



# HOT LINES

Member Driven • Service Focused • It's What We Do Everyday

March // April 2020 CECC Newsletter

## Beware of Phone Scams

Scams are an irritation in every sector of our lives, but utility bill phone scams are an exceptional nuisance. The nature of the utility industry makes it especially vulnerable. If a bad actor can get their hands on your phone number and home address, then it is a simple matter to figure out what utility company you likely receive service from and therefore who to call you posing as.

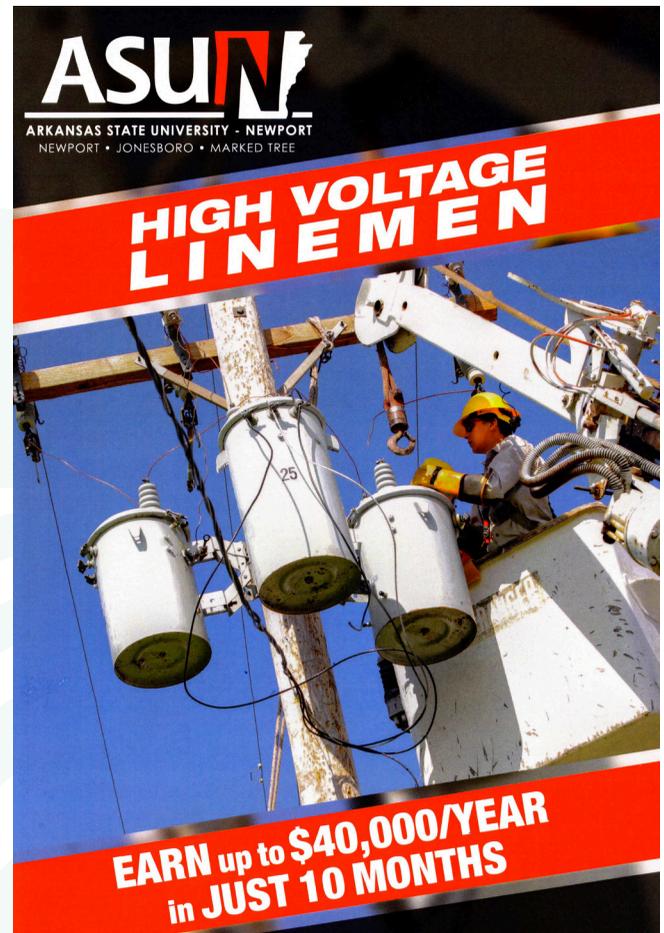
Craighead Electric Cooperative members have recently been targeted in a string of phone scams. Usually, the scammer poses as a utility employee and threatens to disconnect service if payment is not made immediately. Diligent members can avoid falling into their trap if they know what signs to look for. Red flags include:

- Callers demanding immediate payment by credit or pre-paid card. Pre-paid cards are hard to trace, and the numbers on them can be read over the phone making them the preferred currency for scammers. CECC will only ask for you to pay via one of our official payment channels.

- Specific callback numbers that are not the utilities' regular number. They want you to call them back directly and not your utility company. CECC's official 1-800 number is 1-800-794-5012.

- The inability to provide specific account information. Often these scammers come armed with information about the person that they are calling in an attempt to sound authentic but will only know publicly available information like name and address. If they cannot provide specific account information an authentic utility representative should already know, (like past-due amount and account number) it is likely a scammer.

If you suspect the person on the line is not from Craighead Electric, hang up and dial the member service number at 1-800-794-5012 and report scam calls to your local authorities. Remember these tips to protect yourself from scammers:



## Lineman Scholarship

Attention prospective lineman! Each Spring, Craighead Electric awards one full academic scholarship to attend Arkansas State University Newport's High Voltage Lineman Program. The scholarship covers full tuition and books for all 42 credit hours of the course, valued at over \$8000.

Download an application from [craigheadelectric.coop/lineman-scholarship](http://craigheadelectric.coop/lineman-scholarship) and return it along with a copy of your transcript and two (2) letters of recommendation to any of Craighead Electric's offices. Deadline for applications is April 20th, 2020. Before applying for scholarship, you must contact Clay Fulton (870-512-7857) at ASU Newport for pre-entrance pole climbing exercise. For further questions about the scholarship, please call Craighead Electric at 870-932-8301 or ASU-Newport at 1-800-976-1676 or visit their website at [asun.edu](http://asun.edu).

UTILITIES UNITED AGAINST SCAMS



Phone scammers are **targeting** utility customers.



Utilities will **never** ask you to buy a prepaid debit card.



Utilities will **never** demand payment with a credit card by phone.



Utility employees will **never** ask you to pay **immediately**.



Don't fall for scammers **pretending** to be utilities.



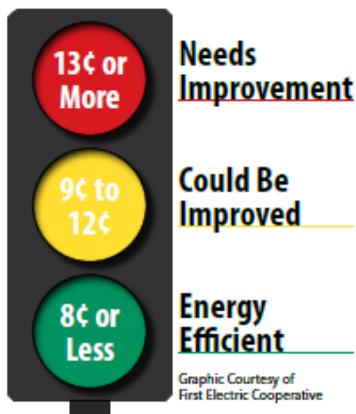
**Urgent call** from a utility? It could be a scam.



## Estimate Your Home's Energy Efficiency

To estimate your home's energy efficiency, take your average electric bill and divide it by the square feet of your home. For example, a 1,800-square-foot home with a \$260 average electric bill would cost \$0.14 per square foot. This home would benefit from energy efficiency improvements. Calculate your home's cost and see how it ranks on the scale. *Please note: This calculation is based on an all-electric home without a pool or hot tub.*

$$\frac{\$260}{1,800 \text{ sq. ft.}} = \$0.14/\text{sq. ft.}$$



Schedule an energy audit by calling 1-800-794-5012 or emailing [memberservice@craigheadelectric.coop](mailto:memberservice@craigheadelectric.coop)



## 10 Tips for Spring Energy Savings

- 1. CLEAR THE AIR:** Open windows to allow fresh (free!) air to circulate.
- 2. COOK OUTSIDE:** Enjoy a few hours of sunshine by using your grill or smoker to add festive flavors to meals.
- 3. SEARCH AND SEAL:** Cracks and spaces let conditioned air outside. Caulk and weather strip to seal leaks.
- 4. NATURAL LIGHT:** Open blinds and curtains, and turn off the lights to save energy.
- 5. BE FAN FRIENDLY:** Use ceiling fans to circulate airflow.
- 6. ATMOSPHERIC ADJUSTMENT:** Remember to adjust your thermostat settings for the milder months ahead.
- 7. TUNE UP:** Schedule an appointment with your HVAC technician to identify any potential problems with your system.
- 8. PEAK SAVINGS:** Think about supply and demand. Plan household chores that require electricity during off-peak hours (when energy demand is low).
- 9. TAKE CHARGE:** Consider disconnecting electrical devices you don't use regularly until you need them. Plugged-in devices use energy even when not in use.
- 10. MOVE OUTDOORS:** Time spent outdoors offers opportunities to turn off lights, televisions, computers and home appliances. You'll be more active, have more fun and save more money.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

# I pledge — TO COMPLETE — the census to shape the future of my community

Responses to the 2020 Census will shape how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding are distributed to local communities annually.

## #shapeyourfuture

### 2020 Census

In mid-March, electric cooperative members across our service territory will begin receiving invitations from the Census Bureau to complete the 2020 Census. The US Census counts every person living in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories every ten years. While getting a complete and accurate census count is critically important to all communities, it is especially important to the rural areas served by electric cooperatives.

The results are used to determine how much funding local communities receive for key public services and how many seats each state gets in Congress. State and local officials also use census counts to draw boundaries for congressional, state legislative, and school districts. And while you are required by law to participate, the Census Bureau is also required by law to protect your answers. Your responses are used only to produce statistics. The Census Bureau does not disclose any personal information.

Join Craighead Electric Cooperative in encouraging your friends and neighbors to complete their Census so that all cooperative members are counted.

### Good Friday Closure

Craighead Electric offices will be closed Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> in observance of Good Friday. If you need



to make a payment during that time, please use our online payment option or drop your payment off at any of our three offices in the night drop box. If you need to report an Outage, you will still be able to call our outage number at 1-888-771-7772.