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January 2012

Hot Watts

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Start the New Year with more energy efficient light bulbs! Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and light-emitting diodes (LEDs) cut lighting energy use by at least 75 percent.

Learn more at energysavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Congratulations

Alissa Philpot is our online survey winner!

Offices Closed

CHEC will be closed January 2nd in observance of the New Year.



Manager's Update

Stigler Office to Start Construction of New Facility

As the members are aware, the Board of Trustees has approved the construction of a new headquarters facility in Stigler. Through a thorough process, the Board has evaluated several options and has approved to tear down the existing headquarters facility and build a new one back on the existing property.

The Board has contracted with Newcomb Associates Architect and Engineering, Inc. to design and construct the new facility. The architect firm has constructed several projects in the area.

In the next couple of months, construction will begin on the south side of the existing warehouse for a garage area. We will utilize this area with temporary offices as the new building is being constructed. Included with the temporary office will be a lobby and drive through for the members to utilize for payments. After the new building is constructed, we will tear out the temporary offices and this area will be the garage area for the cooperative's equipment.

The plans are to keep the offices open as normal, but there may be a few times that a temporary closure may occur. If this happens, it will be kept as minimal as possible.

The total construction may take up to 24 months but this should have no impact on the electric service that Cookson Hills provides to its members.

As always if you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Kendall Beck

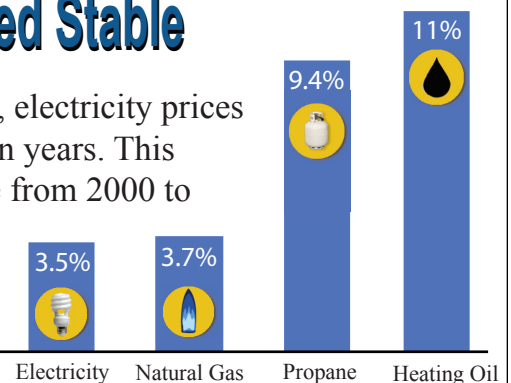
General Manager, Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative



Electricity Prices Have Remained Stable

Compared to other types of home heating fuel, electricity prices have remained the most stable over the past ten years. This graph shows the average annual price increase from 2000 to 2010 for each fuel type.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) September 2011 data.



Hot Watts

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Cookson Hills welcomes members to submit photos, and articles which will be subject to Cookson Hills editing.

Any submissions must be received before the 12th of the month prior to the publication date.

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

Cookson in the Community

Annual Youth Tour Essay Contest

History of Electric Cooperatives taught to local high schools students



Ms. Leah Spradlin's Porum High School Junior class. Photo by: Kristie Cash

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative (CHEC) participates in the national program that allows rural electric cooperative students an opportunity to earn a trip to Washington, D.C. by writing an essay on a topic determined by the co-op. This year's topic is: *What Washington D.C. Means to Me*.

Throughout the recent months of November and December, Kristie Cash, Youth Tour Coordinator, has visited area schools to share a presentation on the history of electric cooperatives and the annual Cookson Hills Youth Tour Essay contest. Youth Tour presentations are done by appointment only. The high school teachers administer the annual contest. Once the essays are completed

and turned in by the due date, they are reviewed by a judge that is not employed by CHEC. Top-ranked entrants are then notified if they are among the finalists.

The four finalists present their essays to the CHEC Board of Trustees and other special guests at the local Youth Tour Banquet held in Stigler, Oklahoma. The winners are presented with a plaque and the Youth Tour trip details.

During the Youth Tour trip on June 15-21, 2012, students will join 1,500 youth from across the nation in Washington, D.C. Participants will visit the monuments and other attractions, as well as visit Capitol Hill to learn more about how our government works.

Power Outage? What to do first.

- 1 Check your breakers.
- 2 If possible, check with your nearest neighbor to determine if they are also without power.
- 3 Call Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative at, **918-967-4614 (Stigler)**, **918-775-2211 (Sallisaw)**, or toll-free at **800-328-2368** and report the outage. If you have your account number available this would be helpful, but it is not necessary.
- 4 Please be patient if the lines are busy. During major outages our telephone lines are overloaded with members calling to report their situation. Calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All calls are answered in the order they are received.

Cooperative Membership Matters

By and large, we do not get to choose who provides our electric service. Folks on opposite sides of the road may be served by different electric providers, some by investor-owned utilities and others by a city-owned municipal electric system. You are a member of Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative (CHEC), a not-for-profit electric cooperative. As a result, anyone who receives cooperative electric service becomes a member, not a customer.

Being a member matters. CHEC does not exist to make profits for distant investors. We exist to provide you with safe, reliable, and affordable electric service and do so in a way that raises the quality of life in our communities. Because electric cooperatives operate on a not-for-profit basis, they have no need to increase revenues above what it takes to run the business in a financially sound manner. This structure helps keep your electric bill affordable.

Membership also matters because

electric cooperatives care about improving the quality of life in the areas they serve, by sponsoring local school organizations and community groups.

Membership matters because it entitles you to certain benefits. CHEC offers Energy Star rebates that can help you lower your electricity usage. Your children also have an opportunity to apply for college scholarships. Furthermore you receive this newsletter because you are a member of an electric cooperative that wants you to stay informed about important news and events.

Membership matters because you have a voice and a vote in how your cooperative is governed. Through democratic control, members like you elected others from our cooperative to serve on the Board of Trustees. Your Board of



Touchstone Energy Photo

Trustees, along with those who work for your cooperative, are your friends and neighbors.

If CHEC makes a profit, you as a member share in the profits in the form of capital credits. CHEC allocates and periodically retires capital credits based on how much electricity you purchased during the year.

Thank you for being a cooperative member.

Keep Your Account Up-To-Date

Please help us keep your account information up-to-date.

Our goal is to minimize outages, but when events beyond our control such as automobile accidents, lightning storms, freezing rain, or other occurrences of nature take place, it is impossible to guarantee uninterrupted service. We are able to get power restored more quickly when we have up-to-date account information.

Please help us by providing your home and/or cell phone number when you call.



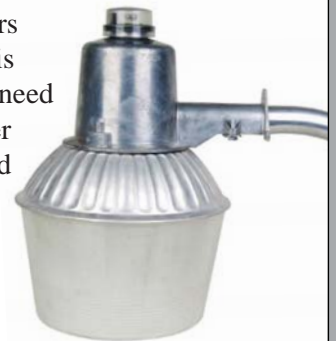
Security Lights offer Safety

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative (CHEC) offers dusk 'til dawn security lights. This outdoor lighting is the most convenient way to have the extra light you need around the house, especially during those long winter nights. Outdoor security lights provide peace of mind and it can help to lengthen your evening outdoors. The idea is that a lit home or business will discourage a burglar because they can no longer operate under the cover of the darkness.

CHEC offers outdoor security lighting for homes and businesses. We install the security lights and make any repairs that may be needed in the future.

Photoelectric controls on top of these lights help save energy by automatically turning on your lights at dusk and off at dawn.

All new installations and replacements will be high-pressure sodium (HPS) lights. For more information about outdoor security lighting and associated costs, please call 918-967-4614 or 800-328-2368.



Be Prepared for Ice Storms and Winter Power Outages

A little rain and temperatures hovering around 32 degrees are the right blend for an ice storm that can bring down trees and power lines. While ice-covered branches may be beautiful, heavy ice accumulation will pull down utility wires, disrupting electric and communication services.

A power line does not need to be sparking or arcing to be energized, even if it is sagging close to or on the ground, and other utility lines can also become energized by being in contact with an electrical line. Lines that appear to be “dead” can become energized as crews work to restore power, or sometimes from improper use of emergency generators. It is best to assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous.

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative stresses the importance of being prepared for these potentially dangerous storms and the potential power outages that they may cause. Having the right supplies and knowing how to safely stay warm are keys to weathering a winter storm emergency.

Make sure you are ready for the next winter emergency.

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights, and a supply of fresh batteries on hand.
- Make sure you have extra blankets.
- Fill containers with water for washing, and keep a supply of bottled drinking water on hand.
- Keep a supply of non-perishable food items, along with a hand opener for canned food.



- Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas.
- Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternate heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.

To Report an Outage call:

Stigler Office: 918-967-4614

Sallisaw Office: 918-775-2211

Toll-free at: 800-328-2368

Heat rises and when it slips past your ceiling, it melts snow on the rooftop. It is an easy way to tell if you need more insulation. Find out what you can do at TogetherWeSave.com.

GUESS WHICH HOUSE HAS BETTER INSULATION IN THE ATTIC.

