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October 2012

# Hot Watts

PUBLISHED BY COOKSON HILLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

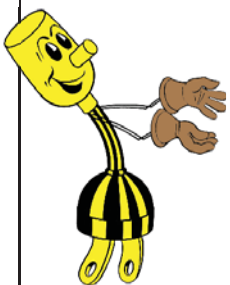


### Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Two degrees can make a big difference on your electric bill. Setting your thermostat 2 degrees Fahrenheit higher in summer and lower in the winter results in major energy savings. Investing in a programmable thermostat can save even more. These devices automatically lower and raise your home's temperature. Set it and forget it!

Source: Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

**Congratulations**  
Latisha Hines is our online survey winner!



## Celebrate National Cooperative Month with CHEC

Join Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative (CHEC) in celebrating cooperatives in Oklahoma and across America during National Cooperative Month.

Every October, cooperatives are recognized for the qualities that make the business model unique: local democratic control, commitment to supporting the communities they serve and improving quality of life, special benefits and services, and the return of margins (the co-op term for profits) back to members in the form of capital credits.

"Cooperatives are special," says Kendall Beck, CHEC

General Manager. "We have an obligation to provide reliable, affordable, and safe electricity, but we take that a step further. We also have a responsibility to support our members, enrich schools, and enhance our communities."

CHEC is proud to be part of America's cooperative network, which employs more than 850,000 people. Across the nation, 29,000 co-ops and credit unions generate \$74 billion in annual wages and nearly \$500 billion in revenue.

CHEC is one of more than 900 electric cooperatives, public utility districts, and public power districts serving 42 million people in 47 states.

"Electric cooperatives were formed because rural communities were struggling for lack

of investment," Beck explains. "Neighbors banded together and lit up the countryside when no one else would. That's what we celebrate each October."

In addition to cooperative utilities, Oklahoma residents are served cooperatively by credit unions, food co-ops, agricultural co-ops, and more! To learn more about co-ops and find one near you, visit [www.go.coop](http://www.go.coop).

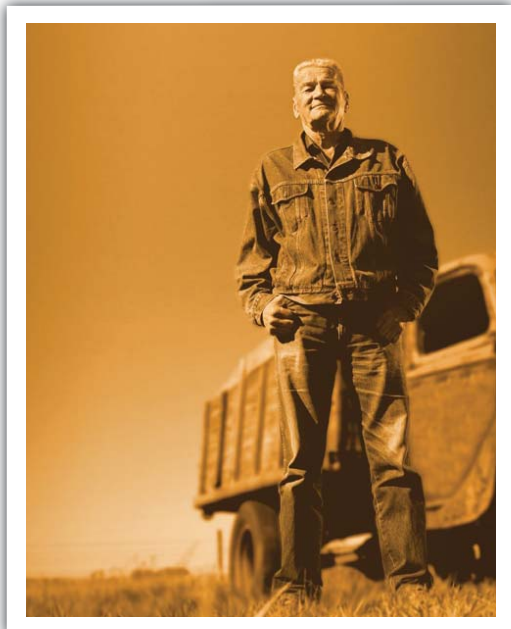


Photo by: Touchstone Energy

**1 billion+**  
people own co-ops in

**90+**  
countries, generating  
100 million jobs.

**Did You Know...**

Co-ops provide electricity, financial services, insurance, marketing, food, and more!

Celebrate the business model that puts people **FIRST.**

**Celebrate Cooperatives!**

**2012 International Year of Cooperatives**

Learn more at [www.usa2012.coop](http://www.usa2012.coop)

Source: NRECA

### Hot Watts

is published monthly by Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. *Hot Watts* informs members in parts of seven Eastern Oklahoma counties about Cookson Hills' programs and issues. Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative continually strives to provide quality electrical service at a reasonable cost for its members.

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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 will receive a \$25 credit on your next electric bill.**

# Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative Relocates Electric Lines in Gore, Requested by ODOT

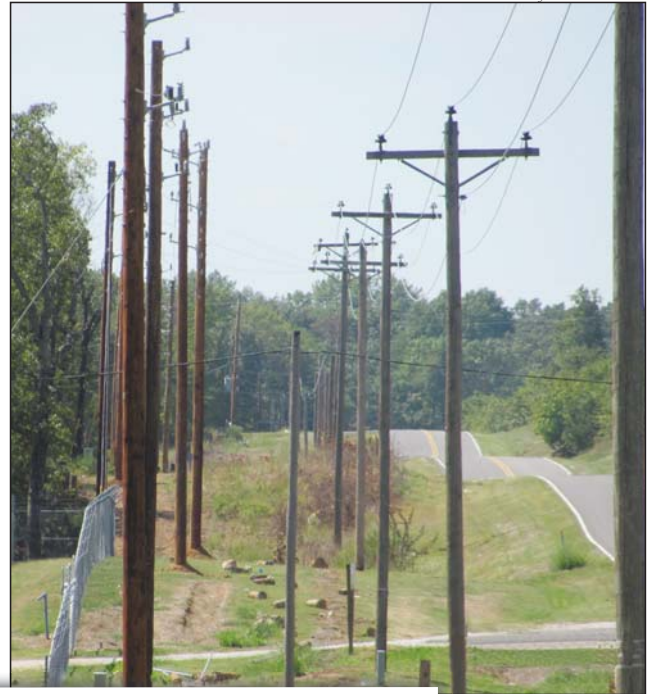
Photos by: Brett Orme

Gordon Construction, a contractor hired by Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative (CHEC), has reconstructed approximately six miles of power lines during August and September 2012. The Highway 100 widening project meant that crews set new poles and hung new overhead lines a greater distance away from Highway 100.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) had this project in the planning stages for several years. The completed project will widen the highway by putting a shoulder on highway 100 from Gore north to the Tenkiller Dam turn-off. Highway widening projects are very detailed. CHEC has been working with ODOT, construction contractors, right-of-way contractors, and local landowners in this area.

Extensive tree clearing was required for this 588800 project. The cutting of trees was not something CHEC wanted to do, but had to do to be in compliance with the requirements from ODOT on the highway widening project. Wolf Tree Services was contracted to do the tree clearing for CHEC.

Approximately 180 new poles have been set with all the old poles removed.



These new poles are a larger class pole, which makes them stronger than the old poles, so they will hold up better. This will

make the service more safe and reliable.

"I know this may have been a major inconvenience for many of our members. Cookson Hills appreciates the cooperation and patience we received from our members while we relocated our facilities to accommodate ODOT's requests," said Brett Orme P.E., Cookson Hills Director of Engineering.

If you have any questions, contact us at (918) 967-4614 or toll-free at 800-328-2368.

**Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative 24-Hour Outage Ho**



# Scam Alert!

Recently we were informed by some Cookson Hills Electric members that they have received phone calls involved with a scam. The person calling stated that

they were with the electric company and they were asking the member to sign up for auto pay. They then requested bank or credit card information from the member.

Please be aware that Cookson Hills Electric employees never solicit members to sign up for any programs over the phone. To protect your identity, if you are contacted by anyone stating they are with the “electric company” do not provide any banking or credit card information to them and contact your local CHEC office to report the call. If possible, please provide the phone number that the call originated from so we can investigate further.

## Look <sup>↑</sup>Up, Protect Your Power Distribution System

Step outside and look up. You will see a valuable system of poles and wires, a system that delivers electricity to the homes and businesses of members of Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative.

Damage to this system can interrupt service to dozens or even hundreds of Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative members and repairing that damage can be expensive. You are a member of Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative. This is your system. Help us protect it.

We are asking for your help in protecting this valuable investment. Please “Look Up!” before doing any of the following:



Do not plant trees in a distance of 15 feet in any direction of utility wires, only plant shrubs with a mature height of less than 20 feet. Taller trees can grow into lines, which can create service problems, or their limbs can fall across lines during storms.



When burning brush, be sure to pile it far away from utility lines. The temperatures of burning wood can easily reach over 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and that is hot enough to melt lines and equipment.



When you lift that gun, make sure utility lines are not in your line of sight. With the pull of a trigger, you could take out service for several homes, and cost CHEC hours of repair time and money for materials.

Hotline (800) 328-2368 • Stigler office (918) 967-4614 • Sallisaw office (918) 775-2211



# Have a CREEPY - but safe - Halloween



Halloween lights and decorations in October are almost as common as Christmas displays in December. The same safety rules—plus a few special cautions for costumes—apply on Fright Night:

▶ Wear costumes and accessories that are flame resistant, flame retardant, and non-combustible. Choose decorations with those qualities, too.

- ▶ If you are using last year's lights and lighted displays, inspect them for cracked, frayed, or bare wires. Worn wiring can shock you or even start a fire.
- ▶ Use flashlights or battery-operated candles instead of candles with flames inside your carved pumpkins and pathway lanterns.
- ▶ Use electrical products outside only if they are designed and marked "for outdoor use."
- ▶ Plug outdoor decorations into outlets protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If your older home does not have them, call an electrician to upgrade your circuits before using any electrical devices outside.
- ▶ Avoid laying extension cords on the ground. Trick-or-treaters can trip on them.
- ▶ Skip the staple gun when hanging light strands or extension cords. Staples can damage cords and their insulation, which can create a fire hazard.
- ▶ Every light and lighted decoration should be approved by a testing laboratory like (UL). If you don't see the label on the product, don't buy it.
- ▶ Turn off your decorations before turning in for the night or leaving your house.

## Questions From Members on the Pay•As•You•Go Billing Program:

### Hot Watts Q&A

**1. Question:** Why do I not get a paper bill?

**Answer:** Our system calculates your usage each morning and updates your account on a daily basis, which prevents us from producing a paper bill.

**2. Question:** How soon after I apply for Pay•As•You•Go service will I be able to track my daily usage?

**Answer:** The process can take several days. Depending upon the day of connect, equipment in place, and/or our calculation schedule, it can take up to a week before you will be able to track your usage.

**3. Question:** How do I find out what my balance is?

**Answer:** You may call the office, come into one of our offices, or go online to view your account information at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com).

**4. Question:** Is my daily charge just for electric usage?

**Answer:** No, there is a daily service fee of 67 cents. If you have any additional fees such as fire department or a security light, they will calculate into your daily amount as well.

**5. Question:** What if I am automatically disconnected?

**Answer:** When payments are posted between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. your service will automatically be restored.

Payments made after 6:30 p.m. will not be applied to your account until the next business day. Your service will be restored once the payment is posted at 6:00 a.m. the following business day.

**6. Question:** If my balance runs out and service is disconnected, how long do I have to pay before my account is permanently disconnected?

**Answer:** If you pay on the account within ten days you will automatically reconnect. If you pay after ten days, you must contact your local CHEC office to restore your service.