

HOT



WATTS



THE POWER BEHIND YOUR POWER

BY ANNE PRINCE

Lineman Cody Gray

As April arrives, it brings with it the showers that produce spring flowers. It also heralds the beginning of a potentially stormy season that can inherently include power outages. While CHEC strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals that spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst – co-op lineworkers.

One of the most dangerous jobs

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers often must climb 40 or more feet in the air, carrying heavy equipment to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S., lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high voltage power lines. To help keep them safe, lineworkers wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect them from

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If you find your account number hidden in this issue of the *Hot Watts*, you'll receive a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

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electrical shock. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight and bulk, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts that can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Line crews use their laptops and cell phones to map outages, take pictures of the work they have done and troubleshoot problems. In our community, CHEC lineworkers are responsible for keeping more than 2,900 miles of lines across seven counties working, in order to bring power to your home and our local community 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations. [3215401]

While some of the tools that lineworkers use have changed over the years, namely the use of technology, the dedication to the job has not. Being a lineworker is not a glamorous profession. At its essence, it is inherently dangerous, requiring them to work near high voltage lines in the worst of conditions, at any times of the day or night. During hurricanes, wildfires or storms, crews often work around the clock to restore power. While April is known for spring showers, there is also a day set aside to “thank a lineworker.”

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 9. So during the month of April, if you see a lineworker, please pause to say thank you to the power behind your power. Let them know you appreciate the hard work they do to keep the lights on, regardless of the conditions.

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Lights.
Heat/AC.
Clean Clothes.
Internet.

Brought to you by your local electric lineworkers.

YOUR CHEC LINEMEN

Kent Alstatt	Wayne Bray	Curtis Eppler	Dion Holcomb	Austin Poindexter
Jeremy Baker	David Bumpers	Cody Gray	Marty Huff	Jesse Ruark
Mike Barnes	Elijah Cloud	Allen Hare	Reuben Kemp	Tandy Sloan
Jason Blalock	Matt Davis	Kevin Harvell	Chaston Oldham	Michael Sizemore
Calvin Boren	Steven Dodson	Kevin Hendrix	John Henry Parsons	Nick Worsham



Congratulations to the 2018 Youth Tour winners!

SUMMER LEE | WARNER HIGH SCHOOL

ROSLYNN FRANKS | STIGLER HIGH SCHOOL

LYLAH WARREN | MCCURTAIN HIGH SCHOOL

KYLE HERRON | ROLAND HIGH SCHOOL



WE ARE NOW
ACCEPTING
DISCOVER CARD
PAYMENTS



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. If the room is unoccupied, turn off the ceiling fan to save energy.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



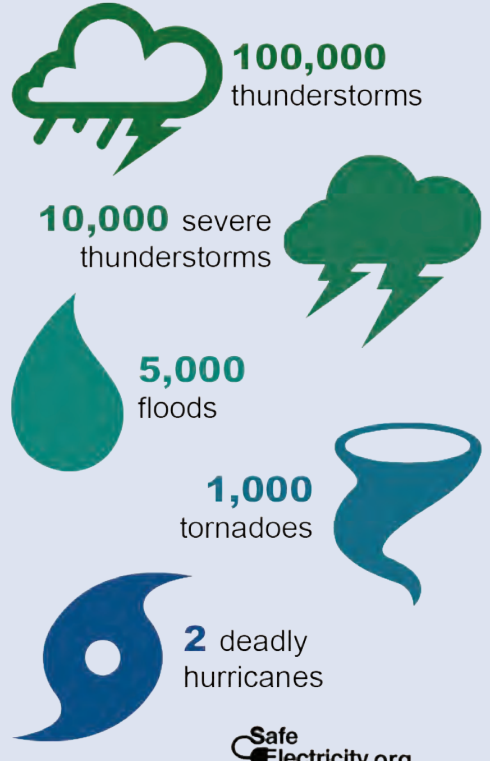
Operation Round Up

Each month, members of CHEC join together to help meet the charitable needs of their neighbors by participations in the Operation Round Up® (ORU) program. ORU is a community outreach program that is funded by CHEC members who round up their electric bills each month. The small change that results from “rounding up” monthly electric bills has made a big impact in the cooperative’s seven-county service area.

The CHEC Foundation Board met March 6. At the meeting, the board awarded grants to assist Nicut Rural Volunteer Fire Department for radios, Marble City Volunteer Fire Association for radios, and Keota Volunteer Fire Department for firefighting bunker gear. The Foundation also approved grants for Liberty Volunteer Fire Fighters Association – Ladies Auxiliary for school supplies and backpacks for area children and Lee’s Chapel Assembly of God for its backpack program for area children.

The CHEC Foundation Board meets every quarter to review applications. Individuals and community organizations throughout CHEC’s service area are eligible to apply for an ORU grant. The board will meet again June 12, with applications due by May 11. For more information about ORU or to obtain an application, visit www.cooksonhills.com or contact Donna Rhodes at 918-775-2211.

Each year, the U.S. faces an average of:



research collected from the National Weather Service

WHAT'S YOUR SEVERE WEATHER PLAN?

Q AND A



STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE

Do pre-paid accounts pay the same rates as regular monthly billed residential accounts?

Yes, all residential accounts are billed at the same rates. March through November usage is billed at 8.72¢ per kilowatt hour (kWh) plus the power cost adjustment and customer charge. December through February usage is billed at 8.72¢ per kWh for the first 800 kWh and 7.72¢ per kWh for usage over 800 kWh plus the power cost adjustment and customer charge.

Do pre-paid accounts have to pay the customer charge that monthly residential accounts pay?

Yes, pre-paid accounts pay the same \$35 customer charge. The customer charge is \$1.17 per day for pre-paid.

How can I owe money on a pre-paid account?

CHEC does not disconnect pre-paid accounts on weekends or holidays. However, pre-paid usage is calculated every day. If the pre-paid balance is low before a weekend or holiday, the account could owe money on the following business day.

How is my payment late when I scheduled the payment through my bank?

When you make a scheduled payment through a bank, they mail us a check through the U.S. Postal Service and not as an ACH direct deposit payment. These payments can be delayed due to mail delay. To ensure your payment is not late, you may sign up for Automatic Bank Draft and avoid late payment penalties.

How do I sign up for Automatic Bank Draft?

- ▶ Complete the online form at www.cooksonhills.com;
- ▶ Complete a paper form in either office (Stigler or Sallisaw); or,
- ▶ Set up a recurring payment in the SmartHub mobile app.

Can I use a debit/credit card to pay my electric bill?

Yes, CHEC accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discover cards. A \$3.95 convenience fee may apply in some instances.

My neighbor lives in a similar size house. Why is my electric bill always higher than my neighbor's bill?

Many factors impact the amount of energy used in a home, so it is very difficult to make direct comparisons between two different households. Below are three major factors when considering electricity use.

▶ Heating and cooling account for more than 50 percent of a home's electricity use.

A high-efficiency electric heat pump will use half or even less energy to heat or cool the same amount of space compared to an electric furnace or older-model inefficient heat pump. And, of course, many homes are heated with natural gas or propane, although electricity is still used for the furnace fans. Electric space heaters can also have an impact on increasing your electric use. Do not forget all those other electricity-users (TV, lights, computers, microwaves, etc.).

▶ How well is your home weatherized?

Attic insulation, insulated doors and windows, and eliminating outside air infiltration are the most cost-effective ways to improve the energy efficiency of any structure.

▶ How many people live in your home?

The number of occupants and their ages can also have a dramatic impact on the amount of energy used. Hot water use for showers and baths as well as for laundry and dishwashing needs is another major factor of energy use.

If you have any questions please call 800-328-2368 or 918-775-2211. We would be more than happy to assist you.