

## Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation

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### Mission Statement

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is committed to providing dependable, affordable electric service through the expertise and dedication of competent leadership and a well-trained and responsive workforce.

### The Tennessee Magazine

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## Co-op Concerns

*News from your community*

### The Seventh Principle

**Cooperatives across the globe** adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all of our decisions — from how we run the co-op to how we engage with our local communities. The seventh principle is “Concern for Community.”

While the employees of Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation think about this year around, there is something about this time of year that makes concern for community seem especially important.

In October, CEMC participated in the Tennessee Electric Co-op Day of Service. This annual event challenges the state’s electric co-ops to complete service projects in their communities.

For this year’s event, we designated a company-wide “Pink Out” on Oct. 24 to raise money and awareness for the American Cancer Society and the fight against breast cancer.

In the first three years of this event, 1,200 co-op employees have volunteered 2,300 hours to complete 75 community projects across the state.

This goes to show that you can accomplish a lot by working together.

In the holiday rush, it can be easy to forget that there are families right here

in our community who go

without on a

daily basis. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season.

This month, I challenge you to seek out ways for you and your family to serve others. Take some time to go through your closets and find clothes, shoes and coats that you no longer wear. Bag those items up and take them to your local Salvation Army, Goodwill or church clothing drive. Volunteer for a local food or toy drive, deliver meals to the sick and the elderly or simply make a meal for a neighbor in need.

No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community. So take the time to give back this holiday season. You’ll be glad you did.



**By Chris A. Davis**  
General Manager,  
Cumberland Electric  
Membership  
Corporation

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation will be closed for the Christmas and New Year’s holidays on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 24 and 25, and Wednesday, Jan. 1. CEMC personnel will be available in the event of an emergency.

Call 1-800-987-2362.

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*



# CEMC goes pink for Co-op Day of Service

In honor of the third annual Tennessee Electric Co-op Day of Service, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation designated Tuesday, Oct. 24, as a company-wide “Pink Out” day in support of the fight against breast cancer.

Employees raised funds and awareness of the cause by purchasing and wearing “CEMC Power of Pink” T-shirts and pinking-out their offices. A total of \$1,518 was raised from individual employees through the company-wide donation drive and a soup luncheon, with proceeds benefitting the American Cancer Society.

“I was thrilled with the overwhelming participation and support of our Pink Out day,” says Stephanie Lobdell, CEMC community relations coordinator and organizer of the Day of Service project. “It was a true demonstration of the dedication and commitment the employees of CEMC have to the communities they serve — beyond keeping the lights on.”

The Tennessee Electric Co-op Day of Service is coordinated by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association. Twenty-eight separate community service projects were completed as a part of this year’s event. More than 450 electric co-op employees devoted more than 1,000 volunteer hours across the state.



Portland District lineworkers show their support, wearing “Power of Pink” bracelets in their pinked-out office.



Customer Contact Center employees are decked out in their “Power of Pink” T-shirts.

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## Members benefit from annual meeting survey

Six members who attended Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation’s annual meeting in White House on Sept. 21 and returned completed surveys regarding their experiences were randomly selected to receive electric bill credits as tokens of the co-op’s appreciation for their input.

Congratulations to Pamela Wilson of Cedar Hill, Sheila Brothers of Adams, Gordon Hodges of Portland, Dorothy

Dowlen of Ashland City and Richard Tippit of Goodlettsville. Each received a \$50 bill credit.

“We value our members’ feedback,” says Seth Roberts, CEMC member services manager. “The comments and suggestions we receive from our surveys are instrumental in the planning of our meeting each year. We may not be able to honor every request, but we do take them all into consideration.”



# Tropical Storm Olga causes damage, power outages

Remnants of Tropical Storm Olga moved through Middle Tennessee on Saturday, Oct. 26, leaving in its wake a path of destruction and thousands without power. Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation's system suffered extensive damage due to strong straight-line winds that tore through the service area, bringing down trees and power poles and knocking out power to as many as 14,000 members. CEMC crews — with assistance from Besco, Springfield Electric, Service Electric Company, Wolfe Tree Service and A&G Tree Service — worked around the clock to restore power.

The hardest-hit areas were in Stewart and Montgomery counties, where some members were without power for nearly three days while crews worked to replace broken poles and downed power lines, often having to clear through fallen trees and debris to access damaged equipment.

Neighboring cooperatives such as Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Centerville, were



*CEMC workers provide assistance to neighboring co-op Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative, which was also heavily impacted by the strong storm system.*



*Remnants of Tropical Storm Olga brought widespread damage to CEMC's service area, including many downed trees and lines like these in Montgomery County.*

also heavily impacted by the severe storm system. Acting on the Cooperative Principle "Cooperation Among Cooperatives," CEMC sent 14 lineworkers once power was restored in our area to join MLEC in its restoration efforts. CEMC's workers joined MLEC crews, along with employees from several other neighboring cooperatives, and worked diligently to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. At one time, as many as 12,000 of MLEC's 35,000 members were without power, and many were without power for several days due to the extensive damage and rural landscape.

Throughout the entire restoration process, CEMC received many kind words of encouragement and thanks, and for that, we are grateful. We understand that outages are frustrating, and we truly appreciate how gracious our members are. We also thank the members and businesses who helped provide food for our crews and dispatchers. And we cannot go without thanking our crews for their hard work — and their families, too, many of whom were without power themselves while their loved ones were out working to restore power.



## Join CEMC in decorating the Trees of Giving

Each year during the holiday season, the lobbies of Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation are decorated with trees bearing coats, hats, gloves and other winter clothing instead of the typical ribbons, bows and garland you might expect. These trees, known as Trees of Giving, will help bring warmth to those in need in our local communities this winter.

We invite everyone — employees and members alike — to help decorate our trees by donating cold-weather clothing such as coats, hats, gloves, scarves, warm socks and pajamas. Donations of nonperishable food items are also welcome and appreciated.

Donations will be accepted from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. through Friday, Dec. 13, and will be delivered to local charitable organizations for distribution before Christmas.

## Save energy when it's cold outside

It's so hard to muster the courage to lower the indoor temperature when it's freezing cold outside. Here are eight ways to keep your home so toasty that you'll be happy to shave a few degrees off the thermostat.

**1. Look for leaks.** Cold air can sneak into your home through windows, doors, the attic and gaps in walls where cable lines come inside. Inspect your walls for holes and cracks, and patch them with caulk or weather stripping.

**2. If your furnace is old, it's probably inefficient.** Newer models come with energy-saving features. Consider replacing yours.

**3. Switch to LED lights.** They're available as ceiling fixtures, lamp bulbs and even Christmas lights. They use less energy than fluorescent lights and last much longer.

**4. Program your thermostat** so it automatically lowers the heat at bedtime and again when everybody leaves the house in the morning. If you don't have a programmable thermostat, isn't it time you got one?



**5. Retire your fireplace.** A wood fire is pretty, but it doesn't make your home any warmer. Plus, it sucks the heated air from the room up through the flue and out into the great outdoors. If you can't live without a fireplace, consider adding glass doors on the front and closing the doors of the room where it's located. And when it's not in use, close the flue.

**6. Open the drapes.** When the sun is shining during the day, invite its warm rays into your home. Then, cover the windows in the evening to keep the nighttime cold outside where it belongs.

**7. Older, single-pane windows are notoriously drafty.** If you can't afford to replace them with energy-efficient, double-pane versions, cover your windows and frames with plastic sheets.

**8. Replace air filters.** They're designed to stop dust, pet hair and other pollutants from getting into your ductwork. But once they're clogged, your furnace has to work way too hard to heat your home.

# Ensure a happy holiday with these tree safety tips

By Derrill Holly

About 95 million American households will host at least one Christmas tree this holiday season, and 81 percent of those trees will be artificial. But a real tree you cut from a field or buy from a store or lot was farm-grown and harvested eight to 10 years after they were first cultivated from seed.

Whether your tastes run to firs, spruces, pines, cedars or cypresses, it's more likely than not that the tree has spent years being sheered, shaped and refined before it was cut this autumn and displayed for sale.

"If you've got a local tree farm in your area, cutting your own is the best way to make sure your tree is fresh," says Jami Warner, executive director of the American Christmas Tree Association. "If you buy your tree from a local retailer, there's a good chance the trees on the lot were cut at least a month ago."

Dryness, electrical malfunctions with lights and trees located too close to heating sources can make for a deadly combination. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), fires involving Christmas trees cause an estimated \$13 million annually in property damage.

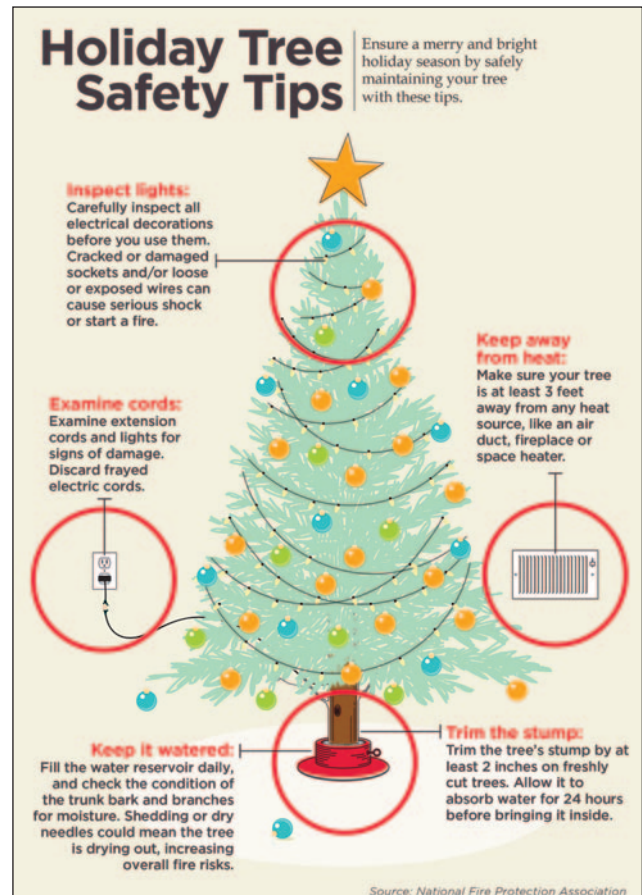
"Always make sure that when you buy a live Christmas tree, it is fresh-cut," says Susan McKelvey, communications manager of the NFPA. "Grab a branch, run your hand along it and see if any needles fall. If you have a lot of needles in your hand, it means the tree is already drying out."

Tree retailers should be willing to cut a few inches of the stump to expose moist wood capable of absorbing water through the trunk and circulating it to the tree's branches, adds McKelvey. "When you get it home, set it in a large container of water and let it absorb as much as it can for at least a day before you bring it inside."

Consumers need to remember that Christmas trees are flammable, so the longer they are inside, the more likely they are to dry out, and that's when they pose an increased fire hazard, says McKelvey.

The NFPA also recommends that the trees be set up at least 3 feet away from any heat source like a fireplace, heating duct or portable space heater.

With five weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, keeping trees adequately moist to reduce fire hazards this holiday season could take regular watering, proper placement and a bit of luck.



"There are only about 500 Christmas tree fires that occur each year," says McKelvey. Christmas tree fires are blamed for about four deaths and 15 injuries a year.

"While the number of Christmas tree fires is relatively low, trees located too close to a heat source are a factor in one of every four such fires," says McKelvey. "When you refill the water reservoir each day, check the tree for needle loss or other signs of dryness that may indicate it's time to take it down."

*Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.*



# CUMBERLAND CONNECT

powered by **CEMC**

It's time for everyone to have access to high-speed fiber internet!

Cumberland Connect is designing and engineering a powerful, innovative fiber optic network that, once completed, will provide access to high-speed fiber internet, phone and video services to all Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation members. Fueled by passion and excitement, Cumberland Connect is looking forward to serving and investing in the communities of all CEMC members with hopes of improving lives through the introduction of high-speed broadband services. We've seen from other broadband projects around the country just how positive an impact that the introduction of broadband connectivity can have on a community. CEMC and Cumberland Connect are looking forward to the opportunities we believe our fiber will afford the members in our service area.

While we are working hard on the design and build-out of our fiber network, we are excited to support the communities we currently serve electrically throughout the build-out process. After all, we are your neighbors and your family. We are passionate about our members and what is important to them. Over the past couple of months, Cumberland Connect has had the opportunity to be involved in several impactful community events.

Cumberland Connect was recently invited to be one of the sponsors for a 5K race held by a local chapter of the Civitan International. Central Civitan, which is based out of Cunningham, fosters good citizenship through community involvement and exists to be a service to others. This purpose can be seen in their involvement throughout this community. We were excited for the opportunity to be a part of a meaningful event geared to serve others. Creative Director Kaitlyn Bonds manned a table to answer questions from participants regarding Cumberland Connect's services, and, of course, cheer on the racers. Kevin Casey, outside plant manager, joined the other racers and ran the 3.1 miles, placing second in his age group. Our members truly are our heroes and the reason behind our project, so it's important to us at



Kaitlyn Bonds and Kevin Casey participate in the Central Civitan 5K in Clarksville.

Cumberland Connect that the communities we serve feel our presence and support within them. For more information about Central Civitan and to get involved, visit the group's Facebook page at [facebook.com/centralcivitan](https://facebook.com/centralcivitan).

Another wonderful organization is Loaves and Fishes, "An Agency Feeding the Hungry" and a nonprofit community wide volunteer effort that provides a noon meal to the hungry in Clarksville. Loaves and Fishes, first



Cumberland Connect was proud to support Loaves and Fishes' fundraising event, "Louisiana Saturday Night."

organized to feed the hungry in 1983, began as a soup lunch. Today it has grown to providing between 150 and 200 meals to the hungry daily, six days a week, and distributes food to area agencies through volunteer efforts. Cumberland Connect played a small role in supporting one of its latest fundraising events, Louisiana Saturday Night, which was a success. Today, Loaves and Fishes serves 45,000 to 50,000 meals on site and continues to grow. This amount of community impact doesn't happen without the dedication and support of volunteers and surrounding communities, so if you're in the area and want to get involved, visit the Loaves and Fishes website at [loavesandfishestn.org](http://loavesandfishestn.org).

We believe it is important to be rooted in the communities we are serving. Cumberland Connect recently joined several of the chambers of commerce serving our members' communities, including Stewart County, Clarksville, Robertson County, White House, Portland, Gallatin and Cheatham County. All have been very welcoming to our team and mission. We look forward to partnering with the chambers going forward to support them and help them in their missions to serve their communities, making a positive difference.

The build-out of our entire fiber network is a lengthy project that, once completed, will cover our entire service area. Our Cumberland Connect team is committed to keeping our members updated on the process of the fiber build-out and what to expect throughout the project. The people and technology we are utilizing to build the network are truly world-class. We are excited and proud to share the process — and the people — behind the scenes with our members. We truly believe in our mission to provide access to high-speed fiber services to all



*Sales Director Jennifer Brown, front left, poses with chamber employees during the welcoming of Cumberland Connect into the Robertson County Chamber of Commerce.*

CEMC members. We know that the end result of access to high-speed internet services is most important, but we hope you will join us as we share our journey building this incredible network. If you'd like to follow along and

get some behind-the-scenes action, please follow our social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter using @GetCCFiber to find us, and sign up for monthly updates on our website at [cumberlandconnect.org](http://cumberlandconnect.org)

We believe it's time everyone has access to high-speed fiber internet services. We look forward to serving you all. Thank you for your support.

*Cumberland Connect employees are, from left, Kevin Casey, outside plant manager; Jennifer Brown, sales director; Mark Cook, engineering division manager; Kaitlyn Bonds, creative director; and Mike Neverdusky, network operations manager.*

