



MARCH 2026

CHOPTANK ELECTRIC
Cooperative Living

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Photo by: Chad Simon
Sam Houston Electric Cooperative



FROM THE DESK TO THE POWER LINES A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Save Money and Energy: Shop the Electric Cooperative Marketplace

When it comes to managing energy costs at home, small decisions can make a meaningful difference. From how efficiently your home is heated and cooled to the lighting you choose and the way electronics are powered, everyday choices all play a role in how much energy your household uses.

As a not-for-profit, member-owned electric cooperative, our role goes beyond delivering reliable electricity. We are committed to helping members use energy wisely and affordably. That's why we're introducing the **Electric Cooperative Marketplace** — an online, member-only resource designed to make energy-saving products more affordable and easier to access.

Here are some of the energy-efficient products available through the Marketplace with an instant member discount:

Smart thermostats learn your household's schedule and adjust temperatures automatically when you're away or asleep, or easily through an app.

Smart power strips and plugs cut power to devices in standby mode, helping eliminate energy when electronics aren't being used.

LED bulbs use significantly less electricity than traditional incandescent bulbs and last much longer, reducing both energy costs and replacement frequency.

ENERGY STAR® certified air purifiers are designed to deliver effective air filtration while using less energy than standard models, making them well suited for longer run times.

High-efficiency showerheads and faucet aerators help reduce hot water use without sacrificing performance.

Multi-spray hose nozzles help control water use more precisely, reducing waste and runoff.

Weatherstripping and pipe insulation keep conditioned air where it belongs, improving comfort while lowering energy use.

ENERGY STAR® certified Level 2 EV chargers offer faster charging and the ability to better manage when energy is used.

The Electric Cooperative Marketplace is another way Choptank Electric is working to deliver value beyond the meter. Learn more and start shopping: www.myco-opmarketplace.com/choptank.



*Mike Malandro,
President & CEO
Choptank Electric Co-op*

Write to us: P.O. Box 430 | Denton, MD | 21629

Member Service Center: 1-877-892-0001

Automated Member Service: 844-975-2746 **Outage Reporting:** 1-800-410-4790

CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP

88th Annual Member Meeting



Please join us for the annual meeting of cooperative members on **Thursday, April 23**, to discuss important policy and leadership issues and review the successes of 2025. All customers of Choptank Electric Cooperative are members and are entitled to vote and participate in discussions about how our electric distribution company functions here on the Eastern Shore.

The annual meeting and dinner will be held at The Fountains Wedding & Conference Center at 1800 Sweetbay Drive in Salisbury. Doors will open at 4:30 p.m. for members to register, visit with staff and vendors, and enjoy a buffet dinner.

The business portion of the annual meeting will begin at 6 p.m. with President and CEO Mike Malandro reporting on the Co-op business over the last 12 months.

Four Board members will be standing for reelection during the 2026 meeting:

Director candidate biographies are posted online at www.choptankelectric.coop and are displayed in the lobby of the headquarters office in Denton. Petitions for nomination were submitted, reviewed and approved by the Credentials and Elections Committee. Because there is only one approved Director candidate for each district, the Committee has invoked Bylaws section 4.06(b). This section states that in the event of an uncontested election, Choptank Electric Cooperative may forego the balloting process.

Members will also be voting on updated bylaws for the Cooperative. You will receive the proposed bylaws in mid-March with a ballot to approve or not approve the amendments. More details about this vote are on the next page.

All members who attend the annual meeting will be awarded a \$10 bill credit on their next electric bill (limited to one per membership). There will also be door prizes drawn at the end of the meeting ranging from \$100 to \$500 in bill credits.

To RSVP and reserve your space at the 2026 Annual Meeting, please contact our Member Service Center by:

- Calling 1-877-892-0001
- Emailing us at annualmeeting@choptankelectric.coop

We will need your name, account number, email address and total number in your group to reserve your space and accurately register you for the 2026 Annual Meeting. The RSVP deadline is Thursday, April 9, but call today to guarantee your spot.



John Burke Jr.,
representing
Cecil County



Craig Mathies Sr.,
representing
Somerset County



Jeff Rathell Sr.,
representing
Talbot County



Bob Thompson,
representing
Ocean Pines



Scan the QR code to learn more about our board members up for reelection.



Summary of Choptank Electric Cooperative Bylaws Amendments

By John Burke Jr., Chairman, Board of Directors

The Governance Committee of the Board of Directors has identified revisions to modernize and streamline Choptank Electric's bylaws. The amendments are being proposed as a single amendment because the changes are intertwined throughout the entire document.

Below is a synopsis of some of the substantive bylaws changes recommended by the Board. You will receive the proposed bylaws in their entirety in mid-March along with the ballot to vote. The existing bylaws and a mapping document detailing the changes are available at choptankelectric.coop/governance.

Substantive changes in the proposed 2026 Choptank Electric Bylaws:

1. Removed the concept of Patronship Types as previously described in Section 2.03. The revised Bylaws instead state "[e]xcept as otherwise provided in the Articles or these Bylaws, all members have the same rights and obligations" (Section 2.4).
2. Added a member conduct and consent section (Section 2.5(e)).
3. Added additional director qualifications to Section 4.4 and additional ability of Cooperative to investigate and confirm those qualifications (Section 4.4(e)).
4. Changed to permit officers to be elected at the first board meeting after annual meeting and removed requirement that it be without nominations (previously Section 6.02, now 6.1).
5. Expanded indemnification section to be more prescriptive as to when Cooperative will and will not indemnify a Director, an Officer or another individual (previously Section 10.07, now Section 6.14)
6. Expanded on the ability to deliver documents electronically (Section 9.1).

Important sections that did not change:

1. The requirement that an Annual Member Meeting occur
2. The total number of Members needed for a quorum
3. The composition of the Board
4. The procedures for Director and Officer elections
5. The required Cooperative officers

You will receive your ballot and the proposed bylaws the same way you receive your monthly Choptank Electric bill (via mail or email). There will be four ways to vote: by mail, online, in person at the Annual Meeting or on the SmartHub app. If you have any questions or concerns, you may send your comments by mail or email us at legal@choptankelectric.coop.

Ten \$1,000 Luck of the Draw scholarships

will be awarded to high school seniors or current college students who apply by April 16 and are present with their parent or guardian cooperative member at the annual meeting. Scan the QR code or visit choptankelectric.coop/scholarships for more information.





Choptank Electric Aids in Jamaica Restoration

By Logan Bilbrough, Graphic Communications Specialist

Local linemen Casey Butler, Jeff Thomas Jr., Dean Samuel Jr. and Jordan Watson of Choptank Electric Cooperative traveled to Jamaica in December of last year to help restore power after Hurricane Melissa.

Hurricane Melissa, which made landfall Oct. 28, 2025, destroyed an estimated 75% of Jamaica's electrical infrastructure. Eleven lineworkers from five electric cooperatives throughout the U.S. went to Jamaica from Dec. 1-19 with NRECA International to help restore power to the Discovery Bay area in Saint Ann Parish on the island's north coast.



The Choptank team's mission was to get the lights back on. They worked closely with Jamaica Public Service (JPS) and local contractors to restore power lines that were damaged during the storm.

"It was such a terrible hurricane that went through there, and they were without power for months,"

said Jordan Watson, a Journeyman Lineman in Choptank's Salisbury District. "I was given the ability to do linework and I thought the best way I could give back is to be able to go down there and help those in need."

Dean Samuel Jr., a Serviceman in Choptank's Cambridge District, talked about the challenges of doing linework without access to his usual equipment. "The most challenging part was probably working out of a tour bus. We had five or six guys and a pretty small tour bus with all of our tools. Every stop we would need different tools and it was tight," explained Dean. "I'm glad I went. It was a great experience and made me a better lineman and a better person."

"It took us more time to do less tasks because you are relying on doing everything on hooks, and you've got to make sure you are inspecting the pole because some of the poles were in really bad shape," added Casey Butler, a Chief Lineman from Choptank's Denton District.



The Choptank crew knew that teamwork was the answer to conquering these challenges.



“Teamwork was very important,” said Jeff Thomas Jr., a Chief Lineman in Choptank’s Salisbury District. “We got to learn a lot about how they do things over there and how they get by with just a little bit of material to get the lights back on.”

This was Casey Butler’s third time traveling with NRECA International to help people in need. Casey talked about how these trips have given him perspective.

“It’s definitely life changing ... You can’t imagine what people go through down there and what we take for granted. And it’s just nice to be able to give back to the community.”

Jordan also talked about interacting with the local people of Jamaica and their ability to stay positive in the wake of the destruction.



“Every job we were on, the locals were right there in the midst of everything. They don’t call it electric, they call it lights,” said Jordan. “They had the best spirit in the world even being without power for weeks and weeks. When you talk to and interact with them, it’s as if it was just another day in paradise, because there’s a lot more to life in Jamaica than having the lights on.”

Casey shared that even though there was still work to be done, he knew that the people of Jamaica were going to persevere.

“Just knowing that you could give them hope and that they still had a positive outlook on everything is what made it awesome. And it made it easier to come home knowing that not everyone’s power is on, but I know they’re going to be alright and they’re going to get there.”



Photos by: Chad Simon
Sam Houston Electric Cooperative



Core Values of Choptank Electric Cooperative

Identified by 2025 LEAD Program Participants

By Katie Luckett, Director of Marketing, Communications & Education

Choptank Electric Cooperative's LEAD program stands for Leadership, Engagement and Development. This annual program aims to foster leadership skills among employees at the Cooperative and prepare them for greater responsibilities.

Seven employees completed the internal LEAD program at the end of 2025 by presenting their year-long projects to Choptank's Board of Directors. Each participant was tasked with identifying an opportunity at the Co-op and a solution or plan for implementation. Project topics ranged from updating member contact information and right-of-way maintenance to company policies and internal training programs.

"We are proud of the inaugural LEAD group and their accomplishments throughout the year. They have each gained valuable skills and experiences that they will carry with them as leaders at the Cooperative to make a positive impact on our members, employees and communities."

-Paula Bishop, Vice President of Human Resources

The group also worked together during the year to establish three **core values for the Cooperative:**

Dependability, Community and Integrity

At Choptank Electric Cooperative, **dependability** means doing what we say we will do for every member – in our daily work, our planning and especially in times of need.

Community involvement is a key ingredient to Choptank Electric's identity and success. As a cooperative, we are always looking for ways to give back to the communities we serve.

And **integrity** is the foundation that allows us to achieve excellence. It means standing up for what we believe in, doing what is right even when it's not easy and ensuring that every action reflects honesty, fairness and accountability.



**CHOPTANK LEAD
2025**

The 2025 LEAD program participants, pictured left to right:

- **Jason Gaskill**, Manager of Regional Operations in Salisbury
- **Rob Jump**, Supervisor of System Control
- **Alyssa Tobolski**, Member Services Project Coordinator
- **Samantha Schuyler**, Manager of Human Resources
- **Wayne Daubach**, Manager of Operating Services
- **Patrick Dubinski**, Senior Electrical Engineer
- **Nick Newnam**, Manager of Regional Operations in Denton

**Choptank congratulates
the following employees
on their promotions:**

Tim Hardesty

Apprentice Lineman 4th Class

Cory Mattox

Apprentice Lineman

Dalton Church

Apprentice Lineman 5th Class

Jordan Walls

Engineering Fieldman

Ben Cunningham

Apprentice Lineman 2nd Class

Hunter Absher

Apprentice Lineman 2nd Class

Luke Turner

Apprentice Lineman 2nd Class

Morgan Chandler

Member Service Specialist
4th Class

Camden Stinson

Apprentice Lineman 2nd Class

Colby Benton

Apprentice Lineman 2nd Class

Welcoming New Employees

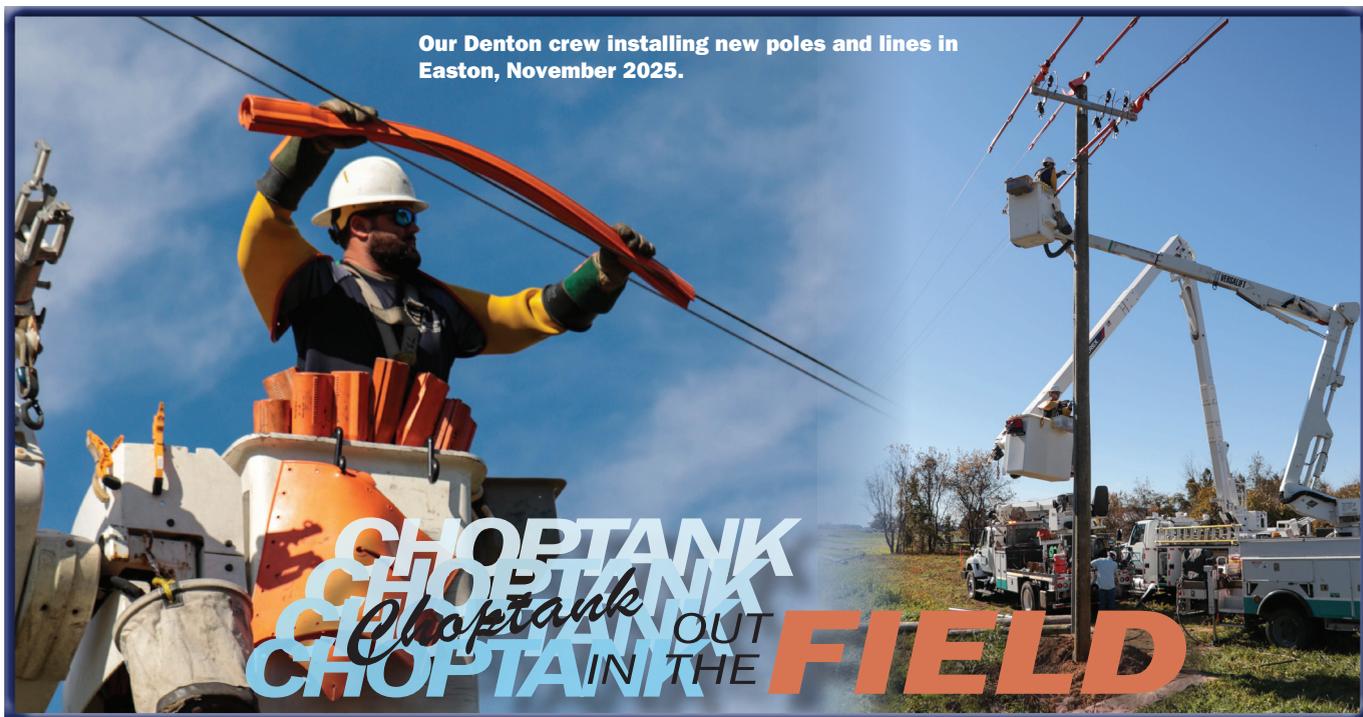


Parker Smith
System Operator, Denton

Experience: Easton Utilities

Hobbies: Golf, Warhammer, LEGO,
board games

Looking forward to: Learning and
growing my skill sets and meeting
a new team of coworkers



THANK YOU FOR ROUNDING UP!



Backstreet Bikes, Inc. is a nonprofit in Snow Hill, Md., that collects used bikes, refurbishes them and gives the upgraded bikes at no cost to those in need of transportation on the Lower Shore. Backstreet Bikes received a grant of \$1,338 from the Choptank Trust last fall to purchase bike parts and safety items that are included with every donated bike. Some examples include bike helmets, racks, safety lights and vests, locks, tubes, tires and chains. Bikes are given to children, teenagers and adults of all ages; many who use the bike as their main

source of transportation.

“We support the maintenance of the bikes that have been given out and upgrade children to a larger bike when the time comes, if needed,” shares Stephanie Hawley, President of Backstreet Bikes. Stephanie’s husband Chris is the Chief Bike Mechanic for Backstreet Bikes, and the two are passionate about helping their neighbors be more mobile in the community.

“Giving bikes also improves the health of our community by encouraging exercise, and it saves bikes from sitting in the local landfills,” adds Stephanie.

Backstreet Bikes has provided more than 100 bikes since creation in 2021. Learn more about how you can volunteer and donate at backstreetbikes.org.

The Choptank Trust, a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation, awards organizations and individuals in all nine counties on the Eastern Shore with funds from Choptank Electric Cooperative’s Operation Round Up program. View recent awards below and learn more at

choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund.

December 2025 Choptank Trust Awards

- Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry \$2,000
- Food for Learning \$2,500
- Chester River Chorale \$300
- Federalsburg City League \$900
- St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church \$3,000

January 2026 Choptank Trust Awards

- QA County High School Clay Target Team \$2,500
- Unstoppable Joy \$2,500
- 4STEPS Therapeutic Riding Program \$2,250

The total of approved applications for December and January was \$32,749.98, which included \$16,790.98 for individual home and medical expenses.



Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Choptank Fiber, LLC

Choptank Electric and Choptank Fiber exist to provide reliable and cost-effective services that improve the quality of life for our communities.

President & CEO

Micheal E. Malandro

Board of Directors

John J. Burke Jr.
Chairman, Cecil Co.

Robert B. Thompson
Vice Chairman, Ocean Pines District

Donna Richardson West
Secretary, Worcester Co.

Amy Ireland Brandt
Treasurer, Caroline Co.

Douglas D. Scott
Dorchester Co.

Kristen E. Nickerson
Kent Co.

Robert E. Arnold
Queen Anne’s Co.

Craig N. Mathies Sr.
Somerset Co.

Jeffery D. Rathell Sr.
Talbot Co.

Matthew R. Holloway
Wicomico Co.