

Your Source For News & Information



Local News and Information for Members of Choptank Electric on Maryland's Eastern Shore



Members Give Choptank Electric High ACSI score

Once again, members gave Choptank Electric an above-average ACSI (American Customer Satisfaction Index) score of 85 out of 100. This rating is higher than the cooperative utility industry average of 77, as published on the 2019 ACSI report. During the summer, Touchstone Energy conducted its National Survey on the Cooperative Difference and surveyed our members. Members who responded shared what the co-op is doing well and where we can improve.

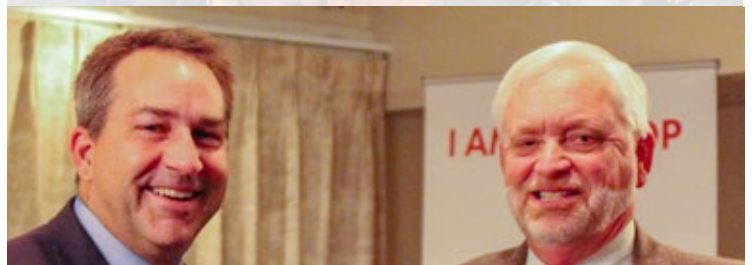
“We are proud of our ability to meet our members’ expectations at the core of our service — providing reliable electricity to our members. It’s in our mission to do so,” said CEO Mike Malandro. “The Cooperative Difference survey helps us understand members expectations and where we can improve to meet them.”

Choptank Electric Cooperative thanks those who participated in the 2019 Cooperative Difference Survey for your honest answers and comments.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURES



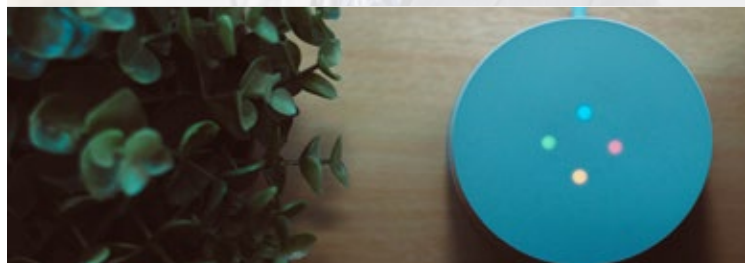
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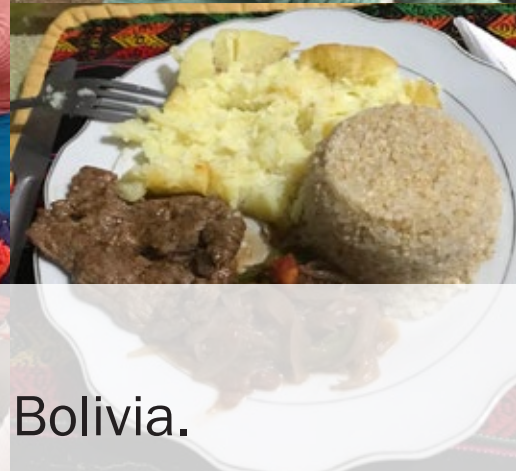
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Committed to Community: Mike Johnson's Volunteer Experience in Bolivia.

Fifteen volunteer electric cooperative lineworkers, including Mike Johnson from our Chestertown District office, returned to the United States from Bolivia with heavier beards, weary eyes and thinner waistlines. But what they left behind after two-and-a-half weeks of hard labor will endure long after they trim their whiskers, catch up on their sleep, and eat something other than llama. These brave men brought electricity for the first time to 52 households across five communities in the Oruro region of the South American nation.

It took over 15 hours to arrive in Bolivia! Johnson recalled how the crew flew together from Reagan International Airport to Miami (2 1-2 hours), and boarded another flight from Miami to Bolivia which took an additional seven hours. Finally, once the weary crew made it to Bolivia, it was another six hours by bus through paved and rough roads to the work site.

The linemen had two interpreters assigned to accompany them everywhere they went – which was done so they could enjoy a safe experience. On their time off, the linemen visited the local downtown, nearby salt flats, and even a 5,000-year-old-burial ground.

Llama, quinoa and potatoes were the staple supper most days. Soup and other local delicacies were also

served. Johnson said locals believed the quinoa grown in this area of Bolivia is so pure, that people allegedly lived into their 600s.



The crew travelled over 15 hours to arrive to Bolivia.

Commitment to Community

Expansive landscapes were common during the trip. Johnson explained the weather was bitter cold, combined with sleet/snow for the first few days.

The town of Coniri in which Johnson performed the majority of his work had a large volcano, easily seen from anywhere in the village. It is said the volcano has not been active since the 1600s. While in Coniri, Johnson and other linemen stayed in a local hotel – the accommodations while reminiscent of a summer camp bunker room, lacked heating in its entirety – no fireplaces or even gas options. Blankets were available.

When asked if he would do it again, and if others should follow on his footsteps, Johnson answered: “Absolutely! This was truly a once in a lifetime experience.”

To view full pictures and video coverage from Johnson’s experience, visit <https://choptankelectric.com/committed-community> or scan the QR code:



According to local knowledge, the volcano in the distance has not been active since the 1600s.



One out of over 200 poles that Johnson and other linemen help install in the Oruro region.



The first bulb! Imagine living in a world without electricity, and seeing it for the first time.

Learn. Lead. Live.

Choptank Electric

Youth Tour 2020

June 21-25

The deadline to apply is January 31! Apply at:

<https://choptankelectric.com/youth-tour>

A New Legislative Session with New Possibilities

The Maryland General Assembly begins the 441st Legislative Session on the second Wednesday in January. During the 90-day session, 188 elected officials will consider almost 3,000 bills. The 2020 session is expected to be dominated by discussion of the Kirwan Commission's recommendation for Education Excellence and the spending formula that accompanies it.

The 2020 session will also feature new leadership in both chambers. Del. Adrienne Jones (D-Baltimore County) was elected Speaker of the House in April. Sen. Bill Ferguson (D-Baltimore City) is expected to be formally elected President of the Senate on January 8th. Both have a history of consensus building within their party.

Choptank Electric Cooperative will monitor all of the bills introduced to identify those that may have an impact on the service we provide to our co-op members.

Our goal continues to be affordable, reliable service to the membership. In that vein, we will also pursue our Broadband Initiative with legislation to streamline regulatory hurdles so we can move forward.

Our first-lines of offense and defense will be the Eastern Shore Delegation. These 16 legislators who caucus every Friday morning during session to protect the interest of the Eastern Shore are worth getting to know. They divide up to sit on every committee in the House and Senate and they hold leadership positions. They rely on each other, and on their constituents, to know what is important for our region.

Members can visit the Maryland General Assembly website to view additional information, including contact information, for their local representatives at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>.

District 35 – Top of the Shore (Cecil & Harford Counties)



Sen. Jason Gallion



Del. Teresa Reilly



Del. Andrew Cassilly



Del. Kevin Hornberger

District 36 – Upper Shore (Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's & Caroline Counties)



Sen. Steve Hershey



Del. Jay Jacobs



Del. Steve Arentz



Del. Jeff Ghrist

District 37 – Mid-Shore (Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester & Wicomico Counties)



Sen. Addie Eckardt



Del. Johnny Mautz



Del. Sheree Sample-Hughes



Del. Chris Adams

District 38 – Lower shore (Wicomico, Somerset & Worcester Counties)



Sen. Mary Beth Carozza



Del. Charles Otto



Del. Wayne Hartman



Del. Carl Anderton

New Board Member Appointed for Somerset County



Newly appointed Board Director, Craig N. Mathies Sr., Somerset County

At the October board meeting, Craig N. Mathies Sr. of Princess Anne was appointed to the Board of Directors of Choptank Electric Cooperative, representing Somerset County. This seat became available when Carl R. Widdowson retired on Aug. 27, 2019. Mr. Mathies will serve the remainder of the unexpired term and stand for re-election at the annual meeting in April 2020.

Mr. Mathies has been a Somerset County resident for over 51 years. Educated in the Somerset County Public School System he graduated from Crisfield High School, and attended the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, receiving a Bachelors of Arts from Norfolk Theological Seminary. He received his Master's degree from the

Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in 2014 and is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry Program at Chicago Theological Seminary in Chicago, Ill.

Mr. Mathies had a career in the automotive business as salesman, finance and sales manager and is presently the pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Cambridge, Md. and president of the Somerset County Commissioners representing District 1. Active in many community and civic organizations, he is married to Clarice Mathies, a Somerset County educator and has two children, Erica Mathies Jackson and Craig N. Mathies Jr. His mother, Shellie Mathies, is also a retired Somerset County educator.

"I am looking forward to the opportunity to serve and keep the residents of Somerset County informed about Choptank Electric's reliable electricity and the different projects that will be coming our way. For example, the broadband, that hopefully Choptank will be able to provide for residents of Somerset County will be extremely helpful and important to all the households that lack internet services. I think Choptank has a great vision and the foresight to provide residents of Somerset County with new technology and new opportunities. I look forward to serving and contributing in any way that I can," said Mathies.

Jeff Rathell, chairman of the Choptank Electric Board of Directors, is pleased with the appointment, saying, "We are thrilled to have someone of Craig's caliber on our Board representing Somerset County. He brings his personal and professional experiences to the table. His connection to our members will help our Board meet the challenges our communities face today."

September 2019 Trust Awards

- Denton Church of Free Seventh Day Adventist - \$2,199
- St. Mary's Episcopal Church - \$4,400
- Easton Elementary School Moton - \$500
- Brian's Christmas Song - \$1,500
- Denton's Lion Club - \$1,569.26
- Rock Hall Police Department - \$1,000
- Bigbie's Black Sox U11 - \$500
- YMCA of the Chesapeake - \$750

The total of approved applications for August was \$31,362.55 which included \$18,944.29 for individual home and medical expenses.

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 Maryland's Eastern Shore.



You ask, And SmartHub Listens (And Answers Too)

Choptank Electric's online bill payment system, SmartHub has brand new features that will help our members take control of their accounts. Connect your SmartHub accounts to a Google Home or Alexa to make inquiries about your bill, and print out the energy usage graphs.

With the printing capability for the energy usage charts, view the full graph without losing information due to browser print screen. Notice a HAMBURGER icon on the USAGE screen in SmartHub Web. Clicking this icon will print out the usage graph. (Available in SmartHub web platform only.)

This could make it easier to compare energy charts after the computer has been shut down, or a better way to share energy usage.

In addition, sync up your SmartHub accounts with a smart device, whether it be Google Home or Amazon Alexa. To access this feature, set a default Voice Assistant payment method via SmartHub before making a payment and designate a card or bank account to be the Voice Assistant Default Payment Method.

You can do so by going to: My Profile > My Information > Manage My Stored Payment Accounts page. Only one method can be selected; however, the payment method can be changed at any time.

Looking for Directions? Here is how you set it up:

Google Assistant Automatic Setup:

1. Ask the Google Assistant to open your app (ex. "Hey Google, let me talk to SmartHub")
2. Review and agree to Google Assistant privacy policy when prompted
3. Link your SmartHub account when prompted
4. SmartHub app will be sent to the provider search where the user can select the provider and then will be taken to the login page

Amazon Alexa Manual:

1. Open App
2. Select "Skills & Games" from the menu
3. Search for "SmartHub"
4. Enable the "SmartHub" Skill
5. Select "Utility Provider" from drop down
6. Directed to SmartHub Login page – use SmartHub username/password

Once linked, your Voice Assistant recognizes the following questions and commands:

Account Balance

- What is my balance?
- What's my payment amount?
- When's my due date?
- How much do I owe?
- What's my electric bill?

Most Recent Billing and Payment History

- What was my last payment amount?
- What was my last bill?
- What is my payment history?

Current Outage Information

- Is there an outage?
- Do I have any outages on my account?

Account Number

- What's my account number?

Custom Alerts

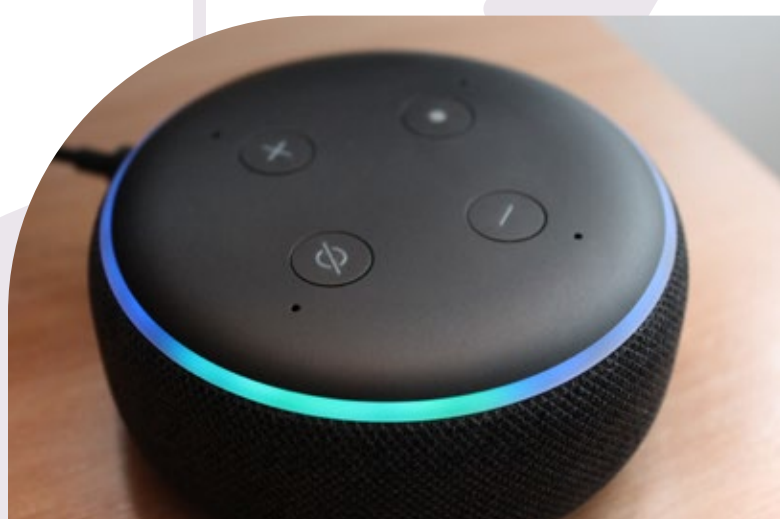
- Any news with my utility?
- Any alerts?
- Is there any information available?

Make a Payment

- Pay my bill.
- Pay my account.
- Make a payment.

All Amazon Echo and Google® Home devices are supported, including the following devices:

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Amazon Echo | Google Home |
| Amazon Echo Dot | Google Home Hub |
| Amazon Echo Plus | Google Home Max |
| Amazon Echo Show | Google Home Mini |
| Amazon Echo Spot | |



Insider's Guide to Keeping Your Home Warm

No matter how hot summer tends to get on the Eastern Shore, the typical residential home actually consumes more energy during the winter months. Hard to believe? Regardless of the heating method (heat pump, natural gas, propane, wood, pellets, etc.) it takes more energy to maintain a house between 60-70 degrees inside, when the average temperature outside the walls is in the low teens.

Heating contributes to between 50-60% of the home's total energy consumption. This means that for every \$100 spent on energy, \$50-\$60 goes to heating in the winter.

Reducing your thermostat to 68 degrees is the easiest and most efficient way to reduce usage. The Department of Energy reports that for every degree above 68, one can expect a 3% increase in usage per degree. Setting your temperature to a comfortable 72 degrees can mean an increase of 12% on your bill (per month!).



Changing filters in return vents or air handlers every 30-60 days will avoid restricted airflow. Restricted airflow could decrease the operating efficiency of a heating system and cause usage to rise drastically in some cases.

Keep doors and vents in unused rooms open to avoid pressure buildup and/or create poor circulation. Closing doors and vents can increase duct leakage even in well-sealed duct work. In turn, the run time for the system will be longer, resulting in increased usage and higher energy bills.

Did you know that using a 1,500 watt portable space heater for only 10 hours a day will use about \$60 worth of electric per month, per unit? Portable space heaters are a good option for certain situations, but used often or if multiple units are used, the usage can add up.

For more tips on how to save, visit <https://choptankelectric.com/energy-efficiency>.

Apply for The VMDAEC Scholarship to Fund Your Dreams

Electric cooperatives in the Virginia, Maryland and Delaware Association are preparing to accept applications for their popular scholarship for high school seniors who intend to pursue higher education studies or trade school. The scholarships are awarded by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives' (VMDAEC) Education Scholarship Foundation which, since 2001, has provided almost 800 scholarships to graduating high school students totaling more than \$680,000.

The deadline to apply is Friday, Feb. 28, 2020. Award recipients will be notified no later than June 1, 2020. The online application is posted at <https://vmdaec.com/scholarship> Qualifications include:

Any high school or home-schooled senior graduating in spring 2020, and whose primary residence is served by a VMD member cooperative, is eligible to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship to be applied to a two- or four-year college or trade school.

The applicant must be entering his or her first semester at a post-secondary or technical/trade school in the fall of 2020. Scholarship funds will be sent directly to the educational institution, and must be used toward tuition, student fees, room and board, or textbooks.

For the application to be considered complete, SAT

and/or ACT score reports must come from the College Board. A score report must be uploaded by the student in the online application system. Scores listed on transcripts do not qualify. If a student has taken the SAT more than once, he or she can take the best score from each test ("Super Score"), but both tests must be submitted in the package to qualify.

Recipients will be selected based on these weighted criteria: financial need at 40%, academic achievement at 40% and personal statement at 20%.

Questions about donations and the application process should be directed to Sam Brumberg, scholarship program coordinator, at scholarship@vmdaec.com.



About Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution Co-op serving approximately 54,000 residential, commercial and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

P.O. Box 430,
Denton, MD 21629

Toll Free:
1-877-892-0001

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

Automated Member
Service Line:
1-866-999-4574, toll free

www.choptankelectric.coop

President and CEO
Micheal E. Malandro



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Ocean Pines District

Donna R. West
Worcester Co.

Craig N. Mathies, Sr.
Somerset Co.



SmartHub is smarter than ever, with access to smart speakers like Google Home or Alexa, and the ability to print graphs for easier monitoring of your usage when using SmartHub web.



Download Today!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Laundry Tip: Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter clothing. You'll spend less time drying the lighter-weight items.

