

SUMMER STORM PREPARATION



TURN THE PAGE FOR VALUABLE TIPS

Summer always seems to fly by, especially on the Eastern Shore. Between enjoying the beaches, fairs and traveling for vacation, the end of summer and back-to-school preparations sneak up on us this time of year. While you're prepping for one last trip or the fall sports season, I encourage you to take a moment and make sure you and your family are prepared for late summer storms and hurricane season, as well.

Your crew here at Choptank Electric Cooperative is prepared for potential outages and has spent countless hours this year maintaining our equipment and systems to be ready for quick restoration. Getting your electricity back on in a safe, reliable manner is our number one priority – having a stocked home and vehicle in case of an outage should be yours!

The most important step to take ahead of time is to have an emergency kit ready with items like water, nonperishable food, flashlights, medications, etc. Keep soap, toothpaste, tissues and other personal supplies replenished. Pre-moistened cleansing towelettes are useful and help conserve water, as do paper plates and plastic utensils. Put first-aid kits in your home and car and make sure your car has gas and/or is fully charged. Also remember to never run a generator inside at any time, and never touch downed power lines.

Check out our Storm Preparations page online at www.choptankelectric.coop/prepare to learn more about making outages as safe and comfortable as possible for you and your family. And remember, if you experience an outage, call or text "OUT" to 800-410-4790 or report it on SmartHub.

Here's to a safe summer,



Mike Malandro,
President & CEO
Choptank Electric
Cooperative

YOUR AUGUST 2023 CO-OP NEWS



Choptank Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy
Cooperative



**Choptank
Fiber**

P.O. Box 430 | Denton, MD | 21629
Member Service Center: 1-877-892-0001
Automated Member Service: 1-866-999-4574
Automated Outage Reporting: 1-800-410-4790
Text "OUT" to: 1-800-410-4790
Use SmartHub to Manage Account,
Track Usage and Report Outages —>

WWW.CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP





Outage List & Preparation Tips

By Samantha Casale, Government Affairs and Public Relations Intern

> BEFORE THE STORM

Hurricane season is June 1 through November 30. One of the first steps you can take to be prepared for a natural disaster is to gather the Red Cross Emergency Kit Essentials. If you and your family experience a power outage, it can range from minutes to hours without power. Having the following essentials can make this situation more bearable.

Food and Water: The food should be non-perishable and easy to prepare. During an extended outage, there should be at least one gallon of water per person available. Here are some other essentials to have on hand:

- **First Aid Kit**
- **Flashlights**
- **Medications**
- **Battery operated radio**
- **Extra batteries**
- **Whistle**
- **Personal hygiene items**
- **Cellphone and charger (charged and/or portable)**
- **Coolers and ice to preserve food**
- **Safe alternative heating or cooling source**

> DURING THE STORM

Tune into the TV and radio for additional information about the current conditions, if possible. Avoid using your cellphone, unless there is an emergency. Battery preservation is essential in any situation. Unplug appliances if instructed to do so. Keep refrigerator and thermostat on the coldest setting if not instructed to do otherwise.

> AFTER THE STORM

Stay clear of loose/dangling power lines or downed poles and report them immediately to Choptank Electric Cooperative. Avoid flood water, as it may be electrically charged and active from underground. Drive only if necessary and always avoid flooded areas — turn around, don't drown. When using a generator, NEVER run it inside your home or garage.

>>> WWW.CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP/PREPARE



Gaff-n-Go Rodeo 2023

The Gaff-n-Go Rodeo is an annual event in Doswell, Virginia, featuring the skills and camaraderie of our nation's lineworkers. We're proud to say that Choptank Electric Cooperative did a great job representing The Eastern Shore this year. Our crew competed and shared experiences and knowledge with over 200 other utility lineworkers from seven different states. Thank you to our lineworkers and their families for representing us. We are looking forward to next year's rodeo.

“Our linemen tried their hardest and endured a very high standard of competition. I'm very proud of our guys, and our members and co-op should be too.”

– Tom Simpson,
Assistant Manager Safety, Training & Compliance



Choptank directors and staff stand with lampist Kurt Fosburg



Taking its place in the new welcome center, the lens is now preserved forever for all to appreciate

Supporting History and the Community of St. Michaels

By Valerie Connelly, VP Government Affairs and Public Relations

Choptank Electric Cooperative directors and staff gathered in St. Michaels to support the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) to restore and relocate a historic lighthouse lens from the 1870s. The lens, a third-order Fresnel (pronounced Freh-nel), was built in Paris, France, by L. Sautter & Company. On loan from the U.S. Coast Guard and no longer in use, it had been stored out of sight in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse for decades.

When the curators of the museum and the campus that surrounds the lighthouse decided to build a new welcome center, they sought a local sponsor to help restore the lens for display. They hope it will continue to be a “guiding light” to bring visitors to the new center.

“Our sponsorship of this restoration project allows us to give back to the community of St. Michaels that has been so supportive of us over the years,” says Doug Scott, Chairman

of the Board at Choptank. He told the gathered crowd that, “Concern for Community is one of the guiding principles of the Cooperative, and we are happy to help our members at the museum share this remarkable lens with the greater community.”

The restoration and move required the expertise of one of a handful of Coast Guard-certified Lampists in the nation. Kurt Fosburg, a lens enthusiast and certified lampist, traveled from Michigan’s Upper Peninsula to St. Michaels to oversee the disassembly, move, and reassembly of the lens. At one point, Michigan had over 250 lighthouses that lined the coast of Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and Lake Huron, giving him ample opportunity to perfect his trade.

Fosburg explained that this Fresnel lens, 62 inches tall and weighing 1,984 pounds, was used along larger coastlines where light needed to be cast long distances to help

guide ships through waterways. It was designed to rotate to make it appear as if the light was flashing.

When originally put into service, the lens would have been tended by a lighthouse keeper, who would have filled the kerosene and lit the wick nightly to burn through until morning. The job of lighthouse keeper was considered a very special appointment, given to close associates of high-ranking politicians.

Today, most lighthouses are operated using timers, batteries or electric bulbs. The great history, environment and culture of life on the water is being preserved by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. The new Welcome Center will be completed this fall, but the campus is open now with many tours, exhibits and spectacular waterfront views. Plan your visit today at www.cbmm.org.



Choptank Fiber is Making Progress from Top to Bottom

By Valerie Connelly, VP Government Affairs and Public Relations



Our Snow Hill community meeting was well attended with many great questions asked

Choptank Fiber, LLC, and Cecil County Government celebrated the successful installation of over 62 miles of new high-speed internet in southern Cecil County. Extending service to over 325 previously unserved addresses, this broadband expansion project totaled over \$2.9 million. A “Neighborhood Connect” grant through the Maryland Office of Statewide Broadband contributed over \$2.5 million toward the project,

with Cecil County Government and Choptank Fiber committing \$215,696 and \$196,941 respectively.

“Over the past three years, my administration has prioritized connecting all Cecil County residents and businesses to high-speed internet,” states Cecil County Executive Danielle Hornberger. “Once considered a luxury, broadband today plays a critical role in providing access to essential public services, as well as access to the job market. These efforts will ensure that everyone can participate in our modern economy.”

Areas receiving broadband service as part of the project include the Earleville communities of Battery Point Farms, Cabin John Road, Cherry Grove Road, Corrin Farm Lane, Fingerboard Schoolhouse

Road, Foxes Lane, Hall Creek, Knight Island, Mount Harmon, Oriole Farm, Sandy Bottom Road, and Stemmers Run Road, and the Warwick communities of Budds Landing, Edgar Price Road, Joe Meltz Road, and Strawberry Hill.

“Southern Cecil County remains an ongoing priority for us,” adds Mike Malandro, President & CEO of Choptank Electric Cooperative. “Choptank Fiber and Cecil County will continue to work together on not only our new \$1.4 million project to connect an additional 90 addresses, but to pursue other opportunities to connect everyone who lacks broadband.”

“Now, members understand the value of our Cooperative,” observes John Burke, Choptank Board member. “We have been able to use our strength as member-owned to

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– Mike Malandro,
President & CEO
Choptank Electric Co-op

partner with local government and build out a fiber broadband network where no one else thought possible, much the way we built out electricity nearly 100 years ago.”

Worcester County residents from the Pocomoke Forest area also celebrated new connections at a community meeting in Snow Hill recently. The meeting attracted more than 200 of the 450 residents that will be eligible for internet service by the end of the summer.

Members of the Choptank Board of Directors, President & CEO Mike Malandro, executive staff and operational managers were on hand to explain the connection process and answer questions. Residents were excited to learn they would finally be offered connection to the internet. They expressed concern that they had been left behind



Cecil County Government and Choptank staff celebrate new fiber connections



V.P. and General Counsel Sarah Dahl answers questions at the community meeting

for too long and were grateful to Choptank and the Worcester County Commissioners for funding the \$5 million construction project that will connect them.

The Worcester County buildout started for Choptank in 2021, with service to 35 locations in a demonstration project. In 2022, the County Commissioners approved the use federal ARPA funding for the Pocomoke Forest project that will extend service to 450 locations from the Somerset County line

east to Route 12 and south to the Pocomoke River.

Choptank was recently awarded an additional \$15.9 million from the Office of Statewide Broadband to provide service to 240-plus unserved residents on the east side of Worcester County, outside of Berlin and another 3,000 locations throughout the Shore in Cecil, Caroline, Dorchester, Queen Anne’s and Wicomico Counties.

Follow our progress at
> www.ChoptankFiber.com.

Francis Kinnamon Retires After 37 Years

Decades of Devoted Service to Choptank Electric Cooperative



Francis Kinnamon
Manager Regional Operations

Francis Kinnamon began his career at Choptank Electric Cooperative in April of 1986 in the System Control department. He then served as a Right-of-Way Tree Trimmer, Operations Field Helper, Lineman, Serviceman, and recently a Manager of Regional Operations over his 37-year career with the Cooperative.

Kinnamon was responsible for overseeing the daily functions in Chestertown as Manager of Regional Operations for major outages and storms, planning upgrades to the system and communicating with members. His favorite part of working for the Cooperative was “working with members when they have issues or challenges with their service,” says Kinnamon.

Lance Lockerman, Vice President of Operations at Choptank, shares, “Concern for Community is one of the Seven Cooperative Principles, and no one delivers on that more than Francis. He is known in the community as someone our members could call upon regardless of their request. His knowledge through work experience and

his familiarity with the area were a true asset to our Cooperative. Even though he is now retiring, I know him as someone who will still do all he can to help our members and employees for years to come.”

When asked what he has learned throughout his career at Choptank, Kinnamon adds, “Most people want someone to listen to their concerns; they appreciate when someone cares. This also helps in everyday life.”

Francis’ last day with the Cooperative was June 16, 2023. In his retirement, he plans to spend time with family, help with his sons’ farm and work his truck transport business semi-hauling grain and equipment.

Choptank Electric Cooperative BUZZ

Choptank Welcomes New Employees



Austin M. Peet
Apprentice Lineman
Chestertown District

Experience: Northwest Lineworker program & AUI Power
Hobbies: Working out and fishing
Looking Forward To: Learning more about overhead linework and troubleshooting



Daniela Hernandez
Member Service Specialist
Regional Service Center

Experience: Verizon Fios Service and Tech Support
Hobbies: Spending time with family, and enjoying the beach
Looking Forward To: Learning a new industry and helping members

Congratulations and many thanks to **Mike Boyle**, who retired from the Choptank Electric Trust Board after more than 10 years of service.



We welcome **Isaac Dressler** (Penn State), **Owen Mank** (University of Maryland), **Justin Thompson** (University of Maryland) and **Jordan Figueroa** (Elizabethtown College), who will be working with us during the summer as Engineering Interns.

We also welcome **Samantha Casale** (Salisbury University), who will be working with us during the summer as a Communications Intern.



Advocating for Reliability and Alleviating Supply Chain Challenges

Choptank representatives advance federal advocacy priorities in D.C.

By **Matthew Tefteau**, Manager Government Affairs and Economic Development

Our national energy policy continues to evolve, and we as electric cooperatives must have a seat at the table during this process. If we are not part of the discussion, our fundamental goal of supplying reliable and cost-effective energy may be at risk. Over the past several months, Choptank Electric Cooperative representatives have traveled to our nation's capital to advocate to our congressional delegation and federal agencies about the importance of maintaining a reliable electric grid.

Day-to-day operations face many challenges in the electric utility sector. The cost of commodities and raw materials remains at or near record high. Workforce shortages and overall production of goods have created longer lead times for electric grid components such as distribution transformers. Recognizing this supply chain crisis, Choptank Electric Cooperative joined with regional electric cooperatives, suppliers, and manufacturers under the Coalition for the Advancement of Reliable Electric Systems (CARES).



Mike Malandro, Choptank Electric Cooperative's CEO and a founding leader of the CARES mission, encourages lawmakers and regulators to take action to relieve this unprecedented supply chain crisis. "Our team here at Choptank Electric Cooperative is advocating on Capitol Hill and locally to bring

about common sense solutions for the communities we serve," explains Malandro.



The CARES coalition is engaging in a deeper policy dive on how a proposed Department of Energy (DOE) rule titled Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Distribution Transformers would impact electric cooperatives in the Virginia, Maryland and Delaware region. The proposed rule requires a shift from the industry standard of "grain-oriented electrical steel (GOES) cores" to amorphous steel cores, which would exacerbate the supply chain shortages as manufacturers would need to adjust their production lines.

During a recent CARES Fly-in to Washington, D.C., Cooperative representatives sent a clear signal to our congressional delegation. They indicated that a

final rule adopting DOE's current proposal could meaningfully worsen current supply chain shortages. Many lawmakers listened and through a bipartisan approach, 47 U.S. senators, including senior Maryland Sen. Ben Cardin, signed onto a letter requesting the Biden Administration nullify the proposed DOE rule. This type of bipartisan and overwhelming support from the U.S. Senate should bring DOE back to the table to discuss the concerns that have been raised.

During a recent visit to Choptank Electric Cooperative's headquarters in Denton, the CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), Jim Matheson, emphasized the importance of working together to strengthen the supply chain, defend against harmful federal rules and help electric cooperatives keep up with increased demand. Choptank Electric Cooperative is committed to representing the interest of our members on all these issues.



MEMBERS' NOTES

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Whether on social media, by phone, or through handwritten letters, we appreciate when members let us know that we are doing a good job!

Thank you, all!

“Thank you for all that you do with keeping electricity going in our homes.” – Heidi Pusey

“Thank you to all the lineworkers out there. Stay safe!” – Betty Collier

“Thanks for connecting The Eastern Shore to the 21st Century!!” – Corey Gallup

Choptank Electric Trust Awards



The Choptank Electric Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation funded by Operation Round Up donations from members of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Funds from the Trust are distributed in all nine counties of MD's Eastern Shore. To apply or to find out more about this program:

> www.choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund

June 2023

- Eastern Shore Ballet Theatre - \$750
- Eastern Shore Wellness Solutions - \$1,000
- Girl Scout Troop 1121 - \$200
- Queenstown Vol. Fire Department - \$7,350
- Shrewsbury Parish Church - \$2,000
- Swim Ocean City - \$500
- Wags & Wishes Animal Rescue - \$300



Emilie Schanken accepts her Choptank Electric Trust scholarship from Trust Board member Debbie Luthy

The total of approved applications for June was \$26,644.85, which included \$11,000 for individual home and medical expenses.



Choptank Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution co-op serving approximately 56,000 residential, commercial and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

President & CEO

Micheal E. Malandro

Board of Directors

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Robert E. Arnold
Vice Chairman, Queen Anne's Co.

John J. Burke Jr.
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Robert B. Thompson
Ocean Pines District

Donna R. West
Worcester Co.

Choptank Fiber

Choptank Fiber, LLC

Choptank Fiber, LLC, is a wholly owned broadband subsidiary of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Choptank Fiber's goal is to install true gigabit broadband with no data caps one community at a time until we serve all our members on the Eastern Shore.