

the Co-op Connection

JUNE 2022

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM YOUR POWER PARTNER



A Word From The General Manager

Thank you to the 430 Members who attended the Central Florida Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting of Members in May. It was great to finally be back together after two years of meeting postponements because of COVID-19. For those members who were not able to attend, I'll share some of the key points here that I shared at the meeting.

Like our Members and everyone, CFEC is not immune to higher costs. From service trucks, parts, brackets, line – whatever it is, that cost has increased tremendously. For example,

- ✓ A 10-inch 5/8-inch machine bolt is now 67% higher.
- ✓ A 15 KVA pole mounted transformer is 57% higher.
- ✓ A 25kva pad mounted transformer for UG is 30% higher.

We are also being told that some of the hardware we need may take months to get. Not days or weeks, but months. Transformers are almost a full year's waiting time before they are actually in stock.

Unrealistic And Forced Goals

Green and clean energy is being forced on the nation at a pace that is not realistic — at a level that is likely not even feasible — and one that will have an adverse impact on citizens. There are many problems with ideas being promoted as solutions. For example, there is a push to move from gas-powered to electric vehicles. Besides the obvious that rural America lacks infrastructure and charging stations, there is currently a waiting list for electric vehicles and a back log because of the shortage of semiconductors, which is slowing the production of all automobiles, but especially electric vehicles, which require more than twice as many semiconductors per vehicle as a traditional gasoline-powered car. The “rare Earth elements” required to produce electric vehicles and the batteries are not found in the United States, and,

therefore, we are reliant on other countries.

Economic Situation Means A Base Rate Increase

As a cooperative and not-for-profit entity, we are required to carry a certain margin. If charges stayed as it is now, it would lead to going below that required margin or being in the negative, which would require us to more significantly raise rates to meet rising cost/prices and return margins to neutral or slightly positive. The Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment has been used to alleviate some of the volatility in the market; however, it has become more than this limited tool can overcome.

Even with the changes and coming base rate increase, we hope our members still see your power provided by CFEC as a good value for the money. We appreciate your continued support of your cooperative as together we weather this trying economy. We will always be here to keep the power on and restore power when it goes out at any time of the day or night.

Clean Energy Needs Careful Planning And Cost Mindfulness

As an update from Seminole Electric Cooperative, they are currently working on four new photovoltaic solar sites that are expected to generate 298 megawatts of additional solar. One of those sites will be in Gilchrist County on State Road 26 near Newberry. Due to market conditions, the exact timing of that project is in question.



General Manager
Denny George

With the inclusion of the Seminole Combined Cycle Facility and new solar resources in Seminole's resource portfolio, carbon dioxide emissions are expected to drop 36% around or after 2024. This is the equivalent of removing approximately 650,000 cars from the road for one year. This type of future planning, coupled with mindfulness about costs, is the best way to move into cleaner energy. Duke Energy, too, is building a solar facility on either side of SR 129 as you come into Chiefland but that is to serve their customers.

Cooperatives Targeted With Cyber Attacks

The last topic that I covered at the Annual Meeting was about cyber security. Cyber security issues and ransomware continue to dominate headlines with 2021 generating ransom activity within two Florida Cooperatives. At both co-ops, their data and systems were held for ransom. Both cooperatives chose not to pay and worked their way back by rebuilding their systems from back-up data. However, the attacks created havoc and cost money. Those cyber hacks came as cleverly disguised emails with attachments that, when opened, got into the system but then

remained dormant. With a keystroke from the hacker, the program awoke and began to do damage. Thankfully here at CFEC, due to our wonderful IT department, we are trained, reminded and cautioned to look for suspicious information/emails and attachments.

Keeping Safety In Mind

As a reminder, Hurricane season started June 1. Stock up now on those hurricane and thunderstorm essential items. More information can be found on CFEC's website. I would also like to highlight a safety milestone: we have now gone more than 1,230 days without a lost-time incident/accident. This all the while driving an incredible number of miles each year, along with our field side working closely to high-voltage lines. We have a great team in place and work constantly to improve our efficiencies and maximize our resources to bring you the greatest possible service and reliable and affordable power, while being a valuable member of the communities we live in and serve. It is an honor to lead Central Florida Electric Cooperative and I thank you for supporting your cooperative.

Skyrocketing Natural Gas Prices Wreak Havoc On Costs

The dramatic rise in natural gas prices is a significant challenge for energy companies to overcome. From May 2021 to May 2022, natural gas was up 155%, with a 32% in one month – with these values changing daily as prices continue to rise. Natural gas accounts for almost one-fourth of the total U.S. energy consumption. Seminole Electric Cooperative, our power provider, has announced plans to shutter a coal-fired generator in their Palatka generation station in favor of a natural gas facility for cleaner generation with less emissions.

Although there is more demand coming out of the pandemic, there is also hesitancy by energy companies to explore for natural gas resources because of the attack on fossil fuels. Instead of being energy independent, as we were a few years ago, we are back to being dependent on foreign sources.

With approximately 60-65% of a member's bill comprised of charges simply passed on to Seminole to ensure payment for the power already used, we will have to raise this recovery amount in order to keep pace. If we over-collect, with the use of the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment, this overage is always owned and retained by our members. And while the WPCA is related to the power cost side of the bill, increasing price pressures on materials and equipment, combined with little growth likely is going to require a price increase on base rates. We were initially targeting later this year, but it might have to come sooner. It is important to note that rates were adjusted downward for 1,000 kilowatt hours in 2016. Prior to that, it was 2014 for the last increase seen by CFEC members in the rate area.



President's Report Recap



Trustee President
Alan Mikell

Thank you to everyone who came to the Annual Meeting of Members on May 7, at the Cooperative Warehouse. It was great to be able to hold a meeting in person again, and I was glad to see members embracing the change from October to May. It was a good opportunity to meet with Members and discuss cooperative business.

Scarcity Of Parts Needed For Reliable Service

One of the topics I covered at the meeting was about the shortages of goods and equipment the cooperative is experiencing. Just like you may have trouble getting certain parts or grocery items, CFEC is experiencing difficulties as well. Sometimes it is not a matter of how much something costs, although prices have certainly gone up, but that the piece of equipment or hardware simply isn't available. As I said at the meeting, I'm not sure what the answer is on this, but as a cooperative member, you are part of a big family who are working together to help source this critical equipment that we all need to provide our members with power.

Watch For Scammers

Another topic that I mentioned was about scammers. This type of criminal is sophisticated and prolific, and unfortunately, they do trick people into giving money or information to them. They will impersonate cooperative personnel or other business or utility employees or even law enforcement. They'll also pretend to be your own grandchildren or other family members. They use fear and intimidation to try to trick you and make you their victim. Don't let them. Be on guard at all times.

The cooperative encourages you to call and check on any phone calls or information if you have any questions. Central Florida Electric Cooperative will never call and ask you to pay your bill over the phone or buy a prepaid credit card and give those card numbers over the phone. That's not how good, legitimate businesses work. If you ever have any questions about your account at Central Florida Electric, don't hesitate to call the cooperative and ask questions.

CFEC Studying Possible Role In Broadband

On the topic of broadband, CFEC is still meeting with interested groups and parties, elected officials and others about broadband internet. Like many other cooperatives across the country, we are studying what role we may have in bringing broadband to the CFEC service area. We know that broadband access is needed, and the pandemic revealed definite gaps in coverage, but we must remember our commitment to members to be reliable and affordable in our electric service and any other service we might bring.

Thank you again if you came out to the Annual Meeting, and if not, we hope to see you next time. We are always here to help.



CFEC's Board of Trustees officers for the coming year are James McCain, President; Carl Roof, Vice President; and Barbara Townsend, Secretary/Treasurer



DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST



General

- Two week minimum supply of medication, regularly used medical supplies, and a list of allergies
- A list of the style, serial number, and manufacturer information of required medical devices
- Batteries
- Flashlights
Do not use candles
- NOAA Weather Radio
Battery operated or hand cranked
- Cash
Banks and ATMs may not be available after a storm
- Cell phone chargers
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Phone Numbers

- Maintain a list of important phone numbers including:
County emergency management office, evacuation sites, doctors, banks, schools, veterinarian, a number for out of town contacts, friends and family

Clothing

- Rain gear such as jackets, hats, umbrellas and rain boots
- Sturdy shoes or boots and work gloves

Special Needs Items

- Specialty items for infants, small children, the elderly, and family members with disabilities

First Aid

- First Aid Manual
- Sterile adhesive bandages of different sizes
- Sterile gauze pads
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Sewing needle
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Thermometer
- Tube of petroleum jelly
- Safety pins
- Soap
- Latex gloves
- Sunscreen
- Aspirin or other pain reliever
- Anti-diarrheal medicine
- Antacid
- Laxative
- Cotton balls
- Q-tips

Food and Water

- Food
Nonperishable packaged or canned food and beverages, snack foods, juices, baby food, and any special dietary items to last at least 7 days
- Water
1 gallon per person per day
- Non-electric can opener
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Plastic cups
- Utensils

Important Documents

- Insurance cards
- Medical records
- Banking information
- Credit card numbers
- Copies of social security cards
- Copies of birth and/or marriage certificates
- Other personal documents
- Set of car, house, and office keys
- Service animal I.D., veterinary records, and proof of ownership
- Information about where you receive medication, the name of the drug, and dosage
- Copy of Will

**Items should be kept in a water proof container*

Vehicle

- Keep your motor vehicle tanks filled with gasoline

Pet Care Items

- Pet food and water to last at least 7 days
- Proper identification
- Medical records/microchip information
- A carrier or cage
- Muzzle and leash
- Water and food bowls
- Medications
- Supplies for your service animal

Find more disaster preparedness tips at
FloridaDisaster.org



Blueberry Key Lime Pie

INGREDIENTS

- Graham Cracker Crust
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1½ cups finely crushed graham cracker crumbs
- ⅓ cup butter, melted
- 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 4 large egg yolks

Key Lime Pie Filling

- ½ cup fresh squeezed Florida Key lime juice
- 3 teaspoons fresh Key lime zest

Blueberry Topping

- 2 cups Florida blueberries
- ½ cup apricot jam
- ¼ cup water



PREPARATION

Graham Cracker Crust

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium-sized mixing bowl combine graham cracker crumbs, butter, and sugar. Stir ingredients to combine. Press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom and sides of a 9-inch pie pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool completely. Set aside.

Key Lime Pie Filling

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. In a medium-sized mixing bowl combine condensed milk, egg yolks, Key lime juice and Key lime zest. Use a whisk to make sure all ingredients are combined (the combined ingredients will naturally thicken slightly). Pour Key lime pie filling mixture into the cooled graham cracker crust. Bake pie for 10 to 15 minutes or until the pie looks almost set. Remove pie from oven and let cool to room temperature. Cover pie and place in the refrigerator as it is best served cold. To serve, top pie with fresh whipped cream and slices of fresh Key lime.

Blueberry Topping

Heat the apricot jam and water in a small saucepan over medium heat until completely melted. Arrange blueberries in a single layer over the Key lime pie. Using a pastry brush, brush a layer of melted jam over the blueberries. Let cool.

Watermelon and Mozzarella Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups Florida watermelon, cubed
- 2 cups fresh mozzarella pearls
- 1 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1-2 tablespoons scallions, trimmed and chopped
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups mixed greens
- Balsamic vinegar, to taste
- Salt and pepper, to taste

PREPARATION

Toss together the watermelon, mozzarella, basil, scallions and oil. Season with salt and pepper. Serve over a bed of greens. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar if desired.



Payment Options:

- **In Office / Drive-Through** – Payments can be made at any CFEC location during working hours. Payments can also be placed in the drop-box at each location after hours.
- **By Mail** – Mail payments to: Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 9, Chiefland, FL 32644. Please allow sufficient time for delivery or payment may be received as late.
- **Phone / Online** – Payments can be processed through our third party provider, SEDC. A \$2.50 service fee will be charged by SEDC per \$500 transaction and is NOT a CFEC charge. Payments made through SEDC are posted to the member's account at the time of payment. Pay By Phone at 352-493-2515 or toll free at 844-434-3962. Pay online at www.cfec.com.
- **Bank Draft** – Payments can be made automatically by bank draft by filling out a form and mailing or dropping it off at any CFEC office. The form can be found at cfec.com under the "Documents" tab. Returned checks or payment arrangements cannot be processed by these banks.
- **Bank Locations** – Payments can be made at any Drummond Community Bank location or at the Lafayette State Bank in Bell, Fla., during their normal working hours. Returned checks or payment arrangements cannot be processed by these banks.



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.

Lights out? *We Need To Know.*

Outdoor lighting fixtures help light up dark areas near your home or business. Outdoor lights operate automatically by coming on at dusk and going out at daylight.

At times, the outdoor light can malfunction or become inoperative. If this happens, please contact the cooperative so that we can repair the light in a timely manner.

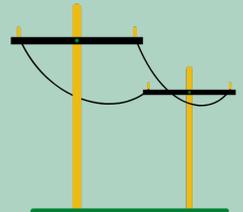


WHEN REPORTING THE PROBLEM, CFEC NEEDS TO KNOW THE FOLLOWING:

1. A specific street address of where the outdoor light is located.
2. A description of where on the property the outdoor light is located
3. A description of the type problem with the outdoor light.
4. Information, including your name, address, telephone number and account number.

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 CFEC Connect App: On the Home page, click "Report An Outage," select the issue causing your outage and the information will be submitted.
- 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**



**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

Drummond Community Bank
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
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**Apply Now For An
Adult Education Grant!**

The Central Florida
Electric Cooperative
Educational Charity
Board is offering
Adult Education
Grants once again in
addition to our High
School Graduate Scholarships!



*For applications and more information
on eligibility, visit www.cfec.com!
Applications must be submitted on or
before **July 7, 2022.***