

Live Wire is a monthly newsletter published for members of Choptank Electric Cooperative,

P.O. Box 430,  
Denton, MD 21629

Toll Free:  
1-877-892-0001

Outage Reporting:  
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## Safety Starts with You

Tips for spotting potential  
electrical hazards in your home



Electricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability that when we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and here at Choptank Electric Cooperative, we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards.

Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections.

**See Safety**  
Continued on Page 3



## Giving to Compass Regional Hospice Creates Positive Impact

The Choptank Electric Cooperative Board of Directors voted to donate \$5,000 over the next five years to Compass Regional Hospice for their renovations, additional facilities, and growing services across the upper counties of the Eastern Shore which include Kent, Queen Anne's, and Caroline Counties.

"We are proud to support such a worthy cause that helps so many people in our local communities," said Jeff Rathell, Chairman of the Choptank Electric Board of Directors. "Everyone has been touched by serious illness in some fashion, and Compass Regional Hospice has helped people during those difficult times in their lives. As part of the Cooperative's Principles, Commitment to Community is at the core of what we do and this donation will give them the opportunity to impact our community."

**See Positive Impact**  
Continued on Page 4

## Safety

Continued from Page 1

### Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations in a kitchen, bathroom, or laundry room often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets.

### Loose or Damaged Outlets or Switches

Unstable electrical outlets or wall switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, it may be time to contact an electrician.

### Surge Protectors

Power strips with surge protectors can help safeguard expensive equipment like televisions, home entertainment systems, and computer components from power spikes. Voltage spikes are measured in joules, and surge protectors are rated for the number of joules they can effectively absorb. That means if your surge protector is rated at 1,000 joules, it should be replaced when it hits or passes that limit. When the limit is reached, protection stops, and you're left with a basic power strip.

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn you when they've stopped working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit, or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

### Extension Cords

If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, you may live in an underwired home. With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to the electricity you get from Choptank Electric Cooperative, having enough outlets in just the right spots can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance. And always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage.

Electricity is an essential necessity for modern living, and Choptank Electric Cooperative is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all of our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so that you can note any potential hazards before damage occurs.



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# Choptank Electric Board of Director Retires after 21 years of Service



After 21 years of dedicated service, Francis "Sonny" Callahan Jr., Director for Caroline County, retired

from the Choptank Electric Cooperative Board on Tuesday, March 26, 2019.

He began his Choptank Electric career in 1965 as a temporary staker's helper. He became a Journeyman Lineman in 1969 and served as a Chief Lineman from 1973-1990. He was awarded the job of Purchasing Agent in 1990 and retired from that position in 1995.

Having been a Choptank Electric member since 1966, Callahan still wanted to influence the company in a positive way, so in 1998 he ran and won the Caroline County seat for the Board of Directors. He received his Director Gold Credentials through the NRECA Directors Certificate Education Programs in 2017.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Sonny for all of his dedicated years of service to Choptank Electric Cooperative," said Jeffrey Rathell, Chairman of the Board at Choptank Electric. "He was an asset to the Board and we wish him all the best in his retirement."



## Save the Date!

Choptank Electric will be participating at the following events in a community near you:

- Talbot County Fair in Easton  
**Jul 11 - Jul 13**
- Kent County Fair in Chestertown  
**Jul 18 - Jul 20**
- Blessing of the Combines in Snow Hill  
**Aug 3**
- Caroline & Dorchester Counties Fair in Denton  
**Aug 7 - Aug 10**
- Wicomico County Fair in Salisbury  
**Aug 16 - Aug 18**

We hope to see you there!

## Positive Impact

Continued from Page 1

This five year commitment from Choptank Electric will help renovate the current space at The Hope & Healing Center in Centreville, along with allowing construction to begin which will add four additional hospice beds, additional parking, help them better utilize the existing space, centralize access to their Grief Support Services

Department and Hospice Center, a more personalized welcome and better waiting areas, more private



Left to Right - Jeffrey Rathell, Chairman of the Board and Talbot County Director at Choptank Electric Cooperative; Francis "Sonny" Callahan, Director of Caroline County; Allison Wood, Marketing Coordinator at Compass Regional Hospice; Robert Arnold, Director of Queen Anne's County; Heather Guerieri, Executive Director at Compass Regional Hospice; Olin Davis, Director of Kent County, and Mike Wheatley, retired President and CEO of Choptank Electric.

family space, and they will eventually move the chapel to a more convenient location for patients and families.

"We are so thankful for the donation and support of Choptank Electric Cooperative," said Heather Guerieri, Executive Director at Compass Region-

al Hospice. "This will allow us to help heal families and support them in their time of need."

**In remembrance for all who have fallen serving our country, our offices will be closed Monday, May 27, 2019.**

***Have a Blessed Memorial Day weekend!***

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your air-conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the A/C to run longer than necessary.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



## March 2019

### Trust Awards

- Maryland Forestry Board - \$1,000 program expenses
- Sudlersville Middle School 8th grade - \$666 field trip
- Bethel UMC - \$400 refrigerator
- St Peter and Paul HS prom - \$300 prom
- Caroline Co Dept of Social Services - \$600 tent/supplies
- Denton Elementary School Fuel Up to Play 60 club - \$250 program supplies
- Sudlersville Elementary PTA - \$500

- Somerset Co. Judy Center - \$1,000 diapers
- Lockerman MS Band - \$700 transportation
- Tim Kennard River Race - \$1,000 printing

The total of approved applications for March was \$26,423.00 which included \$21,227.00 for individual home and medical expenses.

**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.**

