



# CENTRAL ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION

*A tradition of dependable, hometown service since 1937*

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## **Energy savings** FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

by Jennah Denney

Electric cooperatives are proud to serve small businesses that are essential to our local communities. As costs for pretty much everything continue to rise, small business owners are feeling strained. Luckily, there are steps Mississippi's small business owners can take to conserve energy — and save money.

Many small businesses are in commercial buildings smaller than 50,000 square feet. These buildings use 44% of the energy consumed by commercial buildings in the United States. According to the EPA's ENERGY STAR® program, small businesses in the U.S. collectively spend a staggering \$60 billion on annual

energy costs. Additionally, a survey conducted by the National Federation of Independent Business found that energy costs are a top-three expense for more than a third of the nation's small businesses.

Small businesses can reduce their energy costs by taking advantage of competitive rates, making upgrades to increase efficiency and making simple changes to how they do business. This can have a direct effect on a business's bottom line and make it more competitive in the current market.

### HERE ARE A FEW AREAS SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS CAN FOCUS ON SAVING ENERGY AND MONEY.

#### LIGHTING

Many small businesses, like offices and retail stores, depend greatly on lighting, which can be a major expense. There are two ways to increase the efficiency of your business's lighting system: install energy efficient equipment (bulbs and/or fixtures) and change how you use lighting.

New LED bulbs use less energy and last much longer. LEDs come in a variety of options and prices, making them great replacements for older, inefficient bulbs.

Encourage employees to turn off lights when they're not being used. You can also install light switches with sensors so lights automatically turn off when no one is in the room.

#### EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES

Turning off office equipment and appliances can help save energy and money. Computer monitors can add up to \$30 to an office's energy bill if left on during evenings and weekends.

Restaurants typically use up to 10 times more energy per square foot than other commercial buildings. To save money, it is important to have energy efficient food service equipment.

Additionally, kitchens in many other kinds of small businesses use microwaves, coffee makers and refrigerators, which should be considered when reviewing overall energy use.

#### HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEMS

Heating and cooling account for a large portion of a small business's energy bills.

Tracking energy use and maintaining the heating and cooling system can help small business owners save on energy bills. The system should be inspected annually, and filters should be replaced regularly. If the system needs replacing, consider alternative options like a heat pump with a seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) of 13 or higher. Your local electric co-op can offer advice on efficient heating and cooling equipment.

#### AIR LEAKS AND INSULATION

Just like our homes, small businesses have windows, walls, a roof, and insulation as part of their building envelope. Air leaks can lead to higher bills.

Leaks typically are found around windows, doors, walls, and the roof. Seal these areas for additional energy savings.

#### WATER

Efficient use of energy and water go hand in hand. In most cases, gas or electricity is used to heat water, which costs money. The more heated water your business uses, the more you can save by determining how to use water most efficiently. Lowering the water temperature between 110 and 120 degrees is an easy way to save on water heating.

#### TRANSPORTATION

Many businesses can recognize fuel savings and lower the total cost of fleet ownership and transportation networks by switching to electric vehicles (EVs).

EVs have lower maintenance costs because they are more reliable than internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. This is because EVs have fewer mechanical parts that can break, and they often provide better data to allow for more proactive maintenance. Depending on your business's transportation needs, EVs may be able to provide better energy savings for the long-term.

In conclusion, small businesses can take simple steps to better control how much energy they use and how they use it. Not sure where to start? Ask your electric co-op if they offer energy audits, which can identify areas to save the most energy.

*Jennah Denney writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*



# ANNUAL MEETING

Over 300 people attended the 86th Annual Meeting of the Membership of Central Electric Power Association on March 21 at the coliseum in Carthage.

The crowd was entertained by Bros. 4 Quartet, a southern gospel quartet based out of Rankin County. Members enjoyed the old convention-style singing.

General Manager Brian Long opened the meeting followed by the invocation given by Phillip Crosby, a member of the board of directors. Mayor Laurie Henderson of Carthage welcomed the crowd and complimented Manager Long and the board of directors for the wonderful job they do for the community.

John Malone, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Director of Customer Relations, provided TVA updates to the members. TVA values their partnership with Central Electric Power Association and the hard work that has been accomplished through the years. Lydia Walters, Electric Cooperatives of MS (ECM) Vice President of Communications, was a guest at the meeting.

Manager Long reported that by the end of 2022, the association had 38,268 members in central Mississippi and 4,347 miles of underground and overhead distribution and transmission lines. Long also praised his staff for working hard, being safe, and keeping the lights on.

To conclude the meeting, a raffle took place. Dozens of prizes, including a smoker, were given to away to lucky members.

## The special prize winners were

**\$1,500**  
ELECTRICITY  
CREDIT

**Salem Baptist Church**  
*Leake county*



**\$500**  
ELECTRICITY  
CREDIT

**Helen Boykin**  
*Newton county*

**Lewis Trest**  
*Leake county*

**Jimmy Jordan**  
*Leake county*

The elected board of directors are: Mike Brooks; Leake County, Danny Thornton; Leake County, and Earl Browning; Attala County.



A crowd of more than 300 people attended the  
**2023 ANNUAL MEETING**



Brian Long, general manager, delivers the annual report and praises Central Electric staff on a job well done.



Mayor Laurie Henderson welcomed the crowd to Carthage while complimenting Central Electric on community involvement.



Board member Danny Thornton gives reports for the annual meeting.



Central Electric provides door prizes for members in attendance.



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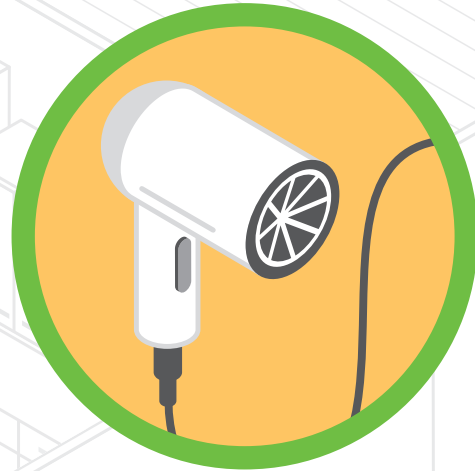
Board member Phillip Crosby delivers the invocation.

# A SAFE, HAPPY HOUSE

Four easy ways to boost electrical safety at home

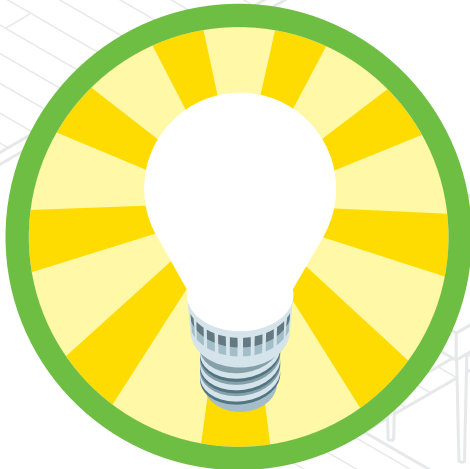
**DON'T**

place flammable items, like potholders, napkins or dish towels near the stove while cooking.



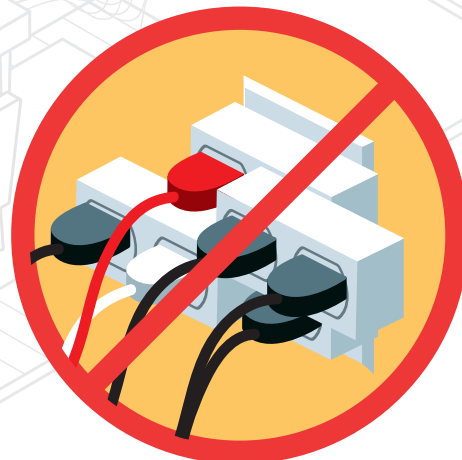
**DO**

keep electrical devices away from water to prevent electric shock.



**DO**

ensure you're using the correct wattage in all light fixtures.



**DON'T**

overload electrical outlets with more devices than the circuit can handle.

MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH