

Inside

Youth Tour 2013.....2

Reduce Winter
Energy Usage.....3

Electricity Powers
Our Lives.....3

Electric Heating
Products Safety.....4

January 2013

Hot Watts

PUBLISHED BY COOKSON HILLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Sleek new flat-panel TVs can consume almost as much electricity as a refrigerator. The bigger the screen, the more power it draws, and HD pulls more, too. Plasma screens use the most energy, while LCD TVs use much less. Remember to change your new TV's default settings to a power saver mode, and turn down the LCD backlight to save energy without sacrificing picture quality.

Source: Cooperative Research Network

Congratulations

Barbara Melton is our online survey winner!



Manager's Update

Stigler Office Building Demolished



Photo by: Larry Mattes

During the week of December 10, 2012 marked a historical event for the members of Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative as the headquarters facility in Stigler was leveled to make way for construction of the new headquarters facility. The original headquarters was constructed in 1961 and has been a landmark in Stigler and Haskell County for more than 6 decades. The new headquarters will be constructed in the same location. Newcomb Associates Architects and Engineering is responsible for the design and construction of the new facility. The total construction will take 18 - 24 months to complete.

It was a difficult decision to demolish the headquarters but there was just no room for expansion within the facility for additional employees and equipment. The building did not meet state building codes and the cooperative will be faced with upcoming regulatory compliance issues that require additional staff and office space.

Built in 1961 the building housed 16 employees. Today, the office has 31 employees and continues to grow to effectively serve the

cooperative's members.

If you have been to the office recently you may have noticed we are now conducting business from the temporary offices south of the original building on SE 10th Street. We have moved all our offices and employees into the temporary facilities in the new section of the garage. The front door is located at the back corner of the warehouse on SE 10th Street. We have signs up for members to help locate the entrance and drive-thru window.

Upon completion of the headquarters facility the temporary offices will be removed and the area will be used to house the cooperative's fleet of trucks.

The construction will have no impact on the reliable electric service we provide to our members.

We appreciate your patience as we transition through construction. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Kendall Beck

General Manager,
Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative

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.

Headquarters: P.O. Box 539
Stigler, OK 74462
Phone: 918-967-4614

Branch Office: P.O. Box 587
Sallisaw, OK 74955
Phone: 918-775-2211

Toll-Free: 1-800-328-2368

Home Page: www.cooksonhills.com
E-Mail: marketing@cooksonhills.com

Cookson Hills Staff

Kendall Beck
General Manager

Eric Johnson
Assistant General Manager

Dalen Garner
Director of Operations

Juli Orme
Manager of Finance and Administration

Brett Orme
Director of Engineering

Cookson Hills Board of Trustees

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

Bill V. Wilkinson - Attorney

Larry Mattes - Editor

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

On Tour With Tomorrow's Leaders

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Essay Contest



Mrs. Sloan's Junior English Class after their Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative Youth Tour presentation.

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative (CHEC) participates in the national program that allows rural electric cooperative students an opportunity to earn a free trip to Washington, D.C. by writing an essay on a topic determined by the co-op. This year's topic is: *"Describe how electric cooperatives operate based on the seven cooperative principles. Tell which of the principles you think is the most important and why."*

Kristie Cash and Donna Rhodes, CHEC's new Youth Tour Coordinator,

have visited or will be visiting area schools to share a presentation on the history of electric cooperatives and the annual Cookson Hills Youth Tour Essay contest. The high school teachers administer the annual contest. Once the essays are completed and turned in by the due date February 22, 2013, 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 57800 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 trip of a life time.

During the Youth Tour trip on June 14-20, 2013 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.

Youth Tour presentations are done by appointment only. If your high school hasn't had their presentation this year, contact Donna Rhodes at (918) 775-2211.



Five Action Steps to Winter Energy Use

This winter season you can take steps to lower your bill by reducing the amount of energy that you are using.

1 Turn down your thermostat to 68 degrees. For every degree you lower your heat in the 60-degree to 70-degree range, you will save up to 5 percent on heating costs. Set the thermostat back to 55 degrees or off at night or when leaving home for an extended time, saving 5-20 percent of your heating costs.

2 Replace or clean your heating system's filters once a month. Dirty filters restrict airflow and increase energy use. Keeping your system clean, lubricated and properly adjusted will reduce energy use, saving up to 5 percent of heating costs.

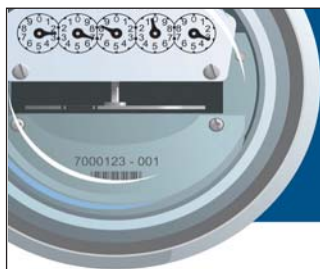
3 Reduce hot water temperature. Set your water heater to the "normal" setting or 120-degrees Fahrenheit. Savings are 7-11 percent of water heating costs. Insulate the pipe coming out of the top of your water heater or until the pipe goes into the wall. Pipe insulation is available from your hardware store. If your water heater is more than 12 years old, consider replacing it with a newer, more efficient model. The best indicator of a water heater's efficiency is the Energy Factor (EF). The higher the EF, the more efficient the water heater.



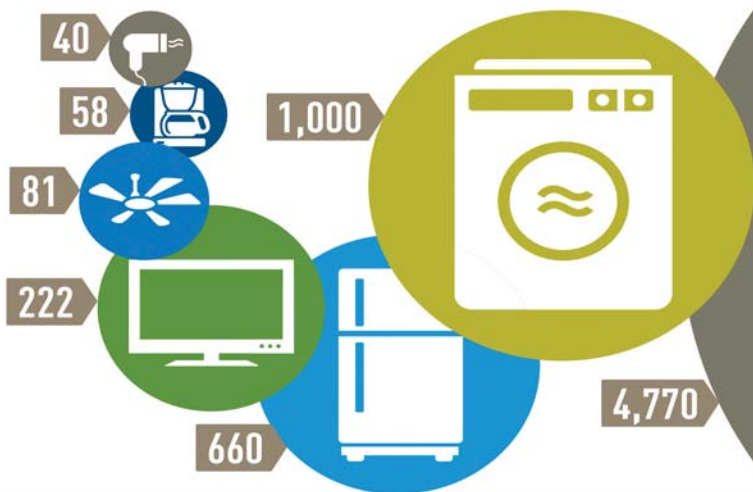
Touchstone Energy

4 Seal up the leaks. Caulk leaks around windows and doors. Look for places where you have pipes, vents or electrical conduits that go through the wall, ceiling or floor. Check the bathroom, underneath the kitchen sink, pipes inside a closet, etc. If you find a gap at the point where the pipe or vents goes through the wall, seal it up. Caulk works best on small gaps.

5 Consider replacing your old appliances with an ENERGY STAR®. If you are planning to replace your refrigerator, clothes washer, dishwasher, or new computer or TV look for an ENERGY STAR rated model that is about 15 percent more efficient than standard models. If your HVAC system is over 15 years old, consider replacing it with a newer ENERGY STAR system.



ELECTRICITY POWERS OUR LIVES: HOW MUCH IT TAKES (IN KILOWATT HOURS)



4,770



- Good hair days
- Alert mornings
- Cool breezes
- Home movie night
- Cold drinks
- Fluffy towels
- Warm showers

SOURCE: Buildings Energy Data Book 2010, 2.1.16 Operating Characteristics of Electric Appliances in the Residential Sector, published by the U.S. Department of Energy, March 2011. A kilowatt hour is the common unit of measurement for the electricity we use. It's calculated by the number of watts a device needs every hour it's in use. According to the Energy Information Administration, the average family uses about 10,654 kWh/year.

Safe Use of Electric Heating Products



Keep your space heater at least 3 ft. away from yourself and flammable items like blankets, drapes, and rugs.

When used properly and safely, electric blankets and other heating devices can help keep you toasty during cold winter months. Here are a few safety tips for electric blankets and heating pads to keep in mind:

- Purchase items only if they have been approved by an independent testing facility, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Inspect all cords and connections for cracks and frayed edges, which are a huge fire and injury hazard. Replace blankets or heating pads with faulty cords.
- Discard your blanket or heating pad if you see dark or charred spots on the surface.
- Do not put another cover on top of an electric blanket unless the safety instructions included in the packaging specifically state it's safe to do so. Some newer models protect against overheating.
- Once your electric blanket or heating pad is switched on, keep it laid flat—a folded device can cause a fire, as can a blanket that's been tucked in (which can bend wires).
- Never use heated bedding while asleep—look for a model with a timer that switches off automatically.

Space heaters

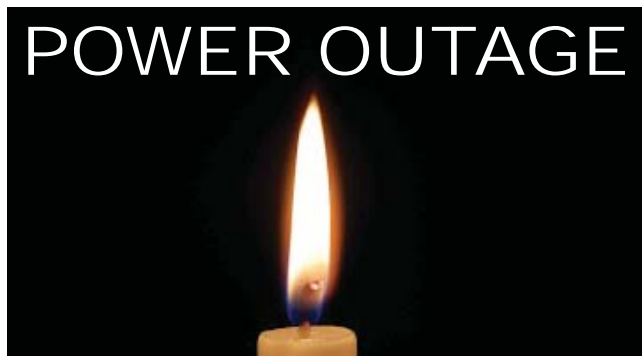
If you choose to use a space heater to supplement your home's heating system, some of the same rules of thumb apply, including purchasing a safety-certified model and reading the included safety instructions. More tips for space heaters:

“ Space heaters are meant to provide supplemental heat, not to replace your home's heating system. In fact, if used incorrectly, space heaters can pose fire and burn risks. ”

- Keep units 3 ft. away from combustible materials—such as bedding, drapes, clothes, and rugs. Space heaters also have parts that can spark, so avoid using them in areas where you store flammable liquids like kerosene and gasoline.
- In general, plugging space heaters directly into a wall outlet is best. If you must use an extension cord, make sure it's the correct type and boasts the right wire gauge size for your particular space heater. Otherwise, use a wall socket that can handle the load.
- Check safety instructions before using a space heater around water—some models are not intended for use in bathrooms.
- Be sure children are supervised around space heaters. Curious exploration can lead to electrical shock and burns.
- Finally, unplug and store the space heater in a safe place when you're not using it.

Sources: *Electrical Safety Foundation International, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*

Calling to report a POWER OUTAGE



Before calling to report an outage, please check your breakers. If you check your breakers and your power remains off, contact your neighbor to see if their power is also out. This can help determine if the outage is widespread or specific to your residence.

Please be patient if the lines are busy. During major outages, our telephone lines are overloaded with members calling to report their situation. We never take the phones off of the hook, and answer calls 24 hours a day. All calls are answered in the order they are received. Once we receive your report, your location is logged into our computer system and crews are then dispatched for repairs.

If you have special needs that require electricity for your well being, for example life support systems, please notify us of your circumstance by calling CHEC at 918-967-4614 or 800-328-2368.