



CENTRAL ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION

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Annual meeting set for March 18

Central Electric Power Association will hold its 88th annual membership meeting on March 18, 2025 at the Carthage Coliseum on Hwy 16 East in Carthage.

As pursuant to Central Electric Power Association's bylaws and to provide each Central Electric member an opportunity to vote in a director election, the official ballot and proxy will be mailed to all Central Electric members the week of Feb. 17, 2025.

Enclosed will be an information sheet with "how-to-vote" details along with a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope for members to return their ballot or proxy. Your official ballot must

be received via mail no later than March 18, 2025. The election results will be published in the *Today in Mississippi* magazine and the Association's website.

In accordance with the laws of Mississippi and the bylaws of the association, members will elect four directors for three-year terms: one director from Leake County, one director from Neshoba County, one director from Newton County, and one minority member at large.

Mark your calendars for March 18, and we'll see you at the annual meeting!





FIREPLACE EFFICIENCY:

Maximize warmth and minimize waste

Q I heard fireplaces can make your home colder. How do I keep my home comfortable while enjoying cozy fires?

A When I was a little girl, I remember my dad telling me that some nights were too cold to have a fire. That always seemed crazy to me, but like many other things he said, he was right.

by Miranda Boutelle

A heat pump heated our home. We had an open fireplace that was more suited for ambiance than creating heat. When you have a fire, warm air rises and draws the smoke out through the chimney. This also draws the warm air out of the house. This invisible force is called the stack effect.

The impact is exacerbated in drafty homes. When the warm air escapes through the chimney, it is replaced by cool air leaking in through gaps and cracks in the home. The greater the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the greater the stack effect, hence dad’s rule of no fires on the coldest nights.

Wood fireplaces are not an efficient option to heat your home. Most of the heat goes out of the chimney. If you enjoy the comforting ambiance and curling up in front of the fireplace during the colder months, here are some tips to efficiently operate a fireplace in your home.

Because it is out of sight, it can be easy to forget to close the chimney damper. The damper should be open when you have a fire going or when any hot ashes are in the fireplace to ensure smoke and carbon monoxide don’t come into your home. Once the fire and all ashes are fully extinguished, close the damper. Leaving the damper open allows warm air to escape, wasting energy. It’s like leaving a window open when your heating system is turned on in the winter.

If your damper doesn’t close properly or your chimney doesn’t have one, purchase a product designed for the task. There are a variety of chimney plug sizes and styles available, including inflatable options designed to fit snugly in place. While you are at the hardware store, pick up some caulking and weatherstripping to seal air leaks around windows, doors, and pipes along exterior walls.

Fireplaces with gas logs are required to be installed with a mechanism that always keeps the damper open. This safety feature allows gases from the pilot light to escape. Glass doors can reduce the impact of air leakage in the winter and summer months. Consider installing glass doors on open fireplaces and keep them closed to minimize drafts.

Sealed combustion gas fireplaces are fully enclosed systems that draw the air needed for combustion from the outside. When properly installed, you get the benefit of the warmth of the fire without the worry of heat loss from drafts. If you have gas logs and enjoy the ease of a gas fireplace, consider upgrading to a sealed combustion unit.

Turning the pilot light off in the summer can reduce wasted gas. If you plan to turn the pilot light off, follow the instructions in the owner’s manual to avoid any potential safety issues.

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Fireplaces with gas logs are required to be installed with a mechanism that always keeps the damper open. This safety feature allows gases from the pilot light to escape.

If your damper doesn’t close properly or your chimney doesn’t have one, buy a chimney plug to keep cold air from entering and warm air from escaping your home.



High efficiency wood stoves can lower your heating costs and are eligible for federal tax credits.

Woodstoves and pellet stoves are additional options that provide more heat than wood or gas fireplaces. Federal tax credits are available for high-efficiency biomass stoves. A credit of 30% of the project cost — including the cost of installation up to a maximum of \$2,000 — is available for products purchased and installed between Jan. 1, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2032. The unit must have a thermal efficiency rating of 75% or more.

If you have a woodstove, fireplace, or any fuel-burning appliance in your home, be sure to install and maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that can be harmful or even deadly if not detected.

Use my dad’s sage advice and these tips to keep your home warm while gathering your loved ones around a glowing fire during the winter season.

Miranda Boutelle is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company.

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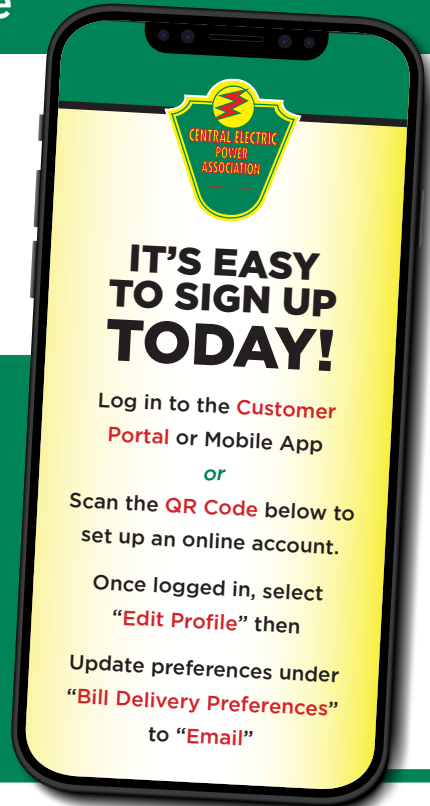
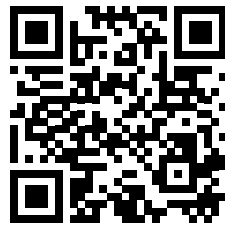
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