$5,000 towards installation of central air at rehabilitation residence
- Dorchester Humane Society – up to \$6,288.50 for repairs and improvements
- Friends of the Worcester Co. Commission for Women – \$1,500 towards purchase of books
- Disabled individuals - \$999 for home improvements and disability equipment

Senior

(Continued from p.1)

“There was a lot of debate on several issues and it was interesting to watch.”

“We’re very proud of Hilary and her enthusiasm for youth programs sponsored by the NRECA and Choptank Electric,” says Anne Whaples, manager of cooperative communications and Youth Tour chaperon. “This is a wonderful opportunity for high school students to get an up-close look at Washington, meet their peers from across the country, and possibly attend the NRECA annual meeting as Hilary did. She has been a fantastic ambassador for us.”

The YLC is an extension of the Rural Electric Youth Tour, where nearly 1,500 high school students meet in Washington, D.C., in June of each year to visit their the U.S. House and Senate, attend educational seminars and visit historical landmarks.

Hilary is enthusiastic about her experiences. “The programs changed my views and my plans for what I’m going to study, particularly since I’ve realized how important it is to have representation on policy in Washington. It truly has broadened my perspective. I would absolutely do it again.”

A top student and cross-country star at Queen Anne’s County High, Hilary has also volunteered at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental and Estuarine Studies at Horn Point and a local bird-banding program. She is now focused on her last few months of high school, and is hoping to attend Cornell University in the fall.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Staver.

THE GREEN SCENE

Most water heaters are factory set at 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Around your home, 120 degree is adequate for most uses. Each 10 degree reduction can save 3-5% on your energy usage.

Save energy naturally — Plant a tree

Looking for the ultimate and most natural way to save energy around your home? Plant trees.

Not only do trees beautify your landscape, studies show properly placed trees can cut your air conditioning costs by 25% or more. The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture estimates the net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.

During the hot summer months, roofs absorb solar energy, paved driveways and sidewalks reflect heat, and windows let in hot sun. Trees not only provide shade that absorbs the sun’s rays, they also help reduce air temperatures around your home by releasing water vapor.990384602

Trees also help the environment by naturally converting the “greenhouse gas” (carbon dioxide) into oxygen.

The type of trees you plant and where you plant them are the keys to maximum energy savings.

Deciduous trees such as maples, oaks, and birches provide the most shade. Plus, because they drop their leaves in the fall, they allow

sunlight to reach your home and provide solar heating during the winter.

According to the U.S. Dept. of Energy, to get a tree’s maximum cooling benefit, plant it centrally and to the south of the house, or in the southwest corner. In this location, a deciduous tree will shade out hot afternoon sun in the summer while still allowing light to warm the house in the winter.

When planting a tree near your house, you need to consider how large and how tall the tree will become as it matures. Trees should shade your house but not overhang it since during storms branches could damage your roof or siding. You should make sure that as the tree grows it will not affect electric and other utility lines around your home.

Before planting any trees, find out what types are recommended for your area. Make sure you get advice as to the most advantageous locations and the recommended distance from your home to plant a tree.

A wealth of information is also available at www.arborday.org, the web site of the National Arbor Day Foundation.

Watt’s Your Number?

There are 2 hidden co-op account numbers in this month’s issue.

If one of the numbers is your Choptank Electric account number, let us know by the fifth of the following month, and you’ll win a \$10 credit on your bill!

If you find your account number in this issue, send your name, address, account and phone numbers to: Anne Whaples, Watt’s Your Number?, Choptank Electric, P.O. Box 430, Denton MD 21629 or annew@choptankelectric.coop.

Anybody home?

Is the name, address and phone number printed on your bill correct? If you have any changes, please fill out the form on the back of your payment stub and send it to us with your payment. It is very important this information is correct, especially for our outage reporting system. So be sure to check the information printed on the front of your bill and make any corrections on the back. Thank you!

Pine Steppers Square Dance Club workshop Wed., 7 p.m., Ocean Pines Community Hall. 410-208-6331 or 208-6777

Vietnam Vets of America, 1st Thurs., 7 p.m., Easton VFW. 410-943-1374. Lower Shore, 3rd Thurs., VFW 194, Salisbury. 410-651-0904

Bingo: Willards VFC, Thurs., 7 p.m., Lions Bldg., 410-835-8678; Pittsville VFC, Fri., 7 p.m. 410-835-2323; Fedsbg. VFW, Thurs., 7:20 p.m. 410-754-5020; Hurlock Legion, Fri., 7:30 p.m., 410-943-8205; Denton Legion, Tues., 6 p.m., 410-479-2708; Redmen, Fruitland, Mon., 6:30 p.m. 410-742-6859; Willards Lions, Tues., 7 p.m. 410-835-2328; Denton VFC, Fri., 7:30 p.m.

Peninsulaires chorus, Tues. 7:30 p.m., Wic. Civic Ctr., Flanders Rm., Salisbury. 410-641-8927 or 543-8628. Ocean Bay Sweet Adelines, Mon., 7 p.m., same location, 410-749-1194. Delmarva Sweet Adelines, Mon., 7 p.m., Ocean Pines Comm. Ctr. 410-641-6876. QA Barbershop Chorus, Wed., 6:30 p.m., Centreville UM Church, Rt. 213. 410-827-7993. Bay Country Chorus, Mon., 7 p.m., Miller Hall, behind Trinity Cathedral, Easton. 410-770-8262

Ocean Waves Square Dance, 2nd Sat., 8-10:30 p.m., Mid-Shore YMCA, 715 S. Shumaker Dr., Salisbury. 410-873-2027 or 822-7387

Disabled American Veterans Chap. 34, 4th Thurs., 1 p.m., Meuse VFW Post 194, Salisbury. 410-749-4518

Chesapeake Christian Riders CMA 453, 1st Thurs, Bob Evans Restaurant, Easton, 6 p.m. 410-943-8325

Pinochle, Wed., 9:45 a.m., 410-208-0562, Ocean Pines Country Club; Bridge Club, Wed., 10 a.m., 410-641-7667, Ocean Pines Yacht Club.

Pepper Steppers Square Dance, 2nd Sat., 8 p.m., First UM Church Hall, Chestertown. 410-810-0926 or 410-778-4578

Heartland Quilt Guild, 1st Thur., 7-9, Choptank Electric mtg. rm., Denton, 410-482-8131

Women Supporting Women (breast cancer group), 3rd Wed., 7 p.m., Atlantic Business Ctr., Ste. 213, Berlin, 410-641-2849

Eastern Shore Bluegrass Assn., show & jam, 2nd Sun., 1 p.m., Maryland Fire Co. 302-674-3149 or 492-1048

TOPS weight loss: Tues., 6:30 p.m., 1st Baptist, Maryland, 410-482-6694; 6 p.m., 418 Dutchman's La., Greensboro; 6 p.m., Caroline Nsg. Home sun room, 410-482-2658; 6 p.m., Worcester Co. Health Dept. Thurs., 7 p.m., Christ UMC, Salisbury, 410-546-4197/543-9039; Church of God, Easton; 6 p.m. 410-822-2630/673-2248

Nat'l Assn. Active & Retired Fed. Employees, Chap. 1261, Salisbury area, 3rd Thurs., 410-896-2671; Chap. 2274, Wor. Co., 4th Thurs., Jordan's Rooftop, Ocean City, 11:30 a.m., 410-641-5570

Activity Singles Klub, Easton, 2nd Wed., 410-822-7468

Medical coverage for pregnant women & children to age 19. Kent, 410-778-7035, QA, 410-758-0720, Tal., 410-819-5690

E. Shore Stamp Club, 1st Tues., Wic. Library, Salisbury, 6:30 p.m. 410-208-2929; Tidewater Stamp Club, 2nd & 4th Tue., 7 p.m., 14 S. Harrison St., 2nd fl., Easton. 410-822-6471

Duplicate bridge: Riverside Homes, Salisbury, Mon., 7 p.m., 410-835-8343; Tred Avon, Wed., noon, Talbot Community Ctr., Rt. 50, Easton. 410-226-5126

Overeaters Anon., Sat., 10 a.m., Christ UM Church, Ed. Bldg., Salisbury. 410-376-0164; Fri., noon, Family Connection Ctr., 29 Broad St., Ste. 209, Berlin. 410-629-0679

Overeaters Anon., Mon. 5:15 p.m., Health Ed. Bldg., Memorial Hosp., Easton; Fri. noon, St. Mark's UMC, Easton. 410-820-0006

Friends of Ocean Pines Library, 2nd Mon., 10 a.m., 410-208-2760

Merry Widows & Widowers Social Club, 3rd Tues., 2:30 p.m., Ocean Pines Country Club. 410-208-6207; Beach Singles 45+, last Tues, 6 p.m. 410-208-3974; Delmarva Singles, 50+, 1st Wed., 6 p.m. 410-742-8310 or jasuth@intercom.net

Denton AA, 105 Gay St., Thurs., 8 p.m.; Co-Dependents Anon., Sun., 6:30 p.m., Christ UMC, Salisbury. 410-376-0164; Dual Recovery Anon., Wor. Library, Pocomoke, Mon., 7 p.m.

Worcester Chorale, Wed., 7 p.m., Community Church, Rt. 589, Ocean Pines. 410-208-1999

Wellness Community-Delmarva cancer support programs, Salisbury, Berlin, Easton. 888-806-0756

Dorchester Swingers Square Dance, 1st Fri., 8 p.m., Maple Elem. Cambridge, Sept. - June '08. 410-822-7535

Sons of Confederate Vets Maj. Gen. Arnold Elzey Camp 1940 & friends, 1st Wed., 7 p.m., Wic. Library, Salisbury 410-641-9305

Pine'er Craft & Gift Shop, Ocean Pines Community Ctr., 239 Ocean Pkwy., every Sat. & Sun., 10-4.

Federalburg VFC, breakfast 4th Sun., 7-10. \$6, Children \$3; under 3 free.

Md. Children's Health, medical coverage, pregnant women & children to age 19. Kent 410-778-7035, QA 410-758-0720, Talbot, 410-819-5690

Line dance, every Fri., Frat. Order of Eagles, 107 Alexander Ave., Salisbury, beginners 6 p.m., dance follows. 410-749-1981

Free meditation group, Tues., 7 p.m., Sweetspot Arts, Ocean Pines, 410-641-6845 or susanbeverly2003@yahoo.com

Preston Vol. Fire Co., AUCE breakfast, 1st Sun., 7-10, \$6.

Tri-County Bird Club (Wic., Som., Wor.) 4th Mon. (except Dec. & June-Aug.), Fox Rm., south entrance, Asbury UM Church, Salisbury. 410-742-5497

Writers Bloc writers group meeting 3rd Sat., Wicomico Library, Salisbury, 1 p.m. 443-260-0790

Missy's Quilting Bee, 1st Tues., 7-9, Choptank Electric mtg. rm., Denton. All welcome. 410-634-1163

Dorchester Swingers Square Dance, Maple Elem. School, Egypt Rd., Cambridge, 1st Fri., 8-10. Refreshments. 410-822-7535

Mid-Shore A.B.A.T.E., 2nd Tues., 7:30 p.m., Easton VFW. www.midshoreabate.com

Noontunes on the Denton Courthouse Green, May 16, 23, 30, noon, free. 410-479-8120

Worcester Co. Garden Club Plant Auction, Taylor Museum, Berlin, May 12, 10 a.m. - all day. 410-289-8251

Ballroom dance, May 15, cha-cha lesson 7 p.m., open 8-11. Asbury UMC, Salisbury. Admission. 410-749-4914

Free concert, USAF classic country rock band, May 17, 2:30 p.m., Cecilton Park Pavilion, bring chairs. Rain, Cecilton Elem. School gym. Town of Cecilton and Lions Club. 410-275-1156

Soft Shell Festival, Crisfield City Dock, May 25, 12-5. Crisfield Lions and Chamber of Commerce. 410-968-2500

Worcester Co. Garden Club "Footprints in the Sand" show, Ocean Pines Library, June 6, 1-8, June 7, 8-noon. 410-289-8251

Contra Dance, June 6, Cambridge YMCA, 7:30 p.m., live bluegrass music, no partner needed. 410-943-4400

Strawberry Festival & Craft Show, June 7, 10-5, St. Luke's UMC, St. Michaels, lunch, bake sale, crafts. 410-745-2534.

Linchester Mill Arts & Music Festival, Denton, June 7, 12-5, open air market, food, music, hay rides, more. 410-673-1910

Delmarva Chicken Festival, Centre at Salisbury, June 20-21, arts, crafts, music, carnival, Giant Fry Pan. 410-749-0144

Relay for Life, Caroline 4-H Park, Denton, June 20-21. Luminaria ceremony at dusk. Food provided. 410-479-3188

East Coast Pullers Truck & Tractor Pull, June 28, 7 p.m., \$12, Great Pocomoke Fairgrounds. 410-632-3998

SEND EVENTS: Shore Good to Know, Choptank Electric, P.O. Box 430, Denton, MD 21629; or annew@choptankelectric.coop two months prior to event if possible. Include phone number.