

# PowerLines

YOUR CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS CONNECTION

Photograph by Jeff Lindey, *Morning Beauty*

## “WATTS” INSIDE

- 3 Running for the Board**
- 3 2025 Christmas Light Contest Winners**
- 4 Keep Food Safe**
- 4 Employee Spotlight**
- 5 Energy Assistance Programs Available**
- 5 2026 Billing Cycle Extension**
- 6 Mid-Winter Heating System Check**
- 6 Good Neighbor Scholarship Applications are Open**
- 7 Energy Explorers**
- 8 Mississippi Pot Roast Recipe**

## It's Not that Simple

BY MATT BOSHAW  
CEO & General Manager

Have you heard about this artificial intelligence (AI) thing? Please read the previous question with the intended extreme sarcasm. We are constantly bombarded with news and advertisements about AI. Not to follow my sarcasm with hyperbole, but is AI the thing that will save humanity or be its end?

Well, in the immortal words of the late, great Jimmy Buffet, “The god’s honest truth is it’s not that simple,” a wonderful line from his 1989 hit “Fruitcakes.” In the case for or against AI, it’s not that simple. As you could imagine, because of the business I am in, I am asked my opinion about AI often. I have written in the past that we have been using a version of AI for over 20 years in the electric utility business. We used computers to predict the location of outages based upon incoming calls, and to design lines. Of course, the AI talked about today is better referred to as generative AI or a computer that can perform so many operations per second that it appears to consider every alternative to a situation

## Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



and provide an instant answer. In the rare event that the answer is incorrect, it can appear to “learn” from that error. Yes, both remarkable and scary.

Concerns of Skynet (shameless Terminator reference) aside, I cannot say AI is good or bad. It is not that simple. In addition to the efficiencies provided by AI’s ability to manage mundane or redundant tasks, the utilization of AI has the potential to revolutionize the electric grid. What I mean is that among other things, it has the potential to maximize the efficiency of generation and transmission asset usage, identify the most cost-effective ways to maintain the grid, and improve on our predictive outage modeling. From a business perspective, a large, consistent load would generate growth and revenue for the company serving that load with little distribution infrastructure maintenance. In our case, it would be the equivalent of a load upwards of ten times our entire current system while adding only a single member to support.

On the other side of the equation are the strains of gigantic electric demand on an already taxed electric supply. There is the cost issue associated with adding ten times the demand to the

*Continued on page 2*

same or shrinking supply of power. Looking beyond cost, perhaps the biggest concern is one of availability. Given the lack of available capacity, during peak usage times or the loss of supply due to extreme weather events, some load would simply not be served. These are not speculative concerns. Even prior to the proliferation of data centers to serve AI, extreme weather events in several locations nationwide led to demands exceeding available supply. This has been followed by generators going offline because of the weather further exacerbating the shortfall. These situations led to two catastrophic issues. Market prices spiked, leading one generation and transmission organization to declare bankruptcy when consumers were unable to pay the power bills. Regardless of the price, once the demand exceeded the supply, the grid operators were forced to ration power in the form of rolling blackouts.

As you can see, the answer is not as simple as AI being good or bad. However, I believe the approach that must be taken is a measured one as with so many challenges that have faced the electric utility industry since it began. First, we must recognize that many of the requests to serve new load are speculative and many projects will not move forward thus, delaying the generation shortfall. Next, we absolutely must continue efforts to maintain viable generation facilities through the end of their useful life while expediting the installation of new generation facilities. Finally, we must demonstrate patience (a virtue that with which I struggle mightily) as these changes to our electrical supply and integration of innovative technology will take more time than we would like. We did not arrive at this point quickly and the effective solution to these concerns will take equal time.

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP

### Matthew P. Boshaw

*CEO & General Manager*

### Chester Conti

*Director of Finance and Accounting/CFO*

### Lisa A. Hoover

*Director of Member Services*

### Christopher W. Kossman

*Director of Information Technology*

### Fred E. Terwilliger

*Assistant General Manager/COO*

### Caitlin Kriebel

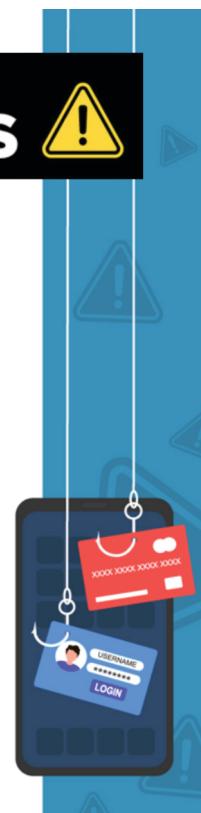
*Director of Human Resources*

Ultimately, we will all benefit from the improvement and long-term stability of energy supply and the thoughtful implementation of AI technology. This is the time to consider a comprehensive energy policy that addresses the concerns raised by competing initiatives. While Mr. Buffet was right, “The god’s honest truth is it’s not that simple.” nothing worthwhile ever has been.

## TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Enrolling in auto draft payments with your utility provider can help prevent certain types of utility bill scams. If a scammer contacts you with fake disconnection threats, you can rest easy knowing your bill is paid automatically through a prearranged, secure channel. Auto draft payments also eliminate the risk of exposing checks and personal banking info through the mail. If your utility offers auto draft payments, consider enrolling to stay on track and avoid certain scams.

Source: AARP



## CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE GOOD NEIGHBOR SCHOLARSHIP



Available to members and their children enrolled in post-secondary education.

APPLY BY MARCH 15



Central Electric Cooperative

For More Information:  
**800-521-0570**  
[www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop)

## Interested in Running for the Board?

As a member, you have a voice in who serves on CEC's eight-member Board of Directors. Every year, members elect two directors for a four-year term. Director seats are divided among the counties in which the cooperative serves. This year, resident members from Armstrong and Butler counties are invited to run for these two seats. To be eligible for nomination, you must be a CEC member in good standing, have a permanent residence in that county, and meet other qualifications required by CEC's bylaws.

If you are interested in running for the board, you must return the below coupon or complete the online form by April 1. You will then receive a qualifications list, nominating petition that must be signed by 20 CEC members, a prospective director questionnaire, and an authorization form for a criminal background check. You must complete all of these items and return them to CEC's nominating committee by April 15 to be eligible to run for CEC's Board of Directors.

After the cooperative confirms your eligibility, you will attend an orientation meeting and meet with the nominating committee for an interview. The committee then submits a list of the eligible candidates for placement on the ballot.

Nominee names, along with a photo, and background

information, are presented in the July issue of Power Lines. Cooperative members will vote by mail or internet prior to the annual meeting, or vote by paper ballot on the day of the meeting, Aug. 5, 2026, prior to the meeting's commencement. Election results will be announced prior to adjournment. Visit [www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop) for more information about running for the board.

Your board of directors has appointed a nominating committee to review prospective candidates interested in running for CEC director. Committee members are:

### Armstrong County

**Harvey W. Loose**  
East Brady

### Forest County

**Dennis Lamb**  
Tionesta

### Butler County

**Joe Gibson**  
Parker

### Venango County

**Carl E. Gadsby**  
Grove City

### Angela Bernardo

Butler

### Ron Paranick

Cranberry

### Clarion County

**James M. Reed**  
Fryburg

### Randy Tharan

Knox

If you are interested in being considered as a director nominee, please complete this coupon and return it by April 1, 2026 to: Central Electric Cooperative, Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 329, 716 Route 368, Parker, PA 16049.

Once you submit this ticket, you will be sent a qualifications list and petition requirements for being a director nominee to CEC's Board of Directors.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

## Congratulations to the 2025 Christmas Lights Contest Winners!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2025 Christmas Lights Contest! With the help of 9,210 votes, the three winners have been chosen. First place received a \$500 bill credit and \$500 donation to a charity of their choice. Second place received a \$250 bill credit and third place received a \$100 bill credit! Videos and pictures of each display can be found on our website.



### First Place:

**Curtis and Deborah Boyles**  
"Looks A Lot Like Christmas"

### Second Place:

**Justin and Kate Bifano**  
"Christmas Corner Chaos"

### Third Place:

**Velma McCrea**  
"Harvesting for the Holidays"

# Keep Food Safe Before, During, and After a Power Outage

Unfortunately, power outages do occur from time to time. It's important to know how to keep your food safe during an outage. Use these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of illness.

## Before power outage



Keep refrigerator at **40° or below**. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately.

Keep freezer set to **0° or below**. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

## During power outage

**Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!**

If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 hours**.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for **four hours**.

## After power outage

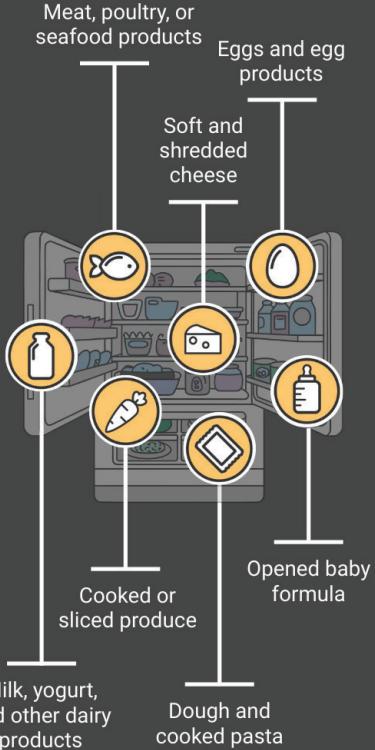


Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer.

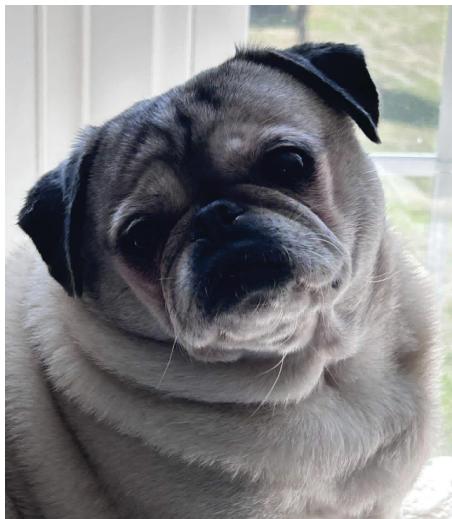


If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

**Foods that should be thrown out after an extended outage:**



- Meat, poultry, or seafood products
- Eggs and egg products
- Soft and shredded cheese
- Cooked or sliced produce
- Milk, yogurt, and other dairy products
- Dough and cooked pasta
- Opened baby formula



**Role:** Billing/Payment Coordinator  
**Employee Since:** June 2010

## Employee Spotlight: Shannon Blain



**What do you do at CEC?** I am the Billing/Payment Coordinator in the Member Services department.



**What do you do outside of work or what is one of your hobbies?** My husband and I make spoon rings and other cool stuff from vintage flatware.



**What is one thing on your bucket list?** Someday I want to go on a Panama Canal Cruise.



**What was your first job?** I worked in the kitchen at a nursing home when I was 15.



**Do you have any pets?** I have 4 dogs and a cat. Jill (pictured left) and Rosie are pugs, Piper is a pug mix, Marty is a Shih Tzu and my cat's name is Maggie.



## Energy Assistance Programs Available

by Izzy Cellucci, Communication Representative

Everyone needs help at times, and this time of year can be more challenging than normal. With low temperatures and increased usage, bills can become overwhelming, making it much harder to enjoy the season. However, CEC remains committed to helping members pay their bills by sharing information about local and federal energy assistance options.

### Federal Assistance: LIHEAP

LIHEAP, or Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, is a federally funded grant program that helps households with their energy bills. This year the program offers grants ranging from \$200 to \$1,000 to income-eligible families, sent directly to your heating utility company or fuel provider. The current LIHEAP season began November 3, 2025, and will end April 10, 2026. Each household can receive one LIHEAP cash grant per heating season depending on household size, income, and fuel type. For more information or to apply visit [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us).

### CEC Assistance: Family Fund

CEC offers its own programs funded entirely by member donations and unclaimed capital credits. Family Fund helps members with permanent residence in CEC's service territory who are facing financial hardship.

## Billing Cycle Extension Coming in 2026

Starting in January 2026, CEC is extending the billing cycle by three days. Historically, CEC gave members 18 days from the billing date to the payment due date. Members will now have 21 days from the time their bill is issued to the date payment is required.

CEC is making this change in response to member feedback. Many members have shared concerns about having enough time to receive bills and make payments. Our goal is to give members a little extra breathing room.

For added convenience, members are encouraged to utilize the SmartHub app, switch to paperless billing, or enroll in the autopay program to process payments instantly and from anywhere.

[www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop)

Funds are raised through the Round-Up program where members can choose to round their electric bill up to the nearest dollar, and the extra change is donated to help local families in need. To qualify for Family Fund, applicants must have been a CEC member for at least six months, eligible for LIHEAP, and have received a current disconnection notice.

### CEC Assistance: Hardship Grant

CEC also offers the Hardship Grant to help members pay their electricity bill. This program was designed to help those experiencing significant hardship that makes it difficult to pay their bill. Qualifying situations may include loss of income, medical emergencies, natural disasters, or other approved circumstances. Please visit [central.coop](http://central.coop) or scan the QR code to learn more about qualifications, and to apply.

Winter can bring its own challenges, but you don't have to face them alone. Central Electric Cooperative is here to help members navigate programs like LIHEAP, Family Fund, and Hardship Grant. If you or someone you know needs assistance, visit [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us), or contact CEC for more information.



### Important for AutoPay Members:

For members enrolled in AutoPay, payments will now be drafted three days later than they did in 2025 as payments are drafted on the payment due date. CEC encourages members to review their payment schedule to make sure this change doesn't interfere with other monthly obligations.

### Reach Out with Questions:

If you have any questions or need more information about the billing cycle extension, please contact our Member Services team at 800-521-0570.



## Mid-Winter Heating System Check

by Connie Long, Member Energy Specialist

Mid-winter could be considered a “stress test” for your heating system. We always recommend checking your Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) in the fall or spring, but why not check it when it’s really being used. By this time in Pennsylvania, we know our heating systems have been working overtime on some of those cold nights. We compiled a list of some items you can inspect on your own, and some you may want a professional to assist you.

### HVAC Inspection Necessities:

1. Replace your air filter. This is the biggest reason something goes wrong in the middle of winter with your HVAC system. When the system runs more often, there is an increased chance of something blocking the air flow.
2. Clear your vents and registers. It’s easy for something to accidentally cover one of your vents or registers, which can cause pressure in the ductwork. Not clearing these can lead to more serious issues with your furnace.

## Good Neighbor Scholarship Applications are Open!

One of the best investments a community can make is in education. Each spring, CEC awards scholarships to graduating seniors or adults going back to school who live at a residence receiving electricity from CEC. **CEC will award 10 scholarships of \$3,000 in 2026.**

Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution, complete the application on our website, and submit a 500-word essay. The funds used for these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credits and does not impact members’ rates in any way. Employees and directors of CEC, along with members of their immediate families, are ineligible.

Visit [central.coop/good-neighbor-scholarship](http://central.coop/good-neighbor-scholarship) to learn more and apply!

[www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop)

3. Use a sensory scan. Hearing: Listen for an unusual noise like rattling, banging or screeching. Sight: Look for a steady blue flame when checking your pilot light. Smell: If you smell rotten eggs, or an electrical burning scent, it could be gas, which is considered an emergency, and you should call someone immediately.
4. Test CO detectors. Use the test function and replace batteries every six months.

If anything seems unsafe or unusual, please call a professional to check your HVAC system. It’s important to stay up to date with your heating system to not only save you money on your heating bill but also to catch small issues before they can become a larger problem.



### Why is the Demand for Electricity Rising?

Demand for electricity in the U.S. is booming. Recent data shows that power consumption nationwide is set to increase by at least 38 gigawatts (enough electricity to power 3,600 homes for one year) between now and 2028. Meeting this new demand will require a combination of new power plants, grid upgrades and energy storage technology advancements. Here are the key factors that are driving increased demand.

1. **Increased Electrification:** Electric vehicle adoption, electrification of home heating and industrial electrification are increasing overall U.S. energy consumption.
2. **Data Centers:** Driven by explosions in AI, cryptocurrency and cloud computing, total U.S. data center load is projected to increase by 65% by 2050.
3. **Economic Growth:** Residential power consumption is expected to increase by 14% to 22% through 2050 due to increases in population and steady economic growth.
4. **Manufacturing Growth/Onshoring:** New, expanding and “onshored/reshored” manufacturing capacity driven by federal incentives is expected to increase industrial demand by 13,000 GWh per year.



**\$30,000 GIVEN YEARLY**

We award approximately \$30,000 in scholarships each year to students within our service territory.



### SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COLLEGE & TECH/ VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Our scholarships are open to members and their children enrolled in post-secondary education.



**APPLY NOW!**

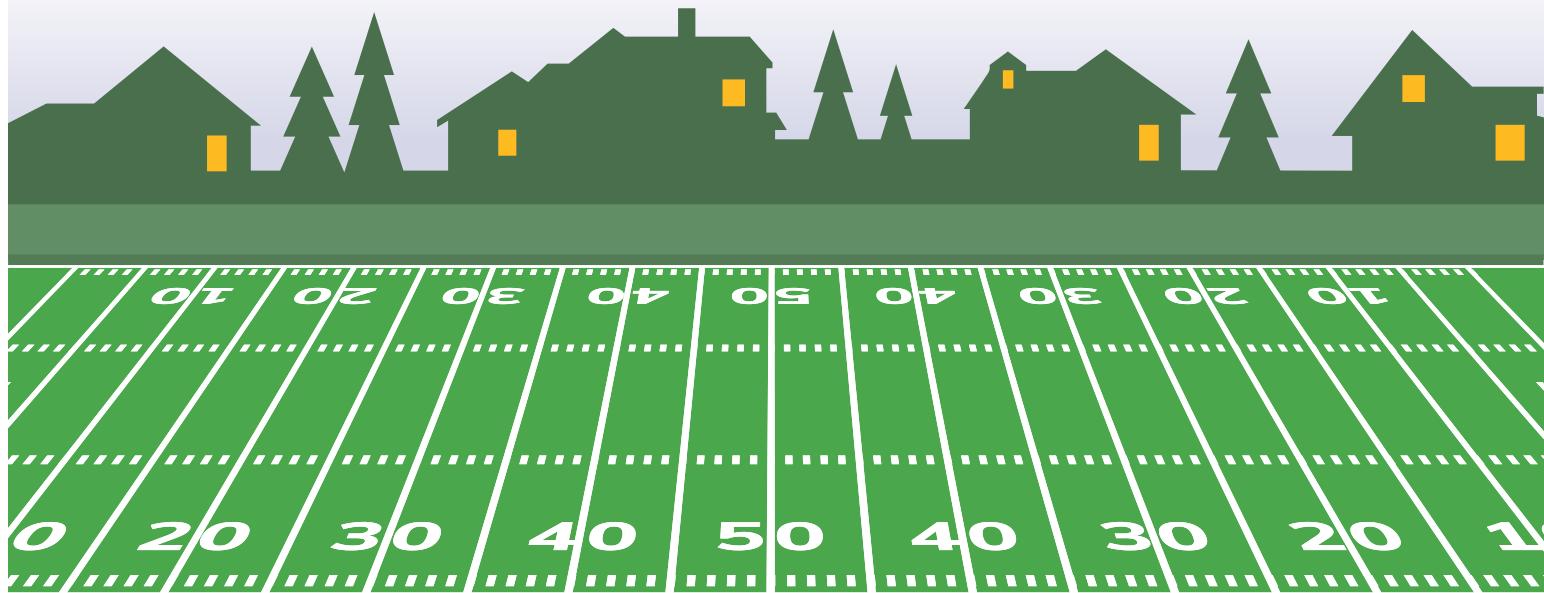
Applications are open now on our website. The deadline to apply is **March 15, 2026**.



## Energy Explorers

# Score Big with Energy Savings!

Every big game MVP makes big plays—and you can too! Use the clues below to fill in the blanks and learn how you can help save energy at home by making smart, efficient plays. Double check your work in the answer key.



1. Spend time outdoors or unplugged to reduce your \_\_\_\_\_ time and save energy.
2. Turn off the \_\_\_\_\_ while brushing your teeth.
3. When it's cold, wear an extra layer of \_\_\_\_\_ instead of turning up the thermostat.
4. Keep doors and \_\_\_\_\_ closed when your home's heating/cooling system is turned on.
5. Unplug smaller electronics like \_\_\_\_\_ when you're not using them.
6. Turn off \_\_\_\_\_ when you leave a room.

**Word Bank:**  
 windows  
 clothing  
 water  
 lights  
 screen  
 chargers

Answer Key: 1. screen 2. water 3. clothing 4. windows 5. chargers 6. lights

From the Kitchen of  
Ashlie Daniels



## RECIPE: MISSISSIPPI POT ROAST

Send your own recipe to:

Izzy Cellucci; [icellucci@central.coop](mailto:icellucci@central.coop) or mail to P.O. Box 329,  
Parker, PA 16049

### INGREDIENTS:

3 lb. chuck roast

1 12oz. jar peppercini's with juice

1 packet au jus gravy mix

1 packet of ranch dressing seasoning mix

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Season chuck roast with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder.
2. Add all ingredients to crockpot and cook on low for 8 hours.
3. Serve over mashed potatoes, noodles, or rice and enjoy!

ON THE GO AND  
IN CONTROL.

**MANAGE**

your account

**REPORT**

service issues

**VIEW AND PAY**

your bill

**RECEIVE**

key notices

**MONITOR**

usage 24/7

*...all in the palm of your  
hand and online.*



**Central Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Your Board of Directors

**From left (back row):** Kenneth Durrett, Vice President, Butler County; Jared McFarland, Forest County; Jody Weaver, President, Clarion County; Robert Smith, Butler County; **(front)** Richard Weaver, Clarion County; Nancy Lendyak, Armstrong County; Althea Smith, Secretary/Treasurer, Venango County; Dana Kellogg, Venango County.

[central.coop/meet-your-directors](http://central.coop/meet-your-directors)

**MISSION:** CEC safely provides reliable and competitively priced electricity to our consumer-members and was established by and is committed to the communities we serve.

716 Route 368, P.O. Box 329, Parker PA 16049

Member Services: 800-521-0570

Outages: 800-282-8610

Newsletter Editor: Izzy Cellucci

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



smart hub



Missed an issue?

Catch up at [www.central.coop](http://www.central.coop)

Read past issues of Power Lines and  
stay up to date on CEC news.

