

August 2017

# Hot Watts

Published monthly by Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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### Save the Date

The 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will be held on October 7th. More information will be available in the September newsletter.



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Setting your thermostat to a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

### Congratulations!

**Randy L. Smith** is our online survey winner.

## District Meetings in August

CHEC will hold district meetings in August for the members who live in Districts 5 and 7. Kenneth Kelly, Secretary-Treasurer of the Board, serves as the trustee representing District 5, and Ronnie Pevehouse serves as the trustee representing District 7.

CHEC holds district meetings in order for you to elect your representatives to the CHEC Board of Trustees. The seven-member Board governs CHEC, which divides its service area into seven districts. One trustee represents each district for a three-year term. The Board establishes policies and monitors cooperative finances and procedures.

The Board has set the following dates and times for the 2017 district meetings: District 5 will be held at 5:00 p.m. on August 15, 2017, at CHEC's headquarters in Stigler in Haskell County, and District 7 will be held at 4:00 p.m. on August 15, 2017, at Webbers Falls School Cafeteria in Muskogee County.



Kenneth Kelly  
Sec.-Treas. - District 5



Ronnie Pevehouse  
Trustee - District 7

CHEC will send notices to cooperative members in each of these districts. *Please read your district meeting notification carefully.* If you have questions about the district meetings, please feel free to call 800-328-2368.

### District Meeting Dates:

District 5.....August 15, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. at CHEC'S headquarters in Stigler in Haskell County.

District 7.....August 15, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. at Webbers Falls School Cafeteria in Muskogee County.

## Attention members on Maple and Central Fire Department billing:

The Maple Fire Department has voted to increase their monthly dues from \$3.00 to \$5.00. This increase went into effect with July's billing.

The Central Fire Department has voted to increase their monthly dues from \$3.00 to \$4.00 effective with September's billing.



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### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

William T. Mills, <i>President</i>	District 4
Joe Falleur, <i>Vice President</i>	District 3
Kenneth Kelley, <i>Sec.-Treas.</i>	District 5
Rocky Woods, Sr., <i>Trustee</i>	District 1
Joe Ogle, <i>Trustee</i>	District 6
Ronnie Pevehouse, <i>Trustee</i>	District 7
Theron Croisant, <i>Trustee</i>	District 2

### STAFF

Kendall Beck, *General Manager*  
Eric Johnson, *Assistant General Manager*  
Mark Blaylock, *Director of Operations*  
Juli Orme, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Amy Smith, *Manager of Accounting Services*  
Kristie Cash, *Manager of Office Services*

Russell V. Barber, *General Counsel*

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. welcomes members to submit photos, and articles which will be subject to editing. Cookson Hills reserves the right to publish or modify any article. Companies and individuals featured in the Hot Watts newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policy, position, or view of Cookson Hills.

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Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



If You Find Your Account Number  
Hidden in This Issue of the *Hot Watts*,  
You'll Receive a \$25 Credit on  
Your Electric Bill

## Has Your Phone Number Changed?

Keeping your account information up-to-date is important to you as well as to CHEC. The most common inaccurate account information is your phone number. CHEC periodically calls members to notify you of a controlled outage, billing information, and other important information. If your phone number has changed, if you have disconnected your home phone, or if you have a new cell phone number, please contact us.



**UPDATE YOUR  
CONTACT INFO**

Please take time to update your account information by visiting our website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) and logging onto SmartHub, or call your local office at 800-328-2368 (Stigler) or at 918-775-2211 (Sallisaw).



Never leave a fire unattended, and make sure you completely extinguish the fire when you're done. Drench the fire with water and stir the ashes until cold.



When burning yard waste, follow local ordinances. Avoid burning in windy conditions, and keep a shovel, water and fire retardant nearby to keep fires in check.



## Tips to Prevent Wildfires



Play it safe when using fueled lanterns, heaters and stoves. Lighting and heating devices should be cool before refueling. Keep flammable liquids and fuel away from appliances.



Never discard cigarettes, matches and smoking materials from moving vehicles, or anywhere on park grounds. Completely extinguish cigarettes before disposing of them.

## Watt's Cooking?



4 large russet potatoes, washed  
3 tablespoons butter, melted  
1 to 2 teaspoons of kosher salt  
1-2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese  
4 to 7 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled  
Sour cream, optional  
Sliced green onions, optional

## Easy Potato Skins



- Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees. Cover a baking sheet with foil and spray with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.
- Wash potatoes and cut the ends of the potatoes off and discard. Cut the rest of the potatoes into approximately ½ inch slices.
- Brush both sides and edges of the potatoes with butter and sprinkle with salt. Place on the foil covered pan and bake for 30 minutes, or until fork tender. Turn potatoes onto the opposite side about half way to brown the other side.
- When potatoes are done, top with cheese, bacon, and green onions. Continue baking for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the cheese is nice and bubbly.
- Top with a little sour cream and green onions if desired. Enjoy!

# Tomorrow's Leaders Tour Washington, D.C.

Four area students just returned from an unforgettable chance-of-a-lifetime trip that has forever changed their lives.

The Oklahoma Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. was June 9 – 15. Representing CHEC this year were: Abigail Deardorff of Webbers Falls High School, daughter of Clayton and Shelly Patterson; Bethany Bryce of Stigler High School, daughter of Amanda Altstatt and Tommy Joe Bryce; Harleigh Sharp of Muldrow High School, daughter of Garry and Misty Sharp; and Matthew Blaylock of McCurtain High School, son of Mark and Janna Blaylock.

The Rural Electric Youth Tour is an annual week-long event in June during which almost 1,700 high school juniors from across the United States convene in Washington, D.C. The Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives (OAEC) and 25 rural electric cooperatives across the state sponsor students from Oklahoma to this event each year.



Left to right: Abigail Deardorff, Bethany Bryce, Harleigh Sharp, and Matthew Blaylock.

The purpose of 186003 the tour is to provide a multitude of opportunities to outstanding young people, allowing them to:

- Better understand the values of rural electrification.
- Become more familiar with the historical and political environment of the nation's capital through visits to monuments, government offices, and cooperative organizations.
- Visit elected officials to better understand how the federal government operates.
- Learn leadership and cooperation skills while gaining new friends and acquaintances.

Points of interest this year included: the Lincoln, Vietnam, Korean, and World War II Memorials, Arlington Cemetery, Ford's Theatre, Library of Congress, U.S. Marine Sunset Parade, Mount Vernon, Congressional Summit, Holocaust Museum, the Washington Monument, a tour of the Capitol with Congressman Mullin, and numerous other sites as well.

Each of the students came back with a newfound respect and understanding of our great nation and with a realization of how privileged we are to live in the United States of America.

For more information about this special trip, you may visit our website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) or call Donna Rhodes, Youth Tour Coordinator, at 918-775-2211.



Pictures courtesy of OAEC.



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# Operation Round-Up Update

Each month, members of CHEC join together to help meet the charitable needs of their neighbors by participating in the Operation Round-Up program. Operation Round-Up is a community outreach program that is funded by CHEC members who “round up” their electric bills each month. The small change that results from “rounding up” monthly electric bills has made a big impact in the cooperative’s seven county service area.

The CHEC Foundation Board recently met on June 6, 2017. At the meeting, the board awarded grants to assist Southside Volunteer Fire Department for fire fighting equipment and Keota ESA for the Keota city park. The Foundation also approved grants for Warner Public Schools for food and supplies for their backpack program, KiBois Community Action Haskell County for their back to school roundup, and KiBois Community Action Sequoyah County for their back to school giveaway.

The CHEC Foundation Board meets every quarter to review applications. Individuals and community organizations throughout CHEC’s service area are eligible to apply for an Operation Round-Up grant. The next meeting will be held on September 5, 2017, with applications due by August 11, 2017. For more information about Operation Round-Up or to obtain an application, visit CHEC’s website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) or contact Donna Rhodes at 918-775-2211.



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## *With Tall Equipment, There is a Tall Order for Safety*

Maintaining safe distances from electrical equipment is important—whether you are a homeowner working with hand tools in the yard or a worker operating large equipment on a construction site—because accidents with electrical equipment are both dangerous and costly. However, additional precautions need to be taken when using large equipment in the vicinity of electrical lines and equipment.

“Having electrical service is a commonplace part of today’s world, and electrical equipment, from padmount transformers to power poles and overhead lines, can all too easily fade into the landscape and be overlooked,” says Amber Sabin, Safe Electricity Advisory Board member. “It is vitally important to respect electrical equipment and maintain proper clearances. Not doing so puts the operator at risk as well as the safety of those nearby.”

Before beginning work, conduct a site survey and note the locations of overhead power lines, and take measures to prevent electrical accidents. Never attempt to move or raise a power line yourself. If any potential clearance issues are identified, contact the utility.

When operating equipment, maintain situational awareness, and keep yourself and the equipment safely away from overhead lines. Know the clearance rules for the machinery you are operating. Equipment like dump trucks, backhoes, and loaders require a minimum 10-foot clearance from overhead lines. However, cranes and derricks need to maintain an even greater distance for safe operation.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration requires the clearance for cranes and derricks be a minimum of 20 feet from overhead power lines. The equipment’s maximum working radius, 360 degrees around the equipment, must also be taken into account. A dedicated spotter is very helpful when working in close

proximity to overhead lines to help the operator keep the required minimum clearance.

Even if contact is not made with electrical lines, but a collision occurs with other related equipment such as electrical poles or guy wires, it should still be reported to the utility. Though the equipment may appear to have survived the collision, unexpected degradation of electrical equipment can lead to public safety hazards such as fallen power lines. Just because a power line has fallen does not mean that it is not carrying electricity. There is still the potential for the line and the nearby area to be energized.

If the equipment you are operating does make contact with any overhead lines, it is best to stay in the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power before exiting the machinery.

The only time to exit the equipment is if it is on fire. In such a case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Never allow any part of your body to touch both the equipment and the ground at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

If you see an operator’s equipment make contact with a power line, resist the instinct to rush to that person to provide help. It is best to stay back and warn others to stay away. Make sure the equipment operator stays inside the cab until the utility has arrived to de-energize the lines.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

