

country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SAFETY FIRST

Office Closed Monthly for Employee Training

You may have noticed that beginning in 2025, the ECE office has been closed one random day each month. Rest assured, it is not because we don't want to see you. Quite the opposite!

In previous years, our offices closed for half-day employee safety meetings. During those sessions, employees reviewed close calls and near-misses in the field and participated in important job-related safety training. The safety of our employees, members, and the communities we serve has always been, and will continue to be, our highest priority.

This year, however, we have expanded the purpose of these all-employee meetings. In addition to safety training, cooperative leaders are fostering cross-department communication to strengthen collaboration and improve overall service to our members. By encouraging greater understanding across teams, we are taking a

proactive step toward enhancing the quality of service you receive.

We recognize that office closures may cause some inconvenience, and we sincerely appreciate your patience. Our goal is that these efforts will lead to noticeable improvements in the way we serve you, our members.

To help you plan ahead, this newsletter will now include a quarterly calendar of office closures for employee meetings and holidays.

For the remainder of 2025, our office will be closed on the following dates:

- November 11
- November 20
- November 27
- November 28
- December 10
- December 24
- December 25



In September, Apprentice Lineman Bryer Crosby had the fastest time in mandatory pole-top rescue training. He made the Mayday call, got fully equipped in climbing gear, climbed a power pole, and safely lowered the practice dummy to the ground in a minute and 39 seconds.



In August, Construction Lineman-in-Charge Kelly Rowan took System Operator KT Hewitt up in a bucket truck for a 40-foot view on the requirements of linework.

notes from the chair

Answers and Escapades

By Lowell Hobbs, President, East Central Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees

We had many good comments by our members from our survey at the Annual Meeting. At a past annual meeting you voted to make some much needed changes to our bylaws. In particular the one that stated the time and place our annual meeting could be held. With the comments from this year's annual meeting, I am sure some needed changes are coming.

There was a question regarding our audit report. During the several years I have served on the board, all opinions from the different auditors we have had have been a 'clean' audit. The audit process is quite lengthy and thorough, so we are very pleased with the continuing 'clean' audit report. 95% of members responding were satisfied with our annual meeting.

We will soon be hosting, along with several of our Co-op neighbors, many of our state legislators. Our lives are stabilized or altered by legislation, and it is important for us to stay close to our senators and representatives.

In last month's article I wrote about Troy's accident on the tractor/bicycle. This month is about the same Troy and same C-Model Allis-Chalmers tractor. Our cows were grazing on the backside of the field Troy was discing in preparation for wheat. Daddy sent my sister, Earlene, and me to bring the cows to the barn. We 'hitched' a ride on the disc Troy was pulling. This was prior to farm implements having their own wheels.

The disc simply rolled along on the disc blades. The angle of the sections could be adjusted to cut deeper into the soil. There were weight boxes on top of each gang with an iron beam in front connecting each gang to the tongue. Earlene was sitting on the weight box on the right and I was on the left.

As the disc traveled over a large clump of Johnson grass, I leaned too far forward to watch. My toes pointing down caught in the dirt and my feet and legs slid between the disc blades with my butt against the iron beam. I was walking as best I could on my hands to keep my speed equal to the tractor. Troy finally heard us hollering and stopped the tractor. They grabbed me by the arms and began to pull me from my entrapped position. I finally told them, "I don't seem to be hurt, but if you keep pulling, you may pull my feet off."

They started digging with their hands. The dirt was loose and sandy, so I was freed and only scraped both sides of my legs. We never told this escapade to my folks either, but my sister blackmailed me for a long time.

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

Lowell Hobbs, District 2
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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.



Youth Tour Application Deadline Change for 2026

The Oklahoma Rural Electric Youth Tour is an annual, weeklong, all-expense-paid leadership experience in Washington, D.C., that is open to select high school juniors (seniors-to-be) who attend schools located in the co-op service area.

The 2026 trip will take place June 13-19.

Due to necessary program changes, the application deadline has been moved to January 26, 2026. Learn more and apply at ecoec.com/youth-tour.

Winter Safety & Savings Checklist



Easy Energy Cost Savers

- ☐ Seal gaps in walls, floors, and ceilings with caulk or foam sealant. Look for cracks around windows, wires and pipes.
- ☐ Unplug electronics while you're on vacation so they don't pull electricity while in rest mode. You can check out your "Always On" energy usage under "Energy Detail" in the SmartHub app.
- ☐ Wash clothes in cold water. Use hot water only for very dirty loads.
- ☐ Set your ceiling fan to spin clockwise to draw cool air up and circulate warm air that has risen to the ceiling.

Kitchen Efficiencies

- ☐ Turn off kitchen and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking.
- ☐ Clean refrigerator coils annually.
- ☐ The most efficient refrigerator temperature settings are between 34° - 37°. Ideal freezer temperature is between 0° - 5°.
- ☐ Slow-cooker meals are one of the most energy-efficient ways to prepare food.
- ☐ Insulate kitchen pipes, especially near exterior walls. Seal any gaps around pipes to avoid drafts.

Decorations & Lights

- ☐ Inspect Christmas lights before use and discard any strands that are damaged or worn out.
- ☐ Keep decorations at least three feet away from heat sources, especially those with an open flame.
- ☐ Running cords under furniture or rugs and stapling cords to walls present serious fire hazards.
- ☐ Extension cords are not designed for long-term use. If you have a long-term need, consider having a qualified electrician install more outlets in your home.

Outdoor Energy & Safety

- ☐ Turn off pool pumps and heaters when not in use.
- ☐ Verify livestock water tank heaters are off when not needed.
- ☐ Add faucet covers to outdoor faucets to insulate and protect your pipes from freezing.
- ☐ Keep generators at least 20 feet away from your home and never operate in an enclosed space. The safest way to operate a generator during an outage is to use a transfer switch. Call the co-op if you are interested in having a Generlink Transfer Switch installed on your electric meter.

Heating Equipment

- ☐ Have your heating system inspected annually by a licensed, qualified professional.
- ☐ Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as recommended.
- ☐ An electric space heater can cost more than \$100 per month to operate. Minimize their use, except for temporary spot heating. Turn them off when leaving the room.
- ☐ Set your water heater to the lowest point, about 120°.

Fire Safety

- ☐ With the time change, be sure to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors. No smoke detector? Contact the American Red Cross for free smoke detector installation.
- ☐ Test your smoke alarms monthly and make sure your house is protected by an adequate number of working alarms.
- ☐ Share your fire escape plan with your overnight guests. Everyone should know at least two ways out of each room in your home.
- ☐ Consider having guests with mobility issues sleep on the ground floor of your house.



You can provide a light in the darkness for a neighbor struggling to make ends meet.

Every donation to Give A Watt helps neighbors in need pay their winter electric bill. Recipients and donors remain anonymous.

To participate please:

- Drop your donation at the ECE drive-thru window or night drop at 2001 S. Wood Drive in Okmulgee.
- Mail your donation to East Central Electric Attn: Give A Watt PO Box 1178 Okmulgee, OK 74447-1178.

If donating by check, please make your check payable to East Central Electric and write Give A Watt in the memo area.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

It is never safe to use an oven to heat your home. Even letting the residual heat from a recently used oven seep through an open door can pose a burn risk for children, expose heating elements to rapid cooling, damaging them, and release dangerous gasses into your home. It is never worth the risk to your family's health and safety.

SOURCE: SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

**Turkey. Touchdowns.
Twelve devices.
No problem.**

ecoLINK
ecolink.coop 918.756.0833



Corn Casserole

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3 cans corn | 1 or 2 T. chopped jalapenos |
| 1/2 stick butter | salt and pepper to taste |
| 1 - 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese | |

DIRECTIONS

Cream butter and cream cheese; melt in microwave. Pour into 9x13" casserole dish. Add jalapenos. Drain corn and add to cheese mixture. Salt and pepper to taste. Mix well. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes. You can sprinkle paprika on top before serving.

SOURCE: ECE 85TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



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