

the Co-op Connection

SEPTEMBER 2023

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM YOUR POWER PARTNER




FIBER BY CENTRAL FLORIDA
~YOUR BROADBAND PARTNER~
CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS
 www.fiberbycentralflorida.com

National Rules With Local Consequences

Every month, a report goes to CFEC's Board of Trustees about how the system reliability is progressing. We track two items: one is the System Average Interruption Duration Index, or SAIDI, which is basically how many minutes per year our members are out of power. Many of our members never experience an outage event, and some members have more than one per year. This is often driven by how far away from the substation a member is or other issues like trees and vehicles. The other measurement is the Customer Average Interruption Duration Index, or CAIDI, and this one tracks the length of time it takes to restore power once it's out. We often hear that, regardless of how far off the beaten path you live, most of our members are incredibly pleased with how quickly we are able to restore power.

Ensuring Reliable Power

The above was said to frame up a discussion about ensuring reliable power, which is not for the faint of heart. It would be much easier if we simply did not have any trees in the tri-county area or had any vehicles that collided with poles, or convinced lighting not to strike anywhere in the area. Oh, and let's not forget that if we could eliminate squirrels, snakes

and frogs, we would just about have a perfectly operating system.

Some of you might be saying, why not an underground system?

Because the cost would be three to five times more, initially, to build the system. And, while providing some protection from weather and elements, an underground system is substantially more complicated to investigate problems and restore power. It is also very expensive to upgrade and expand, which often requires an interruption of service in order to accomplish.

Enhancing Our System

While we are proud of how we operate our system — and this includes our line-side operations team who is responsible for after-hours restoration — the art of power



Denny George
GENERAL MANAGER



~YOUR POWER PARTNER~

Our mission is to be the finest example of an electric cooperative where excellent service, competitive rates and concern for the consumer, community and environment guide our every action.

Cover photo: Fiber Construction Crews Pulling Fiber in Levy County
by Madison Redd, CFEC Communications Specialist

distribution has remained relatively unchanged for the past many years. Soon, we will be enhancing our system, and, using our new fiber system, we will be able to restore some members' power automatically, which will reduce the number of members out of power for a given outage and assist dispatch and our line-side operations team in finding the issue.

Just when we think we are doing a good job, the federal government steps in to "try and help us" be more efficient. Right now, the federal government — through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — has enacted steps that by 2035 power plants will have to be carbon neutral. This means the newly constructed and now operating power plant of Seminole Electric Cooperative, our power generation



The new and improved Seminole Combined Cycle Facility, located in Putnam County, Florida, has a generating capacity of 1,134 megawatts and is one of the most efficient plants in the country, replacing one of Seminole's two coal units.

cooperative, which is state of the art in efficiency, will need a major investment before 2035 in order to accomplish this goal. This type of investment, driven by climate change initiatives, will drive up costs and/or require that plants will be shut down well in advance of their end of life.

A Threat To Reliability And Affordability

Additionally, natural gas costs are back down this year to the mid \$2 per-therm range, allowing us to reduce your cost of power. Given that the United States sits on so much proven gas reserves, it is unacceptable that this commodity occasionally sees prices that get high enough that it impacts our average families. It is important to note that 15-18% of U.S. production is shipped to Europe every day.

Seminole Electric Cooperative has made good strides over the past few years to ensure we have reliable, cost-effective electric power all the while reducing emissions. It would be a real shame if all that has been accomplished by Seminole, along with the reliability of our system, was eliminated or at least degraded by this recently enacted rule. Therefore, I have sent a letter, along with other cooperatives nationally, strongly urging that this newly enacted EPA power plant requirement not be pursued to the detriment and cost of our members and our future.

Co-op Leader to Congress: ‘Rolling Blackouts Cannot Become New Normal’

The push to rapidly replace always-available energy sources could spark rolling blackouts across America, the leader of a generation and transmission cooperative warned a Senate panel recently.

“Lawmakers must support policies that include all energy sources to maintain reliability and affordability. Rolling blackouts cannot become the new normal,” David Tudor, CEO of Springfield, Missouri-based Associated Electric Cooperative Inc., told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee at a hearing on electric system reliability. “It is critical that policymakers recognize the need for adequate time, technology development and new transmission infrastructure before taking our nation down an energy path that prioritizes speed over successfully keeping the lights on.”



David Tudor, CEO of Associated Electric Cooperative Inc. in Missouri, talks about threats to electric reliability at a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing. Photo by Denny Gainer

Alarming Reliability Challenges

Tudor cited the North American Electric Reliability Corp.’s recent Summer Reliability Assessment, which warned that two-thirds of the U.S. could face energy shortfalls during periods of extreme heat this summer.

“Importantly, the 2023 NERC summer reliability

assessment is just the latest in a series of alarming reminders about the new electric reliability challenges facing the nation,” Tudor said. “Last month, Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Mark Christie warned this committee of threats to reliable electricity, stating ‘I think the United States is heading for a very catastrophic situation in terms of reliability.’”

Associated Electric Cooperative serves 935,000 meters across rural Missouri, northeast Oklahoma and southeast Iowa. They were able to keep the lights on during severe winter storms the past two years that knocked out power to millions of Americans and led to the deaths of more than 700 people in Texas during Winter Storm Uri.

Coal And Natural Gas Provide Reliability

Tudor later said about the electrical grid, “Associated relies on a balanced generation mix, with proven and reliable coal and natural gas generating plants as a valuable foundation for reliability and dispatched its units to full capacity in advance of the cold temperatures.

“Despite significant outside pressure in recent years to move to other options, these fossil-fuel generating stations were the major factor in keeping the lights on for the 2.1 million people we serve. Hydropower allocated by the Southwestern Power Administration was a reliable energy source. Wind generation in Associated’s mix played a minor role.”

Last December, nine states experienced rolling blackouts as the demand for electricity exceeded supply during Winter Storm Elliott.

“Again, coal and natural gas generation carried the day, preserving reliability for Associated’s members when they needed power the most,” Tudor said.

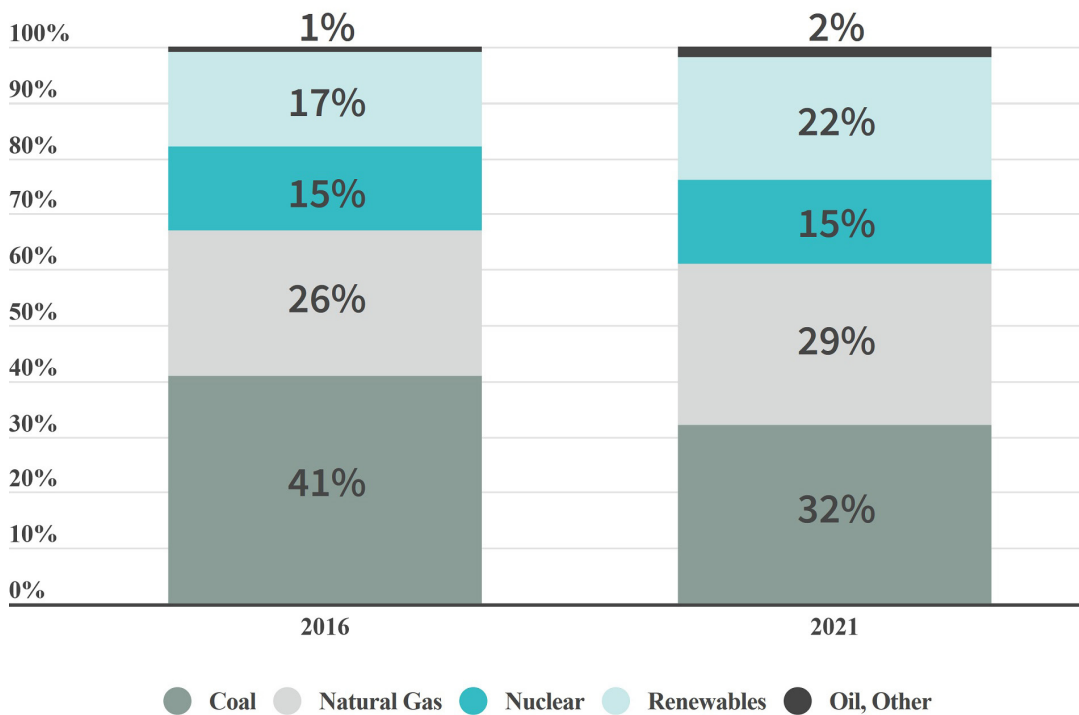
He applauded the inclusion of some permitting reform provisions in the debt limit deal reached by President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has made permitting reform a top priority, as the lengthy and costly process for obtaining a federal environmental permit can derail crucial projects to improve service to co-op

consumer-members.

“These reforms, including firm time limits for environmental reviews, greater applicant involvement in the process and more efficient reviews for recurring small projects we already know have minimal environmental impacts, will allow co-ops to build new generation and transmission infrastructure in a timely and cost-effective way,” Tudor said.

- Article by Erin Kelly for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Co-op Retail Energy Mix



Note: Renewables include owned and directly purchased electric generation, plus generation in the mix from wholesale market purchases and do not reflect renewable tax credits. Source: NRECA analysis

Reliably Keeping the Lights On

Electric co-ops rely on a diverse suite of resources to reliably meet the energy needs of their communities.

American families and businesses expect the lights to stay on at a price they can afford. Our nation’s energy policy must embrace this fundamental expectation.

Five Issues Are Impacting the Reliability of the Electric Grid:

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Electrifying the economy | 3. | Permitting challenges |
| 2. | The disorderly retirement and insufficient replacement of existing generation | 4. | Supply chain shortages |
| | | 5. | Domestic natural gas challenges |

The Choice Is Yours!

Central Florida Electric Cooperative’s Fiber by Central Florida is on the way in its expansion to deliver rural fiber internet to every home – all of them.

In keeping with the cooperative tradition of serving all members in our area – regardless of how far you may be off the beaten path – we have made a commitment not to leave any one behind in this move to provide internet to our service area. By the time you receive this publication, we will have likely surpassed 500 members connected to our Fiber by Central Florida network!

Over the course of planning and beginning to execute our fiber effort, we have worked closely with the County Commissions of all three counties - Levy, Gilchrist, and Dixie - to garner their support and determine the most effective ways to rollout this service to the Tri-County area. In addition to county leadership, we have also worked closely with Local Technology Planning Teams in each county and The North Florida Economic Development Partnership to ensure the internet and phone services we are providing are best suited to meet the needs of our rural communities.

Choose Community-Owned Internet

As of this writing, we now have our first full Substation, our Chiefland 1 Substation, online and providing lightning-fast fiber service! If you are served by the Chiefland 1 Substation, be sure to check the email you provided at pre-registration for a link to schedule your home installation. You can see a map of the Chiefland 1 area on the following page.

As we work through speeding up our process to reach

all of you more quickly, we are simply asking you to be on the lookout for our arrival. While it can be difficult to predict exactly when service may be available to each area of our service territory due to potential weather delays, supply issues, and other unforeseen circumstances that could slow our progress, we have a solid plan in place to get the job done. Check out page 8 of this issue to see the first look at a construction timeline for the entire CFEC service area, which we will update as the project progresses and we are able to provide more precise estimations.

With the Chiefland 1 area officially open for service, fiber crews are now hard at work pulling fiber and splicing connections on our next Substation to receive fiber service in Trenton! We expect fiber construction to wrap up on the Trenton Substation and move north to begin pulling fiber on the Bell Substation by October. From Bell, fiber crews will be splitting into two groups to complete both the Dempsey Substation in North Dixie County and the Country Club Substation in North-West Chiefland simultaneously. With this plan, we hope to then be able to start pulling fiber in the Old Town and Bronson areas in early 2024 before reaching the Cross City and Williston



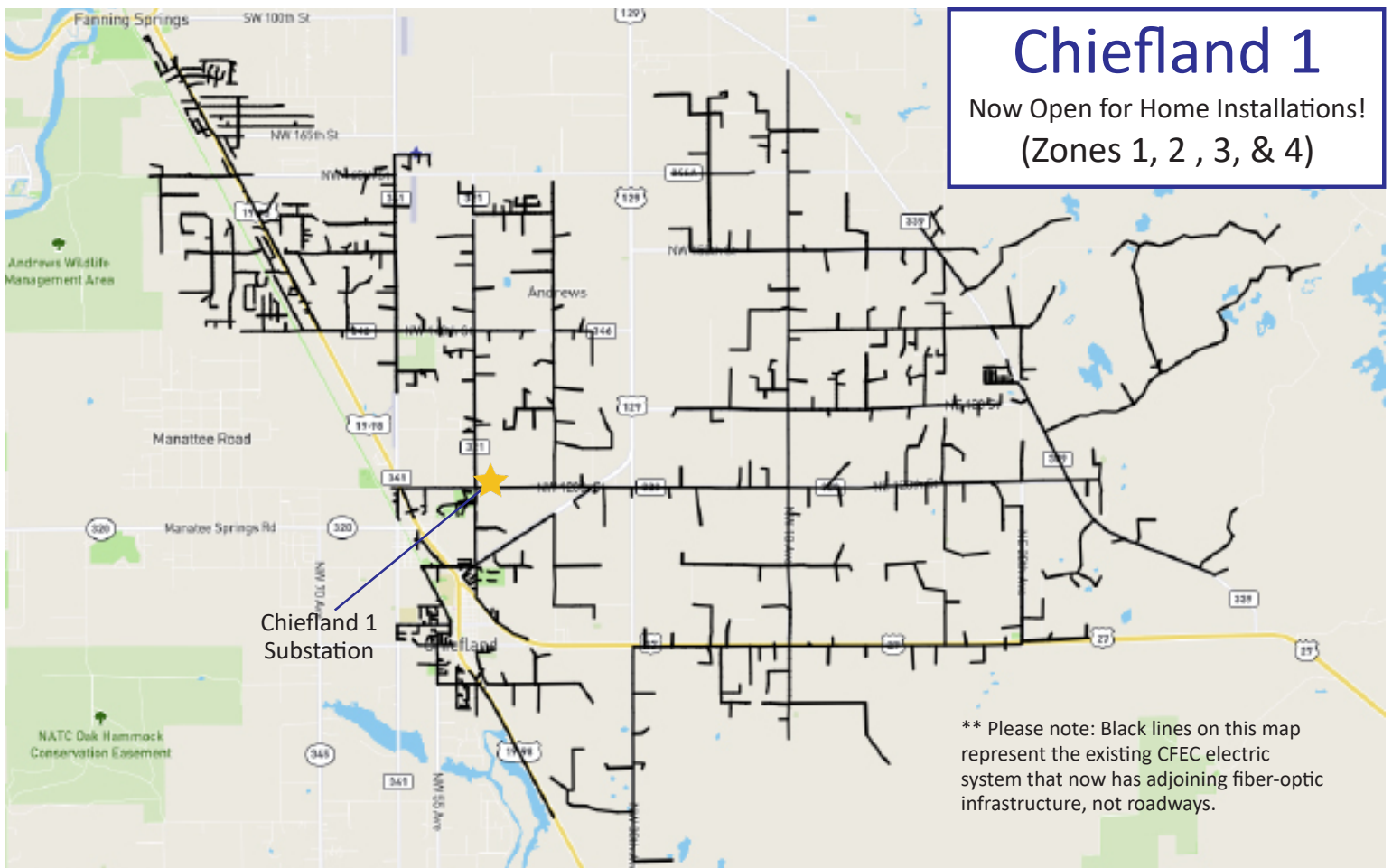
Denny George
GENERAL MANAGER

areas by mid-2024. At this point, we will be roughly half way complete with our base CFEC system, with construction of the second half of the fiber network slated to follow in the second half of 2024 and 2025.

And remember, if you are served by Duke Energy in any of these areas, we will bring fiber internet to you as well. We encourage those served by other utilities to make it known that you will select Fiber by Central Florida for internet service when we make it to your area. Your support is important as our team is working to better analyze our

service areas and coordinate construction efforts.

Remember, for CFEC members this fiber business is your fiber business. You own it. When it does well, you do well. For those served by Duke Energy, you are contributing to a community-owned platform, not one owned and managed somewhere else. Let's all work together to bring this home grown, community owned fiber-to-the-home business to every single person in all three counties – Levy, Gilchrist, Dixie – and beyond, to Duke-served portions in those areas and eventually neighboring counties.



Chiefland 1

Now Open for Home Installations!
(Zones 1, 2, 3, & 4)

If you are served by the Chiefland 1 Substation, you should have received an email at the address you provided at pre-registration with a link to schedule your fiber installation! If you have trouble accessing the electronic installation scheduler, please contact our fiber team at 1-844-533-4237.

Wondering when fiber crews will make it to your neighborhood? Check out our estimated build schedule to see when fiber crews are expected to begin pulling fiber on your Substation!

Once you know when you can expect crews to begin pulling fiber in your area, check out the graphic at the bottom of this page to get a better idea of when service may be available to you.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chiefland 1 | Service Now Available | |
| Trenton | Under Fiber Construction | |
| Bell | October 2023 | Make-Ready Construction |
| Dempsey | December 2023 | |
| Country Club | December 2023 | |
| Old Town | 1st Quarter 2024 | |
| Bronson | 1st Quarter 2024 | |
| Cross City | 2nd Quarter 2024 | |
| Williston | 2nd Quarter 2024 | |
| Newberry | 3rd Quarter 2024 | |
| Neals | 3rd Quarter 2024 | |
| Usher | 4th Quarter 2024 | |
| Renfroe | 4th Quarter 2024 | |
| Inglis | 1st Quarter 2025 | |
| Cedar Key | 1st Quarter 2025 | |
| Town of Suwannee | 1st Quarter 2025 | |

Not sure which CFEC Substation you are served by?

Contact our fiber team at 1-844-533-4237 or view a map of the CFEC system online at:



<https://www.fiberbycentralflorida.com/fiberbuildschedule>



Make-Ready Construction

Preparing the power poles for fiber lines & relocating other utilities (4-12 week process)



Fiber Splicing

Connecting fiber lines back to the fiber hut, which is the source of the internet (3-6 week process)



Service Available!

Zone is live and ready to begin scheduling home installations

Design/Make-Ready Engineering

Creating a digital blueprint for the fiber network



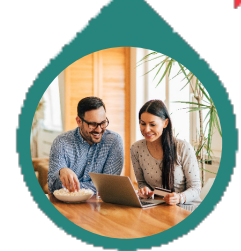
Fiber Construction

Attaching fiber lines to the power poles (4-8 week process)



Service Drop Construction

Extending fiber line from Right-of-Way to outside of your home



CONTACT US



Customer Service

1-844-53-FIBER
(1-844-533-4237)



Technical Support

1-844-533-4237



Email

info@fiberbycentralflorida.com

WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

Fiber by Central Florida offers a variety of ways to pay your bill, including:



My Fiber Account Customer Portal
- www.fiberbycentralflorida.com



Fiber by Central Florida App
- MyFiberIQ



By Phone
- 1 (844) 533-4237

Enroll in Autopay

To enroll in Autopay and set up monthly credit card or bank draft payments, visit fiberbycentralflorida.com and access the Customer Portal.

Once inside the Customer Portal, follow the prompts to set up a bank draft or assign a credit card to your Fiber by Central Florida account.



TROUBLESHOOTING AND TECH SUPPORT

No internet connection? Need help?

If you are having trouble, you may need to reboot your GigaSpire. With GigaSpire plugged in and powered on, pull the power plug out of the GigaSpire to turn it off, wait 10 seconds and plug power cable back in to turn it back on. Once the power is returned, give it some time, as it will take about 1 to 2 minutes to fully boot up.



GigaSpire BLAST u6x LED Status

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Green (solid) | Connected to the internet |
| Green (flashing) | Pairing attempt with other Wi-Fi capable devices |
| Yellow (flashing) | Booting up or service/software is being upgraded |
| Red (flashing) | No internet |

Device Troubleshooting:

1. Verify your device is connected to your network in your Wi-Fi settings.
2. Try to connect to other websites using your device.
3. If you cannot visit any website with your device, try to access the internet with another device. If the other device connects, restart your device and try to connect to your network again.

If you are still unable to connect your device to the network, call Tech Support at 1(844)533-4237.

FLORIDA LOBSTER BITES WITH AVOCADO-LIME PUREE

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (9-ounce) Florida spiny lobster tails, removed from shell and cut into 1-ounce bites
- 1/2 Florida red bell pepper, diced fine
- 1/2 Florida avocado
- 20 (3-inch) bamboo skewers
- Canola or olive oil for cooking
- 2 limes, juiced
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste



PREPARATION

Preheat a medium-sized saute pan over medium-high heat. Skewer each lobster bite onto the bamboo skewers and lightly season with salt and pepper. In a blender or food processor, add avocado, lime juice and season lightly with salt and pepper. Puree the avocado mixture until smooth, adding 1 tablespoon of water at a time until the desired thickness of avocado puree is reached (the avocado puree should be smooth and creamy and should be thin enough to pour into a small bowl or shot glasses). Add 1 tablespoon of the cooking oil to the hot pan. Carefully add the skewered lobster bites to the hot pan being careful not to overcrowd the pan. Cook lobster bites for just 30 seconds on each side (the lobster bites will cook quickly so it is important to keep a close eye on them). Once the lobster bites are cooked, remove them from pan, and let drain on a paper towel. Repeat the cooking process until all the lobster bites are cooked (this cooking process can be done ahead of time and the lobster can be served cold if desired).

To serve, arrange the lobster bites on a plate with a bowl of avocado puree, or add a small amount of avocado puree into the bottom of several shot glasses and top each glass with the cooked lobster bites. Garnish the lobster bites with the fine diced red pepper.

HERB AND BUTTER ROASTED FLORIDA SPINY LOBSTER WITH CITRUS AND OLIVES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (6-8 ounce) Florida spiny lobster tails, deshelled
- 1 Florida orange or grapefruit, peeled and segmented
- 4 bamboo skewers (6 inches)
- 1 tablespoon fresh herb mix, chopped fine (thyme, rosemary, parsley)
- Olive oil for cooking
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 cup microgreens or arugula



- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 12 Spanish Queen and/or Kalamata olives, pitted
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

PREPARATION

Cut the lobster tails in half, lengthwise. Preheat a medium-sized sauté pan over medium-high heat. Season the lobster tail meat with salt, pepper, and fresh chopped herbs. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil and butter to the preheated pan. Carefully add the seasoned lobster to the hot pan. Cook the lobster tails for 2 to 4 minutes while turning them until just cooked. Make sure not to overcook the lobster. Remove the lobster skewers from the pan and let them cool slightly. Insert the bamboo skewers into the middle of each of the halved lobster tails. In a small bowl, combine the microgreens or arugula with the lemon juice. Season the greens lightly with salt and pepper and toss to coat. To plate the dish, put a bed of the greens on a small platter. Arrange the lobster skewers, citrus segments, and olives. Serve immediately.

7 Ways To Pay Your Bill:



In Office / Drive-Through

Make your payments at any CFEC location during working hours or place your payment in a drop-box after hours.



Mail

Mail your payment to: Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 9, Chiefland, FL 32644. Allow for adequate delivery time or the payment may be late.



Phone

Pay by phone at 352-493-2515 or toll free at 844-434-3962 through a third-party provider. A \$2.50 service fee will be charged by the provider per \$500 transaction and is NOT a charge by CFEC. Payments made by phone are posted to the member's account at the time of payment.



Online

Go to www.cfec.com to pay online. Choose the e-check option to pay with NO FEE. To pay with credit or debit card, a \$2.50 convenience fee will be applied by the third-party payment provider. Members who opt for paperless billing will also receive a 0.50 cent credit on their bill each month.



Power Partner App

Use CFEC's Power Partner App to make a payment. Choose e-check to pay with NO FEE. A convenience fee of \$2.50 will be charged to pay by credit card or debit card.



Bank Draft

Set up automatic recurring bank draft payments and receive a \$1 CREDIT on your bill each month. Members can use their bank routing and account information to complete a Bank Draft Application to ensure timely payment each month. Applications can be found online at www.cfec.com under the Documents tab, then under Member Benefits & Safety Documents, or at any of our office locations.



Bank Locations

Payments can be made at Seacoast Banks located in the CFEC service area or at Lafayette State Bank in Bell, Fla., during their normal working hours. Returned checks or payment arrangements cannot be processed by these banks.

Do We Have Your Current Phone Number and Address?

CFEC's Automated Outage Response System uses customer telephone numbers to locate accounts and corresponding locations.

Additionally, a new Automated Delinquency Call will provide an additional notice as a courtesy for accounts that are delinquent one day before your disconnect date. These services will not be possible if CFEC does not have your current phone number on file.

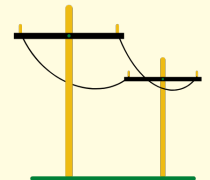


It is important to update phone numbers and mailing address associated with your service location. Inaccurate phone number/service location combinations may result in delayed handling of outages or a missed opportunity to avoid a power disconnection.

If you have questions or need to update your contact information and phone number, call 352-493-2511 or 1-800-227-1302.

To Report A Power Outage:

- Call: 1-800-227-1302 or 352-493-2511, follow the prompts of the Automated Outage Response system.
- Use the Power Partner App: On the Home page, click "Outage," then select "Report an Outage." Fill out the form as to Outage information and press "Report Outage."
- Online: Click on the "Report Outage" button located at the top of the website. Fill in the "Identify Outage Location," form and click "Submit."



Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc.

~ YOUR POWER PARTNER ~

Meeting Notice: The Board of Trustees for Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc., meet on the fourth Monday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Cooperative's main office in Chiefland. Members are always welcome to attend.



**CENTRAL FLORIDA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC**



**Central Florida Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

~YOUR POWER PARTNER ~

MAIN OFFICE

11491 NW 50th Ave.
Chiefland, FL 32626-3247
352-493-2511
or 800-227-1302
www.cfec.com

Physical Address/Payment Locations

MAIL ADDRESS

P.O. Box 9
Chiefland, FL 32644-0009

CROSS CITY OFFICE

207 NE 210 Ave.
Cross City, FL 32628
352-498-7322

INGLIS OFFICE

167 Highway 40 West
Inglis, FL 34449
352-447-3553

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT LOCATIONS

Seacoast Banks
Lafayette State Bank (Bell only)
*For a complete listing of payment locations,
go to www.cfec.com.
This institution is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.*

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**Central Florida Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

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Start Managing Your Fiber Service by Accessing Our
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 **REGISTER NOW**

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- select add-on services & other service packages

Access the My Fiber Account Customer Portal at:
<https://myfiber-fl.camvia.cloud/login>