



# WATTS

## Storm Damage

On November 30, 2018, an EF-1 and an EF-2 tornado tore through CHEC's service territory causing approximately \$300,000.00 in damages. To date, CHEC has replaced at least 83 poles and other equipment. According to the National Weather Service, an EF-1 tornado touched down around the Webbers Falls area, traveling 7.10 miles and was 400 yards wide. An EF-2 tornado touched down around the Lake Tenkiller area, and stayed on the ground for 47 miles and was 1,100 yards wide.

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*Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



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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Crews worked through December 5 rebuilding powerlines and restoring power. CHEC would like to thank all of our members for their patience and words of encouragement as we worked diligently to restore power after these storms. Our thoughts and prayers continue for those that experienced damages.



**RESOLVE TO SAVE ENERGY**  
Make a home energy resolution and reap the benefits all year long!

Three easy ways to save energy:

- 1** Install a programmable thermostat. You could save an estimated \$180 annually!
- 2** Ditch incandescents. Did you know incandescent bulbs release 90% of their energy as heat? Use LEDs instead.
- 3** Reduce energy used for water heating. Lower your water heater's temp and consider installing low-flow showerheads.





Source: energy.gov

# Youth Tour Trip to Washington, D.C.

CHEC is once again sponsoring its Youth Tour Essay and Scholarship Contest for high school juniors. The program provides students an opportunity to earn a trip to visit Washington, D.C. and earn a \$1,000 scholarship.

Donna Rhodes, Youth Tour Coordinator, has visited or will visit area schools to share a presentation on the history of electric cooperatives and on the annual CHEC youth tour essay contest. Local high school teachers will administer the contest. Essays must be submitted by February 8. All essays will then be reviewed by an external judge not affiliated with CHEC. Essay finalists will be interviewed before the final selection is announced.

Four finalists will present their essays to the CHEC Board of Trustees and other special guests at the CHEC Youth Tour banquet held in Stigler. The finalists will be presented with a plaque and Youth Tour trip details. [3315100]

During the Youth Tour trip (June 14-20, 2019), students will join 1,500 other youth from across the nation in Washington, D.C. Participants will visit monuments and other attractions as well as visit Capitol Hill to learn more about how our government operates.

The Youth Tour contest information is presented by appointment only. If your school is interested in participating this year, please contact Donna Rhodes at 918-775-2211.



*Energy Efficiency*

## *Tip of the Month*

Is your hot water tank warm to the touch? Consider insulating it to save 7 to 16 percent annually on water heating costs. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Source: energy.gov

## Operation Round Up

Each month, members of CHEC join together to help meet the charitable needs of their neighbors by participating 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 December 4, 2018. At the meeting, the board awarded grants to assist the Boys and Girls Club of Sequoyah County for supplies and learning tools; Stigler Health and Wellness Inc., for the angel tree outreach; Trinity United Methodist Church Kozie Quilters for supplies; Gore United Methodist Church for their food pantry; and Woodland Hills Pentecostal Church for their backpack program. The Board also approved a grant for an individual in need.

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 March 5, with applications due by February 8. For more information about ORU or to obtain an application, visit CHEC's website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) or contact Donna Rhodes at 918-775-2211.



## News & Notes

- CHEC offices will be closed on January 1 in observance of New Year's Day.
- CHEC has rebates available on room air conditioners, electric water heaters, ground source heat pumps, and dual fuel and mini-split heat pumps. For eligibility criteria and rebate applications, visit our website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) or visit your local office.

# Budget Billing

If you don't like surprises, we may have the perfect plan for you. Budget Billing levels your monthly bill so that you do not have those "peak and valley" bills. Although Budget Billing helps you better "budget" for your electric bill, it does not guarantee a constant recurring monthly bill. It does not reduce your electric bill, but will smooth out your charges and help you manage your electric bill.

Our Budget Billing recalculates your budget billing amount each month by averaging your current bill plus the previous 11 months' bills. By doing so, this will help stabilize your payment amounts, and ensures that you do not rack up a large running balance in the event that you experience several consecutive months of high usage. The program keeps a running balance of what you truly owe should you choose to cease participation in the program.

There is no charge for using Budget Billing. This is a service that we provide to our members to make it easier for you to budget your electric bill and enjoy the peace of mind that comes from planning ahead. Members can sign up for Budget Billing if they have at least one year of billing history, no more than two late payments and no returned checks.

For more information about Budget Billing, visit our website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) or call 800-328-2368.

# Go Paperless!

Would you like to receive one less bill in the mail each month?

If so, all you need to do is go to the CHEC website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) and log on to your SmartHub account. Click on "My Profile" > "My Information" > "Update My Printed Bills" and then click the white box just after the green "On" button to turn off printed bills. You will receive notification of your monthly statement and the CHEC monthly newsletter "Hot Watts" electronically to your e-mail. Please verify your email address for accuracy if you select this feature.

SmartHub offers many conveniences that you do not receive with a paper bill. You may:

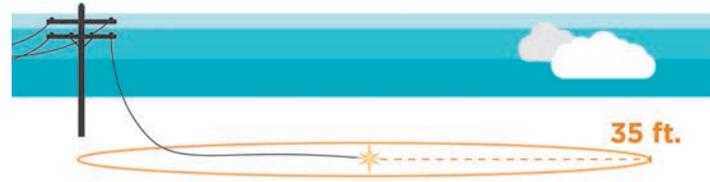
- View your bill and payment history
- Make payment on one or more accounts with a credit card. (A \$3.95 convenience fee will be assessed with each payment transaction.)
- Review your usage and bill comparison
- Update your settings and account information
- Manage notifications

SmartHub also has a mobile app available for your smart phone. The mobile app has many of the same conveniences as your online SmartHub account. Please note: you cannot turn off/on printed bills from the mobile app.

SmartHub is a secure and convenient method of payment and communication. If you have any questions concerning SmartHub or about going paperless, please contact your local office at 800-328-2368 (Stigler) or 918-775-2211 (Sallisaw).

# Downed and Dangerous

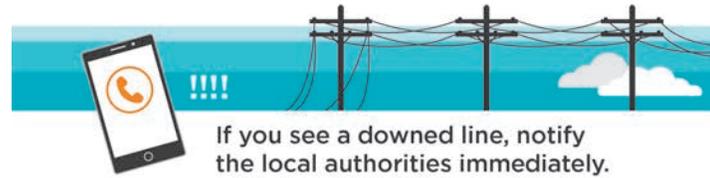
If you see a downed power line, always assume it is energized and dangerous. Avoid going near it or anything in contact with the power line.



Downed power lines can energize the ground up to 35 ft. away – so keep your distance.



Never drive over a downed line or through water that is touching the line.



If you see a downed line, notify the local authorities immediately.



Never try to move a downed power line, even if you think the line is deenergized or if you're using a non-conductive item – this will not prevent injury or death!



Source: ESFI.org

