

# HOT WATTS

COOKSON HILLS  
EST. 1945  
ELECTRIC CO-OP

## By the Community, for the Community

### October is National Co-op Month

When you think of October, pumpkins, Halloween and beautiful fall foliage naturally come to mind. But October is notable for another reason – it's National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including CHEC, celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service, or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

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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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Similar to how CHEC was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our community, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. CHEC's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of trustees, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines.

We know our members (that's you!) have a valuable perspective. That's why we are continually seeking your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as equipment and technology upgrades.

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." We participate in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our communities' brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. CHEC members also contribute to Operation Round Up, which helps meet charitable needs in our service area. CHEC also supports our area youth and communities through donations and sponsorship of area events.

Ultimately, our communities benefit from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of CHEC as more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you – because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.

**Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative's 71st Annual Meeting is Scheduled for Saturday, October 5, 2019. We hope to see you there!**

# Operation Round Up



Each month, members of CHEC join together to help meet the charitable needs for their neighbors by participating in the Operation Round Up program. Operation Round Up 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 on September 3. At the meeting, the board awarded grants to assist Brent Rural Fire Department, Liberty Volunteer Fire Department - Ladies Auxiliary, and Hillside Pentecostal Church of God. The board also approved grants for Friends of Stanley Tubbs Memorial Library, American Red Cross, and Stigler Health and Wellness Center.

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 Operation Round Up grant. The board will meet again on December 3, with applications due by November 8. For more information about Operation Round Up or to obtain an application, visit CHEC’s website at [www.cooksonhills.com](http://www.cooksonhills.com) or contact our office at 800-328-2368.

## Keep Electrical Spooks from Haunting Your Halloween

More and more people decorate their yards for Halloween with elaborate lighting displays with as much enthusiasm and as many materials as they do for the Christmas holidays. Strings of decorative lights, fog machines, strobe and black lights, animatronics, and electrically powered decorations all add to the ambience of Halloween, but improperly used, can create added dangers of fire, shock, and other potentially disastrous accidents.

Safe Electricity urges everyone to use caution and look for potential hazards while decorating and operating these displays. [127507]

“These decorations have been packed away since last year in basements, garages and sheds,” says Molly Hall, executive director of the Safe Electricity program. “Weather, time and even mice can damage cords and insulation on electric decorations, making them unsafe. Make sure you discard any damaged sets and buy new.”

Safe Electricity offers these tips:

- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracking, fraying, or bare wires may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Replace any damaged products.
- Before using any light strings, animated displays, or other electrical products outdoors, make sure the product is approved by a nationally recognized certification organization such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL) and marked for outdoor use.
- Follow the use and care instructions that accompany your electrical decorations.
- Don’t overload extension cords or allow them to run through water on the ground. Typically, one extension cord should only have three strands of lights connected to it at most, but you should also check that the extension cord is rated for its intended use.
- Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into outlets protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If your outdoor outlets don’t have them, either contact a qualified electrician to install them or use portable GFCIs instead.
- When decorating outside, always be sure to look up and double check that you and any equipment, such as a ladder or a light strand, are a minimum 10 feet away from overhead power lines. When securing light strands, never staple or nail them into place. This could damage the product.
- Keep electrical cords out of walkway areas to avoid causing a tripping hazard.
- Lastly, turn off all electrical light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to sleep. A timer can help you do this.

Avoid real scares this Halloween, and decorate safely. Get more safety tips at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



**Energy Efficiency**

**Tip of the Month**

Cooler weather is on the way! Heating requires more energy than any other system in your home, typically making up about 42% of your energy bill. With proper equipment maintenance and upgrades like additional insulation and air sealing, you can save about 30% on your energy bill.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

# Is an EV right for you?

The appeal of electric vehicles (EVs) is gaining momentum. There are many considerations to make before purchasing any new vehicle, and EVs have some unique aspects.

First, consider your driving habits. Keep track of your actual daily use so you know what range you need from an EV. According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, the average American drives almost 30 miles a day, and in rural areas, that average is just under 36 miles a day. However, a typical range for an electric car today is over 100 miles, and ranges of 150 to 250 miles are becoming more common. CHEC recently added a Chevy Bolt to our fleet. The Bolt runs solely on electricity and has a range of 238 miles on a single charge.

Also, consider what type of EV would work best for you. Depending on your driving habits, if you own a second gasoline-powered car or require any long-distance travel, you may need to consider a hybrid model. Review the types of electric vehicles to determine your best fit. If you decide to purchase a BEV, one of the most important questions to ask yourself is how you plan to charge it. There are three ways to charge an electric car:

*Level 1:* The simplest charging technique is to plug the car into a standard home outlet. That will charge the battery at a rate that will add from two to five miles to its range each hour. That's pretty slow, but the battery might start the charging session already partly charged, depending on how far it's driven that day.

*Level 2:* Level two charging stations require a 240-volt plug and a dedicated 40-amp circuit. They will provide between 10 and 25 miles of range for each hour of charging, which would fully charge the battery overnight. Timers can also be used to charge the vehicle in the middle of the night when electric consumption is typically lower.

*Level 3:* This is the fastest form of charging, and requires specialized equipment more suited to public charging stations. It will charge a car battery up to 80 percent of capacity in 30 minutes. This high-speed technique should only be used for special long-distance driving, since it can degrade the battery over time.

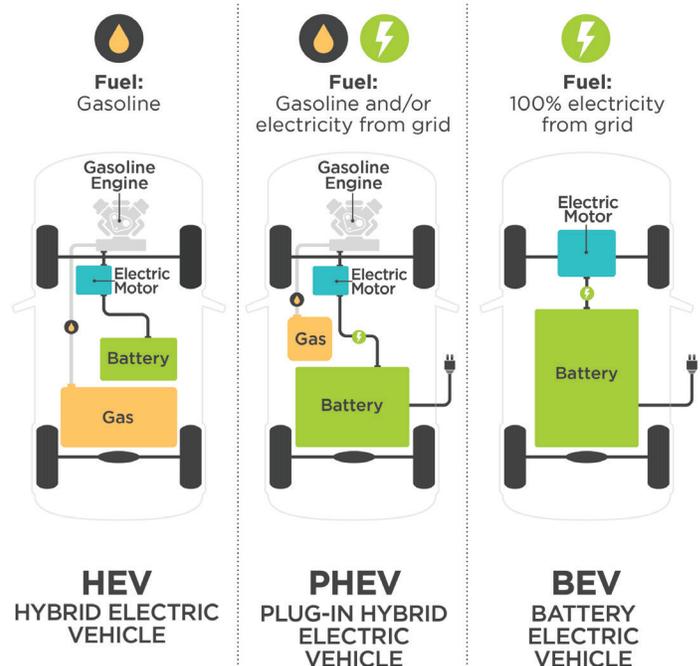
The lack of charging infrastructure to support electric vehicles has been a significant barrier to adoption, but that is changing. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, there are now more than 18,000 public charging stations in the U.S. and CHEC is adding to that number. In partnership with Francis Solar, CHEC is installing a level 3 charging station at the Stigler office, and both a level 2 and level 3 at the Sallisaw office.

If you do purchase an EV, be sure to let CHEC know. The current service to your home was sized to meet the demands of your house as needed when your service was connected. Adding the EV charger could create a risk of overloading the wires and transformers powering your home. Overloaded services can fail and leave you in the dark. A quick call to CHEC at 800-328-2368 before installation of an EV charger can prevent and avoid such a scenario.



## Types of Electric Vehicles

If you're looking to purchase an electric vehicle, use this cheat sheet to help determine the various options. Drivers can choose between three types of electric vehicles (EVs). EVs are classed by the amount of electricity that is used as their energy source.



Source: Electric Power Research Institute