



# NEWS CENTRAL

Monthly newsletter from Central Electric Membership Corp.

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## Vegetation maintenance is key to reliability

The spring and summer months are right around the corner and your cooperative is gearing up for its annual vegetation maintenance program. There are many ways that Central Electric provides you with safe and reliable electric service. One of the most common ways is referred to as right-of-way (ROW) clearing.

Clearing the ROW is critical to keeping the power flowing. Without an effective ROW clearing program, power interruptions occur when trees, shrubs or bushes grow too close to power lines.

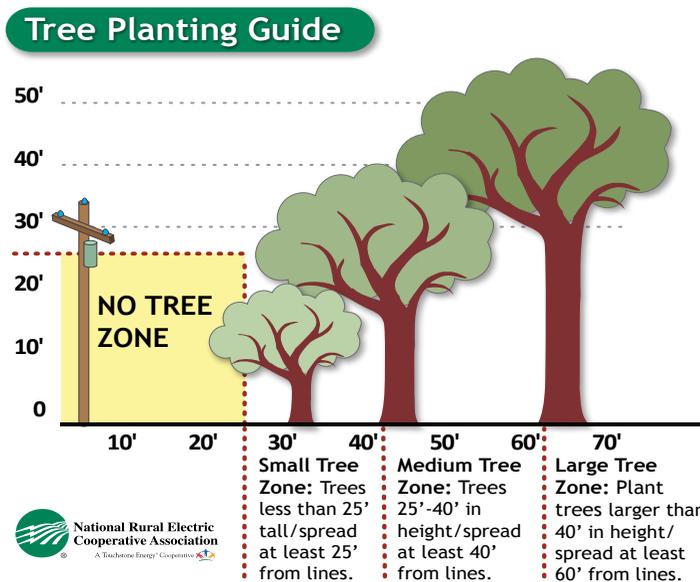
We use two ways to manage ROW areas: mechanical mowing and an environmentally-safe herbicide that interrupts photosynthesis, so plants

aren't able to convert sunlight to energy. While the herbicide is considered safe for humans and is a much cheaper method for managing ROW areas, we respect that some people may prefer mowing on their property.

If you prefer that we only mow at your home or business, simply call the office at (800) 446-7752.

We'll send you a form to get your name on a list of "mow-only" properties that can be displayed at your residence.

This spring, look out for our ROW crews who will be working in several different areas across the system. Remember to contact the cooperative if you notice trees near any power service or line, and **NEVER** trim a tree in the right-of-way zone on your own.



- ▶ Each year, Central Electric offers scholarships to five students attending Central Carolina or Sandhills Community Colleges. The deadline to apply is May 1. For more information, visit CEMCPower.com.
- ▶ The Cypress Creek Fire District Annual Meeting is April 4 at 7:30 p.m.

# POINT OF VIEW

## Protecting the electric grid

From the desk of CEO & General Manager Morris McClellion

Electric cooperatives are committed to protecting the reliability and security of our electric power system. As an electric cooperative member, it's important to know that your cooperative is working to keep the nation's electric grid, and your personal information, secure. It's also important to understand how you can work to protect your network at home.



If you grew up in certain rural areas, including our very own communities right here in central North Carolina, you may have never locked your doors. You trusted your neighbors and everyone looked after each other. But now the times have changed, in more ways than one.

It seems every day we hear about security breaches, how various foreign countries are attempting to hack into the networks of large retailers, email and search engine giants, social media outlets and now even our political parties, just to name a few.

You have probably also heard about recent reports of continued attempts to breach electric utilities, bringing up the question, could a computer hack shut down the nation's electric grid?

Most experts answer that question with probably not, due to security measures that are in place. However, the threat of our networks being infiltrated is very real. Cyberattackers are constantly trying to gain access to our data, over 100 times on a daily basis. And they're also trying to gain access to your home networks as well.

We take this threat very seriously. After all, Central Electric is owned and governed by you, our members. You've placed your trust in us, and we're committed to protecting your data while delivering safe, reliable and affordable power.

Unlike our old neighborhoods, we don't have an open digital door policy at our cooperative. We're part of a national network of consumer-controlled electricity providers working together to evaluate and bolster cyber security measures. While there is no sure fire way to keep hackers out, we have several layers of network security in place. We constantly train our employees to be on the look-out to monitor for suspicious activity.

No matter what security challenges arise in the future, your cooperative is working to be ready to meet them. Like the cooperative, you should also take cybersecurity very seriously. Develop and practice sound cybersecurity measures around your home and always be vigilant.

Until next time,

*Morris McClellion*

### FOUR TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR COMPUTER



**1. Install antivirus software and keep it updated.**



**2. Never send emails that include your personal information (like date of birth or SSN).**



**3. Never open attachments or links unless you know the sender or were expecting the message.**



**4. Monitor children's activity on the Internet and make sure they know how to practice good cyber security.**

# Watch your household savings grow

Winter is coming to a close, and spring is just around the corner! As you welcome the new growth of spring outside, it's a great time to take advantage of cooperative programs that will help you grow your energy savings, too.

## FlexPay

Want more control over your electricity payments? Sign up for our FlexPay program which allows you to pay for your electricity in advance. You decide when, and how much, to pay toward your electric bill. When your balance gets low, we'll let you know. And you want to know the best part? Members enrolled in the FlexPay program tend to be as much as 11 percent more energy-efficient as they become more aware of their household energy consumption.

## Member Service Portal

Besides payment and account information, the free online account portal at [CEMCPower.com](http://CEMCPower.com) allows you to track your energy use anytime, anywhere. You can also set up a variety of different notifications, including a high-use alert that will alert you when your energy use reaches a certain point.

## Energy-efficiency

The least expensive energy is the energy you don't use. Take action! Find lots of energy and money-saving tips at [CEMCPower.com](http://CEMCPower.com) and [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).



Central Electric is owned and directed by you, our members. Because of that, we're focused on providing you excellent service, and finding ways to help you save money. Use these cooperative services to help you grow your energy savings!

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## Deadline for TESC is quickly approaching



Central Electric is sending a young man to the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a young woman to the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at N.C. State University in Raleigh.

To be eligible to apply, the student must be in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade during the upcoming school year, have permission from a parent or guardian to attend the overnight camp and must be able to provide their own transportation if selected to attend.

**The deadline to apply is March 31.** Visit [CEMCPower.com](http://CEMCPower.com) to download the applications, or contact Janet Jackson at (919) 708-1638 for more information.



## Billing credits keep on coming

The cooperative has more good news for members concerning the recent wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA): it was extended once again into February!

That's right, all Central Electric members received a **third** WPCA billing credit in February of \$.015 per kWh, or \$15.00 per 1,000 kWh used.

The WPCA billing credit is a result of favorable fuel and wholesale power costs in 2016. These costs can be difficult to predict and rather than conducting frequent, costly rate studies, a WPCA is used to adjust for actual costs of

wholesale power. When costs are lower, you receive a credit on your bill, and when they are higher, it may appear as a charge.

*An all-electric residential consumer that uses an average of 1,400 kWh each billing period has received credits totaling over \$75.00.*

An all-electric residential consumer that uses an average of 1,400 kWh each billing period has received credits of \$40.60 in December, \$14.00 in January, and \$21.00 in February, totaling over \$75.00 in billing credits over the last three months. That's quite a savings, returned directly to you.

This is just another great benefit of being a member-owner of an electric cooperative.

## Cooperative Leadership Camp

This summer, Central Electric is sending a rising sophomore, junior or senior to Cooperative Leadership Camp hosted by the N.C. Cooperative Council.

The week-long, overnight camp will be held at White Lake, N.C. June 19–23. It will feature energetic and interactive workshops, presentations, outdoor recreation and leadership building exercises. The camp is designed to provide a learning experience that concentrates on the cooperative way of doing business and building a better understanding and appreciation for the

cooperative model. Each year, five campers are selected to receive leadership awards for their unique leadership abilities and receive an all-expense paid trip to the National Institute on Co-op Education at Virginia Tech University. All campers will also be eligible to apply for the \$1,000 Jim Graham Cooperative Leadership college scholarship their senior year of high school.

The application period is underway and will run through May 12. For more information or to apply, visit the "Cooperative Leadership Camp" section at [CEMCPower.com](http://CEMCPower.com).

**Students: Apply for Cooperative Leadership Camp at [CEMCPower.com](http://CEMCPower.com)**



Central Electric  
Membership Corporation

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Morris McClellon  
CEO & General Manager

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