

the Co-op Connection

OCTOBER 2023

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM YOUR POWER PARTNER



Many Reasons To Be Thankful

At the time of writing of this message –which actually happened over several days, it is Sunday morning Sept. 3, 2023. Rather than being in church, as usual, I am in my office taking a quick break as we manage what is hoped to be a clean-up day in Old Town and getting our area restored from the effects of Hurricane Idalia.

While thankful we did not receive the full effects, this glancing blow generated outages to more than 25,000 members on our system. **The primary issue for CFEC in our restoration mode was that our entire 2,200 square miles of service territory was impacted.** Since we knew it was likely our area would be impacted, CFEC staffed up to approximately 17 additional crews to be pre-staged and ride out the storm. This helped tremendously to allow us to hit the ground running more quickly on Wednesday, Aug. 30, as soon as the winds subsided. Once we knew how many outages that we had, we knew that more help would be needed. Other preparations that took place prior to landfall facilitated gathering more resources immediately after Idalia's landfall.

All Of The CFEC Service Area Affected

After assessing the damage, we concluded that outages would be very long if we did not staff up considerably. And, so, we called Storm Services that would allow us to feed, house and keep moving a workforce that quickly grew to a total of approximately 550. Towards the end of the second day of restoration, the leadership team set an Estimated Time of Restoration (ETR) for what

is considered essentially complete or traditionally about 95%. While this in no way reflects that the last 5% is not important, it is rather just a target, and in any major storm, this target reflects that some accounts may

not be able to be immediately energized (damage to weatherheads, damage to homes, etc.). We were successful in reaching the Levy County 95% target by Saturday, Sept. 2 at 11 a.m. We also made our Gilchrist County target of 95% by Saturday, Sept. 2 at 9 p.m. For the hardest hit and more difficult area of Dixie County, we reached the 95% target on Sunday evening, Sept. 3, 2023. We were successful in meeting all of these projected targets.

In the early days of the storm, I had numerous phone calls with members who were concerned about how we could get so many outages and why it might take so long to be or get restored. A number of members even remarked, “there was not any wind at my house.”



Denny George
GENERAL MANAGER



Central Florida Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

~ 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: Crews clearing tree debris after Hurricane Idalia by Ryan White, Seminole Electric Multimedia Communications Specialist

While it was not particularly windy at my house either, the damage and other eyewitness testimonies of the wind in certain areas of our service territory told a completely different story. Anyone who lives in Old Town, Suwannee or Horseshoe knows the damage that this glancing blow delivered. While Old Town seemingly experienced some form of tornado, Suwannee and Horseshoe had to contend with an enormous storm surge. Equipment (CFEC and members) soaked in salt water in Suwannee and Horseshoe has made restoration slow, but with tremendous collaboration from residents and Dixie County leadership, we are working through it.

No Safety Incidents During Power Restoration

We establish storm plans prior to storm season. We even rehearse – on paper – those plans with mock storms. But there is nothing like the chaos that occurs when it happens for real. Keeping a fighting force this size equipped with fuel, food and material is a daunting task. Plus, these folks have to be guided around the area by CFEC staff who are knowledgeable of the area and the protective devices for a particular line section. Keeping all personnel safe is the highest priority but also the most difficult. We were able to

keep everyone safe and no safety incidents were reported for this 550-strong army as they restored power to the area.

I have visited the Tri-County Electric Cooperative territory and have seen what a 30-mile shift to the west meant for them (also meant for us). As we have seen those communities come together as well, it simply makes one sit back and ponder, in thankfulness, what it means to live where we live. While we were out restoring, in the early days with leadership taking 5-6 calls per minute, we heard nothing but collaboration from our elected leaders, community leaders and our members. As we continue to work together to get back on our feet – especially those areas that will be in repair mode for what will be many months – lets ponder some words:

“Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bone.”

Proverbs 16:24

“Be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”

Ephesians 4:32

Blessings to you all, and thanks for all the support you gave CFEC, our crews in the field and the hundreds of others that came to help.

Idalia By The Numbers:

- The hurricane center came ashore near Keaton Beach, Florida, at 7:45 a.m. Aug. 3, with maximum sustained winds of 125 mph, making it a strong Category 3.
- On CFEC’s power systems, there were 25,000 outages out of 36,212 accounts.

- All 2,200 square miles of service area received storm effects.
- 108 outside crews in total responded for mutual aid with more than 550 people working on restorations

- Levy County was 95% restored by Sept. 2 at 11 a.m., four days after the hurricane made landfall.
- Gilchrist County was 95% restored by Sept. 2 at 9 p.m.
- Dixie County was 95% restored by Sunday evening, Sept. 3, 2023.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH!



Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same set of core principles and values, adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance. Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844. These principles are a key reason that America's electric cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of their members first.

1. VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a cooperative is open to all people who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender or economic circumstances.



2. DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Representatives (directors/trustees) are elected among the membership and are accountable to them. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3. MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.

5. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs, and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, help boost cooperative understanding.



6. COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

By working together through local, national, regional and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies, and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.



Hey Trenton! It's Your Turn!

The time has finally come. We are now LIVE in Zones 5, 6, 7, and 8 which covers all members served by our Trenton Substation!

If you live in any of these areas, you should have received an email with a link to schedule your home installation at the email address you provided at pre-registration.

If you haven't pre-registered yet – don't wait! Crews are making progress every day on the fiber network and may be nearing your neighborhood sooner than you think. By the time you receive this issue, we will likely have reached our 1000th fiber subscriber!


Stay tuned to our Fiber by Central Florida Facebook Page for updates on construction, subscriber reviews, and more!

We now have over 800 local homes and businesses connected to our lightning-fast Fiber-to-the-Home network!



FC From: [Fiber by Central Florida](#) >

Fiber By Central Florida Schedule Install



Congratulations!

Your new Fiber by Central Florida service is now ready for installation. Please use the link below to access our Fiber By Central Florida portal to schedule your home installation. Please note, someone 18 years of age or older must be present during the installation and authorized to sign service related documents.

[Schedule Install](#)

Fiber by Central Florida
PO Box 69
Chiefland, FL 32644
www.fiberbycentralflorida.com

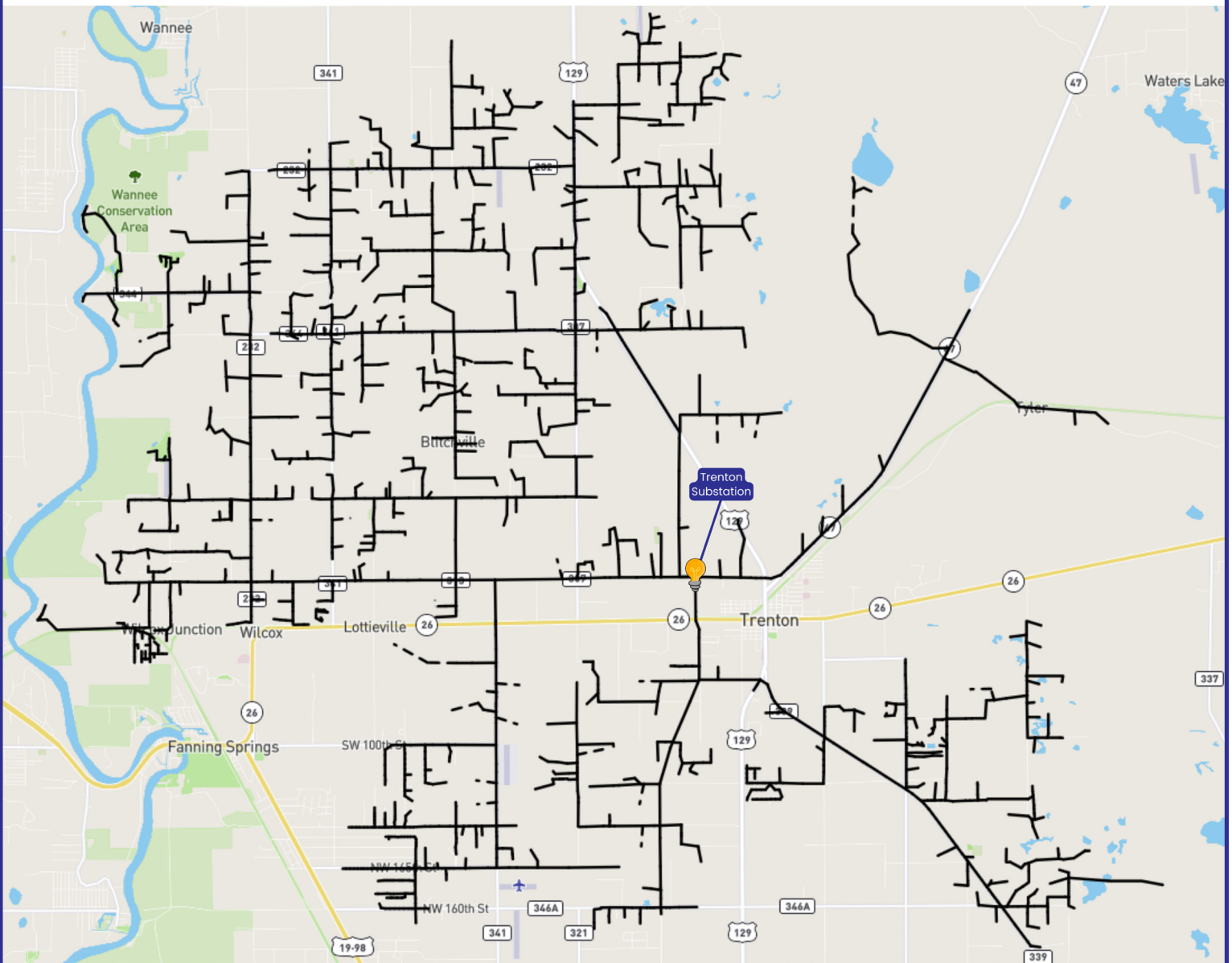
Customer Service: 1-844-53-FIBER
Local: 1-844-53-FIBER

While home installation crews are working hard to get homes and businesses hooked up in the Chiefland and Trenton areas, fiber-pulling crews are hard at work on the Bell Substation, and make-ready construction crews are working throughout the Tri-County area to prepare for fiber construction to follow!



More information on the fiber network build-out can be found on our website at: www.fiberbycentralflorida.com

Sign up for 100% Fiber Internet Service today! ▶



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:

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



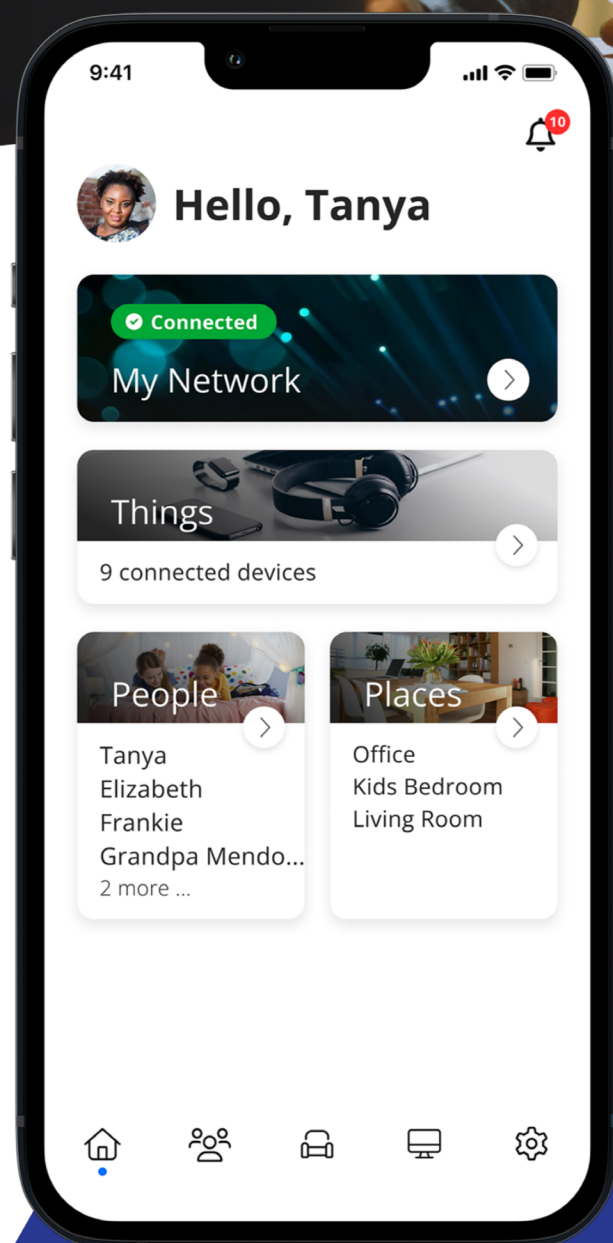
This isn't just
“INTERNET”
It's
the **ULTIMATE**
WI-FI SERVICE

Internet service is just the start of your experience with us. Yes, it's lightning-fast, reliable, and affordable. But it's much more than that.

100% Fiber-to-the-Home redefines internet service without you having to worry about picking the best technology, setting it all up, figuring it out, and ongoing maintenance and troubleshooting. It offers many benefits, such as complete control through the MyFiberIQ app, inclusive service with simplified billing, and more. The service is flexible and can be tailored to be used in different aspects of your life, such as work, entertainment, school, and parenting. If you've been looking to get a better experience, the Fiber By Central Florida Ultimate Wi-Fi experience is finally here.

Sign up today and experience a service that works for you!

Enjoy a better Wi-Fi experience!
1-800-533-4237 | www.fiberbycentralflorida.com



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.

CHICKEN AND VEGETABLE FRIED RICE

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (8 ounce) chicken breasts
- 1 bell pepper (any color)
- 1 cup cabbage, sliced thin
- 2 carrots, sliced thin
- 6 mushrooms, sliced thin
- 2 cups spinach
- 2 eggs
- 3 cups cooked rice (brown or white)
- 2 green onions, sliced thin
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2-3 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce or Tamari
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 3-4 tablespoons olive oil, for cooking
- Chili sauce or sriracha (optional)
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste



PREPARATION

Cook rice according to package directions and set aside. Dice the chicken breasts into 1-inch pieces and store in the refrigerator until ready to cook. Prepare and slice all the vegetables and set aside. Mix soy sauce, sesame oil and garlic and set aside.

Preheat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat and add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Beat two eggs and scramble, set aside. Next, season the diced chicken with salt and pepper and sauté for six minutes or until cooked thoroughly. Remove from pan and set aside. Add another tablespoon of olive oil to the pan and sauté the carrots for one to two minutes. Add the bell peppers and cabbage, season with salt and pepper and cook for additional two minutes. Remove the vegetables and set aside.

Using the same pan, add a small amount of olive oil and sauté the mushrooms, green onions and spinach. Add this to the rest of the cooked chicken and vegetables. Lastly, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the hot pan and stir-fry the rice until it is slightly crisp, add the scrambled eggs and combine. Pour the soy sauce mixture and stir to combine. Serve chicken and vegetables over fried rice in large bowl.

SHRIMP AND SWEET PEPPER STIR FRY

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 3 bell peppers, assorted colors, sliced
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup low-sodium soy sauce
- Olive oil for cooking
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste



PREPARATION

Lightly coat the shrimp with the cornstarch. Preheat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the preheated sauté pan. Carefully add the coated shrimp to the sauté pan and cook until almost done, about 3 minutes. Remove the shrimp from the pan and add the peppers and onions. Cook the peppers for 4 minutes. Add the honey, orange juice and soy sauce to the pan. Turn the heat up slightly. Bring the liquid ingredients up to a boil. Turn the heat back down to medium-high and add the shrimp back to the sauté pan. The sauce should thicken, and the shrimp will be cooked after 3 minutes. Serve over brown rice. Garnish with sesame seeds.

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 352-493-2511 or at 1-877-875-0202 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.

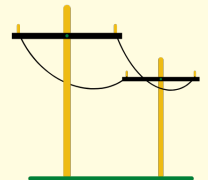


It is important to update phone numbers and mailing address associated with your service location. Inaccurate phone number/service location combinations may result in delayed handling of outages or a missed opportunity to avoid a power disconnection.

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

PRSRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ORLANDO, FL
PERMIT NO. 3937

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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**October Is National
Cooperative Month**

- There are more than 30,000 cooperatives—including agricultural, utility, financial services, purchasing, food/grocery, housing, and retail co-ops.
- They operate 73,000 businesses, account for more than 2 million jobs and generate more than \$660 billion in annual revenue.
- Rural electrical cooperatives provide power to three-quarters of the Nation’s landmass and, along with rural telecommunications co-ops, are helping to expand access to high-speed Internet service.
- CFEC services more than 35,000 accounts and 4,400 linear miles of line.
- Cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations that are owned by their Members.



**Central Florida Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

~YOUR POWER PARTNER ~