



Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative News

CEO's Message:

Cooperative Evaluates Broadband for Its Members



Shawn C. Hildebrand
CBEC CEO

After much review, it was concluded CBEC would pursue offering broadband, but only to a small portion of its service territory initially, and only with grant funding comprising at least half the financial need to complete the project.

Over the past year, Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative (CBEC) has been evaluating the opportunity for providing broadband service to its members. This process has been driven by the large volume of feedback CBEC has received from some of its members, as well as from other electric cooperatives around the state and nationally that have been having success in providing this service.

The electric cooperatives were first formed in the 1930s to provide a service the for-profit electric utilities would not. This is the same for broadband in 2019. Most internet service providers' mission is to make money while providing the service. To maximize profits, why would the internet service providers serve more rural locations, where it can be very costly to provide the service? The Cooperative is not about making profits, it is about providing needed services that otherwise may not be provided to CBEC members.

The evaluation of broadband started with a feasibility study. This study showed that it was possible financially with public assistance and grants or low-interest loans. After the feasibility study, CBEC conducted a survey of over 1,600 of its members. Close to 90 percent of the surveyed individuals responded they would be interested, and over 70 percent did not have access to any option other than DSL or satellite. CBEC then had several months of internal discussions regarding the project. After much review, it was concluded CBEC would pursue offering broadband, but only to a small portion of its service territory initially, and only with grant funding comprising at least half the financial need to complete the project.

The Cooperative decided on an area in Botetourt County. Among the reasons this area was chosen is there is already access to a path to the internet, which is centrally located between two of CBEC's substations, and there is a high concentration of homes and businesses in the area that do not have access to high-speed broadband.

As you read this, CBEC is awaiting word for the results of a grant application that has been submitted to see if it will be funded. If the funding is granted, CBEC expects to begin building the fiber system in the very near future. If it is not awarded to CBEC, I can assure you that CBEC will be pursuing future grants. The Cooperative cannot, in a financially responsible manner, offer this service without the grant assistance. CBEC member/owners have a need, and the Cooperative intends to meet that need as it did 84 years ago, when Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative was formed.

Cooperatively,

Shawn C. Hildebrand

**CRAIG-BOTETOURT
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**
26198 Craigs Creek Rd. • P.O. Box 265
New Castle, VA 24127-0265
540-864-5121 • 1-800-760-2232
Office Hours: M-F, 7:30 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
Website: cbec.coop
Email: craigbot@tds.net

President
Jasper B. Persinger, Jr.

CEO
Shawn C. Hildebrand

Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Want to be involved with your Cooperative?

Members interested in serving on the board or knowing of a member desiring to serve, please contact management, a director or nominating committee member. Volunteering for the Advisory Board, attending the annual meeting and reading *Cooperative Living* magazine are all very important for every member.

10 Quick Tips to Avoid High Winter Bills

Looking to lower your bills this winter? Use the 10 tips below to conserve energy.

-  Seal air leaks and insulate well to prevent heat from escaping and cold air from entering your home.
-  Reduce waste heat by installing a programmable thermostat.
-  Turn off lights when not in use.
-  Lower your water heater temperature. The Dept. of Energy recommends using the warm setting (120 degrees) during fall and winter months.
-  Unplug electronics like kitchen appliances and TVs when you're away.
-  Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home.
-  Close blinds and curtains at night to keep cold, drafty air out.
-  Use power strips for multiple appliances, and turn off the main switch when you're away from home.
-  Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible.
-  Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75 percent less energy.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

Dear Member/Owners:

Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative has contracted with Asplundh Tree Experts for its cutting and spraying efforts for 2019. Their vehicles will be designated with Craig-Botetourt signage. **They will be cutting in Roanoke County from Route 311 northeast to Botetourt County down to Gala Industries, and in Craig County down to Peaceful Valley Road. They will be spraying everything that was cut in 2018. This includes parts of Craig and Giles counties. In Craig County, this includes Sinking Creek Valley and along Route 615.**

Any questions, please contact Mack McCaleb, supervisor of field services for the Cooperative, at (540) 864-5121, extension 130, or by email at mack@cbec.coop.

Sincerely,
Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative

CBEC October and November Outages

Oct. 11

Widespread outages in various areas affecting 929 members for up to 6.7 hours due to Hurricane Michael.

Oct. 21

Widespread outages in various areas affecting 1,254 members for up to 8.9 hours due to a windstorm.

Nov. 15-16

Outages in Botetourt, Craig and Roanoke counties affecting 3,136 members for up to 28 hours due to an ice storm.

Scholarship Deadline Approaching



The Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives' (VMDAEC) Education Scholarship Foundation accepts applications from high school and homeschooled seniors for scholarships to be used for college tuition, books, fees and/or room and board. The parents or guardian of the graduating senior must be a member of an electric cooperative served by the VMDAEC. **The deadline for submitting an**

application is Feb. 8, 2019. Visit vmdaec.com/content/vmdaec-education-scholarship-foundation to begin the application process.