

May 2024

country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Electrical Safety in the Storm

SPOT WARNING SIGNS

Distant thunder? Seek shelter in a hard-top car or four-sided building.



Never enter a flooded room. The water could be electrified.



If you're using a generator, make sure it is plugged in to your home at the meter with a transfer switch. Any other method could be dangerous to your family, neighbors, and co-op linemen.

REPORT YOUR OUTAGE

On The App



Or



918-756-0833

STAY INFORMED

For outages over 200 members, updates will be posted to our Facebook Page. Follow Us.

DOWNED LINES? ASSUME THE WORST

Consider all power lines energized and deadly.



An invisible, silent killer. Even if your power is off, electricity may still be present on the line.

STAY AT LEAST 50 FEET AWAY



Call 911 or the co-op to report the location.

If you're traveling, stay inside your vehicle.



Even if you do not see a downed line, one could be hidden by storm debris, flood water, snow or ice. Wear insulated rubber gloves and work boots while cleaning up after a storm.

BE PREPARED

Prepare for a storm by gathering items for use in your safe place:

- Bottled water
- Non-perishable food
- Portable phone charger
- Battery operated radio
- Prescriptions
- First Aid Kit
- Flashlights
- Spare batteries
- Pet / baby supplies
- Blankets
- Warm clothes
- Hand sanitizer





At this year's Annual Meeting on July 25th, the co-op board and I are asking members to vote in favor of a proposed bylaw change. We want you to have a good understanding of what we're asking you to vote on, so I'm going to talk a little bit about it in this column and the June Country Living.

Co-op members like you and I are kind of like the shareholders of a major corporation. We get a voice and a vote in the decisions our co-op makes. We elect members from among ourselves to serve on a Board of Trustees and make the tough calls. I feel honored that you've elected me to help guide this ship for the last few terms.

The bylaw change we want to enact cleans up and tightens some of our qualification requirements for who can serve on the board.

First, we're extending the minimum length of membership from one year to five years. We want board candidates to have experience being in a co-op before they try to lead it. Second, we're clarifying the language around "close relative" as it pertains to Trustees, so we have a strong legal defense against nepotism and corruption.

And third, well, you'll have to come back next month for number 3, because right now I've got a story to share.

When I worked as a manager of Kerr McGee Farm Center in Haskell, my District Manager, Jim, was a prince of a guy, always on your team and ready to make life better for all. In contrast, James was the new Regional Manager and not so well liked and quickly stood alone at the top.

James' first trip to our district was held in Muskogee, and as we were standing around visiting, the maestro of this gathering and feeling his importance, overheard Jerry, a manager

of a KM Farm Center in Texas, ask, "Lowell, how long do we have to be here?"

I didn't know so we continued visiting. We had moved into our conference

room and Jerry asked me again just as James entered from behind Jerry, "Lowell, how long before we get to go home?" James took up the answer, "You can go right now!"

An awkward silence fell over the room before I remarked — "Ask him something else, Jerry!"

Laughter erupted, even James. Later Jerry whispered to me, "Thanks, you saved me!"

Lowell Hobbs represents ECE District 2. To reach him, please call his cellphone at 918-695-5289.

"We get a voice and a vote in the decisions our co-op makes."

- LOWELL HOBBS

Lowell Hobbs, District 2
President

Larry Harvey, District 1
Vice President

Dwight Luther, District 7
Secretary / Treasurer

Jim Hall, District 6
Assistant Sec. / Treasurer

Max Shoemake, District 3

Michael Vernnon, District 4

Jay Emerson, District 5

To learn more about your elected trustees, or to view a district map, please visit ecoec.com. To contact your trustee, please call 918-756-0833.



2024 Co-op Calendar

**Districts 2 & 5
District Meeting
June 11, 2024**

**Drive-Thru/In-Person
Annual Meeting
July 25, 2024**

Bylaws modifications will be presented for approval to the members of East Central Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc. at the Annual Meeting scheduled for July 25, 2024. These modifications are recommended by the East Central Board of Trustees to update Article IV, Section 3 of the current Bylaws, **Trustee Qualifications.**

Learn More:
ecoec.com/proposed-bylaw-change

Meet Our Next Level Team: Right-of-Way and Mapping

East Central Electric Cooperative prioritizes providing our members with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. Our Right-of-Way and Mapping teams are crucial to accomplishing our goal.

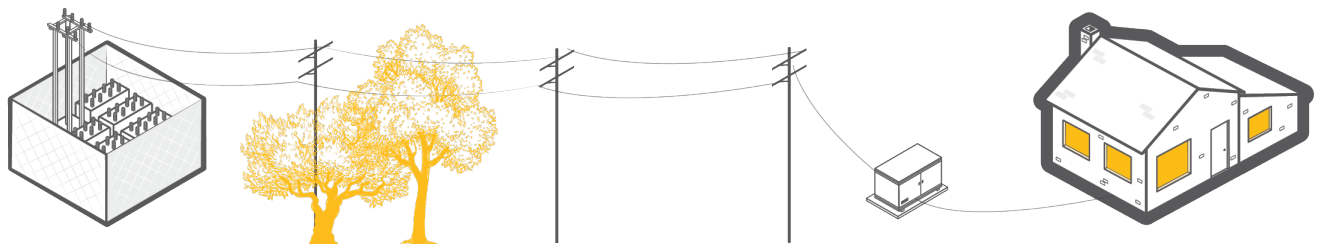
“The most rewarding part of my job is making sure that our goals are achieved.”

- JOHN HUBLER, RIGHT-OF-WAY REPRESENTATIVE

The Foliage Fighters



Keeping trees out of power lines is a never ending task, especially when you're responsible for maintaining 6,398 miles of line. Our Right-of-Way team is responsible for planning out which areas need the most help with tree trimming and herbicide spray, and managing contractor crews to get the work done. This work is done on a rotation, to ensure every area of our nine-county service territory is addressed at least once every five years. Clearing vegetation cuts down on blinks and power outages caused by trim limbs, keeps members and lineworkers safe, and helps reduce the need for costly repairs. Their day-to-day work involved surveying, reviewing work orders, auditing to ensure the work was done correctly, and conversing with co-op members. Despite preplanned work, the right-of-way team also stays responsive to member requests and concerns. In 2023, East Central Electric Cooperative and our contractors trimmed 1,103 miles of vegetation away from power lines and applied herbicides to an additional 1,039 miles.



The Spatial Specialists



With a distribution grid that spans 3,000 square miles, our Mapping Department has a lot of ground to cover. They update and maintain a geographic information system which details every pole, meter, transformer, recloser and fuse on our lines. This system is updated daily as linemen and fiber technicians make adjustments and repairs. The digital representation they create is used by every other department through-out the co-op, for billing, addressing service issues, and getting ecoLINK installed. When the co-op was founded, all of these records had to be kept on paper. Bad handwriting or a typewriter typo could require leafing through a whole backlog to get accurate location information. The improved accuracy is an asset to the co-op's response times and to the safety of linemen who know exactly what to expect on any given pole. Our GIS system also gives our System Operators the bird's eye view they need to spot hazards up and down the line from where crews are working and provide adequate warning.

“It's nice to know that my work is useful and important to the whole co-op.”

- MITCHEL WILLINGHAM, GIS SUPPORT TECH



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Appliances that require a lot of power should not be plugged into a power strip. This includes, but is not limited to, microwaves, toasters, coffee makers, blenders, slow cookers, hair styling tools, sump pumps, space heaters, or portable air conditioners. Overloading your power strip can start a fire.

SOURCE: SAFELECTRICITY.ORG

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Pineapple Upside Down Cake

INGREDIENTS

1/2 C. brown sugar	3/4 tsp. salt
1/4 C. melted butter	1 1/2 C. sugar
1 (20 oz.) can sliced pineapple	1/2 tsp. vanilla
6 maraschino cherries	1/2 C. butter, softened
2 C. flour	1 1/2 C. milk
2 tsp. baking powder	2 eggs

DIRECTIONS

Sprinkle brown sugar in bottom of cake pan, then drizzle with melted butter. Place pineapple in a single layer on bottom of pan, then place a cherry in the center of each pineapple ring. Combine other ingredients into a batter and pour over pineapple. Bake in preheated 350° oven for 50-55 minutes. Immediately turn upside down on serving plate.

SOURCE: ECE 85TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



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