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country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

TOP STORY

New Year, New Way To Serve

Fiber broadband service for members is a big reason to celebrate

East Central Electric members have something to look forward to in 2019: Blazing fast internet service, courtesy of their electric co-op.

East Central Electric (ECE) announced its decision to provide fiber broadband service to members last November. The service will be provided through the co-op's new subsidiary, ECOLink.

Tim Smith, ECE general manager said the co-op trustees felt strongly about offering high speed internet because they see it as natural extension of the co-op's mission and values.

"Electric co-ops were created to provide critical infrastructure that wasn't available in rural America," Smith said. "This service puts a modern spin on that same mission, which is to provide an important service that will enhance the quality of life for our members."

In the same way that electricity raised the standard of living for rural Oklahomans, fiber-based internet service in the ECE service area will make new developments and opportunities possible in agriculture, health services, education, and more.

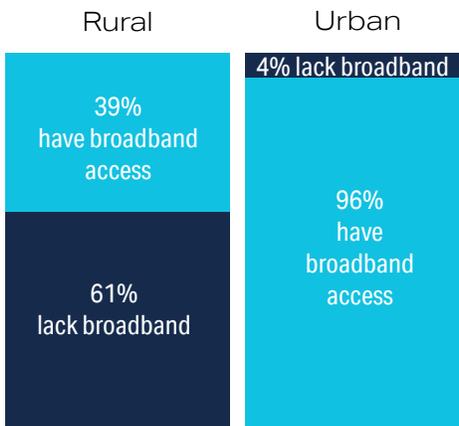
With speeds of 100 megabytes per second (Mbps), farmers and ranchers

will be able to use precision agriculture technologies that help boost yield and productivity. Rural residents and schools can take full advantage of distance learning, and rural patients will have access to improved medical care through telemedicine technology.

Having fiber in place will also improve electric service reliability for ECE members by enhancing grid communications.

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Nearly all urban residents have access to true high-speed internet (25Mbps download/3Mbps upload, while less than two-thirds of rural Americans enjoy speeds like that.



Source: Federal Communications Commission



THE FIBER DIFFERENCE

Broadband is defined as service with speeds of at least 25Mbps download and 3Mbps upload. Most rural

residents get internet through DSL, which is provided by phone companies, or via satellite. Distance, weather, lack of bandwidth, and data limits cause problems with these services.

Fiber is superior to DSL for the following reasons:

- Speeds of 100 Mbps/1Gbps
- Speed not affected by distance from ISP
- No data limits
- Number of users does not affect quality
- Ideal for streaming movies, games, etc.

"This will allow us to operate devices such as reclosers and capacitor banks from the office," explained Royce McMahan, director of ECE operations and engineering. "This saves a lot of time and money on trips to the field."

The ability to change voltage thresholds and make other adjustments from the office will also improve efficiency by correcting the power losses that occur as electricity travels over the line.

ECE will begin fiber construction in March. The co-op will post periodic updates on the fiber build-out via social media and other communication channels. Stay tuned! 📡

BUILDING LEADERS



2018 Youth Tour winners take a quick photo in front of the US Capitol. Front row: Sabriah Hoover, Savannah Been, Kylie Atwell, and Rylie Theloir. Back row: Caleb Coburn and Josh Mills.

essay. Any junior attending high school in or around the East Central Electric service area is eligible. The deadline to enter is March 1.

Energy Camp for Eighth Graders

If your child is an eighth grader, spending three days at YouthPower Energy Camp will foster budding leadership skills as it teaches teens cooperative principles. Campers enjoy activities and games designed to help them make friends and have fun.

The co-op will select up to six students for Energy Camp on May 28-31 at Canyon Camp near Hinton, Okla. The deadline to apply is March 1. ☺

Find contest details, application forms and other materials at www.ecoec.com. To visit with a co-op representative about the trips, please call **918-756-0833**.

Put Your Teen In This Picture

Youth Tour and Energy Camp inspire local students to new heights

If a week in Washington DC or an adventure at camp sound enticing to your teen, your electric cooperative has an opportunity for them.

For high school juniors, East Central Electric (ECE) offers the chance to tour our nation's capital as part of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The tour takes place June 13-20, 2019.

Students chosen for this once-in-a-lifetime trip will travel with other teens from Oklahoma on a tour of historic monuments, museums and buildings in Washington DC.

Teens will meet with elected leaders, cruise the Potomac River, and enjoy the sites and sounds of DC. Youth Tour inspires and educates students as they see and experience the heart of American democracy.

The co-op selects six students for the trip based on scores of a 500-word



Leadership activities are part of the Energy Camp fun for Molly Poteet and Addy Warner. The students attended the camp last year, courtesy of ECE.

YOUTH TOUR: BY THE NUMBERS

- 7 days
- 50-plus destinations
- 70 Oklahoma students and 10 chaperones in 2018
- 25 participating co-ops*
- 44 states represented
- 1,800 students in 2018
- 51,000-plus students since 1964

*No. of participating electric cooperatives from Oklahoma.



Need Money For College?

East Central Electric urges students of all levels to pursue dreams through the Operation Roundup Scholarship program

More than \$41,000 awaits local students whose dreams for the future include a higher education. Every year, East Central Electric's Operation Roundup board of trustees earmarks these funds as scholarships for high school seniors.

"In many cases, the most important factor is the student's sincere desire to further their education," said Mike Brannon, president of the Operation Roundup board of trustees.

The program gives one scholarship of \$1,000 to one student from each high school in East Central Electric (ECE) service territory. Home schooled students are also eligible.

The money may be used to help pay tuition at any four or two-year college or university, or any technical school or vocational training program.

"They can use this money to attend welding school, beauty school, or a four-year university. What we want to do is help these kids take a step toward establishing a viable career," Brannon said.

Every year, thousands of dollars in scholarship funds go untouched due to lack of applicants, he added.

"It's disappointing because we know there are kids out there who could use this scholarship," said Brannon. "We're asking all our members to help us spread the word."

To be eligible, scholarship recipients must be a member of ECE or be the dependent of an ECE member. Members must participate in Operation Roundup voluntary bill roundup. †

For more details or to download a scholarship application, please visit www.ecoec.com, or call 918-756-0833.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Is your school on the list? If so, you could be eligible for a college scholarship!



Beggs
Bixby
Braggs
Bristow
Checotah
Depew
Dewar
Drumright
Eufaula
Ft. Gibson
Glenpool
Graham-Dustin
Hanna
Haskell
Henryetta
Hilldale
Home School
Jenks
Kellyville
Kiefer
Liberty
Mason
Midway
Morris

Mounds
Muskogee
Okemah
Okmulgee
Oktaha
Oilton
Olive
Porum
Preston
Private School
Sapulpa
Schulter
Stroud
Warner
Webber Falls
Weleetka
Wilson

GENERATOR *safety*



FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO ENSURE EVERYONE'S SAFETY:

- Make sure there is **nothing plugged into the generator when turning it on**. Use a **heavy-duty** extension cord to connect appliances to the outlets on the generator.
- Always operate the generator on a stable, dry surface **outside the home**—and well away from garage, doors, windows, and vents leading into your home. Generators produce **deadly** carbon monoxide.
- **Never** connect your portable generator to the home directly. This **can result in potentially deadly backfeed**, which happens when electricity is fed back through the electrical system onto power lines, creating a serious hazard for line workers and others.

Learn more at

SafeElectricity.org



operation round-up

MONTHLY UPDATE



Operation Roundup funds support local charitable organizations, civic groups, youth programs, community services, and needy families. For more information on this voluntary bill roundup program, please visit us online at www.ecoec.com.

Applications reviewed.....	1,033
Applications granted.....	700
Applications denied.....	319
Applications tabled.....	24
Scholarships awarded.....	\$218,000
Total Disbursements.....	\$1,692,840.88
Average member contribution.....	44¢

RECIPES



Slow Cook Chicken Taco Soup

INGREDIENTS

1 onion, chopped	green chilies, undrained
1 (16 oz) can chili beans	1 (1.25 oz) pkg taco seasoning
1 (15 oz) can black beans	3 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
1 (15 oz) can corn, drained	Shredded Cheddar cheese
1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce	sour cream
1 (12 fluid oz) can beer	tortilla chips
2 (10 oz) cans diced tomatoes w/	

DIRECTIONS

Place the onion, chili beans, black beans, corn, tomato sauce, beer, and diced tomatoes in a slow cooker. Add taco seasoning; stir to blend. Lay chicken breasts on top, pressing down slightly until just covered by the other ingredients. Set slow cooker for low heat, cover, and cook for 5 hours.

Remove chicken breasts from the soup; allow to cool slightly. Stir shredded chicken back into the soup, continue cooking for 2 hours. Top with shredded Cheddar cheese, a dollop of sour cream, and crushed tortilla chips, if desired. Source: allrecipes.com



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

If outlets for switches feel warm, and frequent problems occur with blown fuses, tripped circuits, or flickering or dimming lights, call a qualified electrician.

SOURCE: NATIONAL FIRE SAFETY PROTECTION ASSOCIATION



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- Pay online at www.ecoec.com using SmartHub, or download the app.
- Pay by phone using VISA, Mastercard or Discover at **866-999-4584**. Available 24 hours a day. Convenience fee associated with payments.
- Pay with cash or credit/debit card at participating Moneygram or Pay Site locations. Convenience fee associated with payments.
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- Pay via automatic draft of your checking or savings account. Sign up online or download the ebill form for easy automatic payments at www.ecoec.com.

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