

December 2017

Hot Watts

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time in the kitchen during the holiday season? Here's one way to be more energy efficient: Unplug small kitchen appliances, like toaster ovens and microwaves, when not in use. You could save \$10 to \$20 per year.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Congratulations!

Heather Poor is our online survey winner.



Offices Closed

CHEC will be closed on December 25 & 26 in observance of Christmas.

Manager's Report: Service Charge Increase in 2018

At this year's annual meeting of the membership the members that were in attendance were informed to expect an increase in electric bills for 2018. The increases in the cost of serving the members with electricity comes from the ever increasing fixed costs of the cooperative and the increase in wholesale power cost.

The cooperative's fixed costs are increasing annually. The right-of-way vegetation that we maintain to provide you reliable electric service costs \$1.25 million annually and continues to increase. Labor and overhead costs along with increases in the cost of transformers, poles, wires, etc., also continues to increase. All of these place pressure on the rates of the cooperative.

Effective with bills due in February (January usage), CHEC will implement an increase in the monthly customer service charge. As a not-for-profit utility, our goal is to set the rates as close to our actual costs as possible, while maintaining the financial requirements set forth by our lending agencies and to provide you safe reliable electric service.

The Board and management of your cooperative takes any increase in your utility costs very seriously, and we are constantly

looking for ways to be more efficient and keep expenses down. However, when our power costs increase beyond our operational ability to absorb and our fixed costs increase, adjustments must be made in order to cover these costs. The Board has approved the increase in the customer service charge, but the rates will not change with the exception of the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA). Below is the table showing the monthly customer service charges for 2018.



Kendall Beck
General Manager

MONTHLY CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARGE			
	2017	2018	Monthly Increase
Residential	\$ 25.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 10.00
Small Commercial 1 Phase	\$ 25.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 10.00
Small Commercial 3 Phase	\$ 37.00	\$ 51.80	\$ 14.80
Irrigation 1 Phase	\$ 22.50	\$ 31.50	\$ 9.00
Irrigation 3 Phase	\$ 40.00	\$ 56.00	\$ 16.00
Agriculture	\$ 37.00	\$ 51.80	\$ 14.80
Large Power	\$ 90.00	\$126.00	\$ 36.00
Large Power 2	\$175.00	\$245.00	\$ 70.00
Large Power Optional	\$ 80.00	\$112.00	\$ 32.00

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Capital Credit Checks in the Mail

Each December, CHEC members anticipate the arrival of their capital credit check. The CHEC Board of Trustees have authorized the retirement and distribution of \$803,218.04 in capital credits for the year 1998 and for a portion of 1999. Current and former members of CHEC, who received electric service in 1998 and 1999, will receive a capital credit check in the mail.

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918-775-2211

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918-552-0016



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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**



Each month CHEC randomly draws an Online Survey winner to receive a \$20 electric credit. The Online Survey winner is announced in the Hot Watts each month. To be entered into the drawing, CHEC members must fill out the Member Survey at the CHEC website. Go to www.cooksonhills.com > About Us > Member Survey. CHEC will use this information to help improve our services to you. The information will be used only by CHEC, and will not be sold or distributed to other firms.

Use Extension Cords Safely

The holiday season ushers in a time of decorating, spending time with family, and gift giving. If you have a new electronic or appliance on your list or you are making room in your home for holiday decorations or visiting family members, it is time to take note of where your electrical outlets are located. The placement of new, or rearrangement of current, appliances and electronics in your home can be problematic. Extension cords seem like the practical, cost-effective solution. However, Safe Electricity urges you to keep in mind that extension cords are not designed for permanent use and that it is important to choose a cord that meets your needs.

“Extension cords are designed for temporary use,” explains Molly Hall, Executive Director of the Energy Education Council’s Safe Electricity program. “They should never be put in place as a long-term solution. A qualified electrician can help you install the necessary wiring and receptacle outlets for a permanent solution.”

If you go shopping 2019202 for extension cords, you will find there are a variety of options available. It is important to choose an extension cord that is properly rated for the device(s) you will have plugged into it. According to Underwriters Laboratory (UL), if an appliance or power tool is drawing more current than an extension cord can carry, it may cause the cord and tool to overheat and create a fire. Check the packaging or the tag on the cord for its rating, and check the appliance or its use and care booklet for its power usage.

The Safe Electricity program offers the additional tips for the safe use of extension cords in your home:

- Check the condition of extension cords. Look for fraying or cracking along the entire length of the cord and for damage to the plug or sockets. Replace any damaged extension cords.
- Make sure the extension cord that you are using has been certified by a recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratory, ETL, or CSA.
- Do not overload extension cords with too many electronics or appliances.
- If any part of the extension cord becomes hot while in use, unplug it immediately and discard it.
- Keep extension cords away from children, pets, and high-traffic areas.
- Do not place extension cords under carpets, rugs, furniture, or other objects.
- Unplug extension cords when they are not in use.
- When using extension cords outside, use only extension cords rated for outdoor use.

Help keep your home safe from electrical hazards. Safe Electricity encourages everyone to take the necessary safety steps and precautions when using extension cords both inside and outside your home. For more information on electrical safety at home, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Scholarships Available to Area Students



The employees and Board of Trustees of CHEC offer four \$500 scholarships each year in memory of Herman Driscoll, long-time employee and former General Manager of CHEC. Mr. Driscoll believed that education is of foremost importance to success.

The Herman Driscoll Memorial Scholarship is awarded to high school seniors whose parents or guardians are members of CHEC. To be eligible for consideration, students must have a GPA of 2.0 or better, good character, good citizenship, financial need, and a desire to further their education. Additionally, seniors must enroll as a full-time student at a college or technical school.

High school seniors may complete the application on page four of this Hot Watts issue or obtain an application from the CHEC website www.cooksonhills.com

Please return your application, along with two letters of recommendation by March 9, 2018, to the following address:

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Scholarship Committee
Attention: Brittani Coble
PO Box 539
Stigler, OK 74462

Service Charge Continued

Mentioned above is the PCA. So what is that? First, you should know that over 60% of the bill you pay goes to the cost of wholesale power. The PCA is a separate line item on each bill statement which reflects the increases/decreases in the cooperative's cost of power purchased wholesale from KAMO Power Electric Cooperative. The fluctuation in the PCA is largely caused by changes in the cost of fuel for generation. When the cooperative rebased the rates in 2014, 5.69 cents per kWh was included in the base rate for the cost of wholesale power. Today, the average wholesale power cost is near 7.0 cents per kWh. The difference will be the PCA. When the cost of power is greater than the amount included in the base rate, the PCA is a charge. When the cost is less, the PCA is a credit. The next time the cooperative does an independent rate study, the cost of purchased power will be included in the rates and the PCA will be reduced. Based on increased costs associated with environmental regulations, fuel, transportation, material and labor, we know that it is extremely likely that our wholesale

power costs will continue to rise in the future as well as the costs associated with operating your cooperative locally. Rate increases are not easy for anyone, but you can rest assured we are doing what we can to keep your rates as low as possible and still provide you with safe reliable electricity.

We are not in this alone, however. Electric utilities across the state and nation are facing these same challenges. Compared to the rest of the United States, Oklahoma's electric consumers on average pay some of the lowest costs per kilowatt-hour. Our electric power generator, Associated Electric Cooperative, is owned by the electric cooperatives it supplies electric to, and they are committed to maintaining their position as a low cost wholesale power provider.

At Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, we are committed to maintaining the success of your cooperative, which means we strive to provide you with excellent service in the most efficient manner possible. Safe, reliable and affordable electricity is our main goal.

Capital Credits Continued

Capital credits reflect each member's ownership in and contribution of capital to the cooperative. Member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives set rates to generate enough money to pay operating expenses. At the end of the year, the cooperative subtracts operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. Margins are allocated to each member as capital credits based on how much electricity you purchased during the year.

Capital credit checks will be mailed in early December. If you were a member of CHEC in 1998 or 1999 and you do not receive a capital credit check, please contact our office at 800-328-2368 or 918-775-2211.

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees and Employees wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!



Attention members on Muldrow Fire Department Billing:

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



Application for the Herman Driscoll Memorial Scholarship

Name _____

Social Security # _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Parents' (guardians') name(s) _____

Cookson Hills Electric Account Number _____

Number of children at home or in college _____

Family income last year (check one): Below \$35,000

Above \$35,000

GPA Score _____ ACT Score _____

Currently attending school at _____

List your involvement in school, community and vocational groups. Also include any work experience:

In 75-100 words tell why you are applying for the scholarship and share your goals and ambitions:

List scholarships you have earned and their value: _____

Choice of Schools: _____

Note: Please attach two letters of recommendation.