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March 2015

Hot Watts

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Your home works hard for you. Consider giving it an energy checkup. Hire a professional energy auditor to diagnose where your house could be losing energy and where you can start saving money. Auditors check for air leaks, inspect insulation, survey heating and cooling equipment and more. After making efficiency upgrades, you could save 5-30 percent on your energy bills.

Source: EnergySavers.gov

Congratulations!

Kathleen Folsom is our online survey winner.



New Trustee Appointed to the Board

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative's (CHEC) Board of Trustees and employees are pleased to introduce and welcome Mr. Theron Croisant as our newest board member. Mr. Croisant will be serving District #2, which covers the western 1/3 of Sequoyah County.

Mr. Croisant, a longtime educator, was born and raised in Muskogee, Oklahoma. During his childhood, he spent a lot of time at the cotton gin his father and grandfather operated in Muskogee. He graduated from Muskogee High School in 1962. He continued his studies at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, receiving his degree in education. His first job, which spanned fourteen years, involved teaching and coaching at Midwest City Schools, consequently leading him into administration. He accepted a position at Mustang Schools where he spent the next eighteen years, seven of which were as superintendent, until his retirement in 1999. An opportunity arose, and he found himself working again as Superintendent of Vian Schools for the next 4 ½ years. Croisant took a part-time position

for the State School Board Association in the Whole Board Development Program. This program was designed to help school board members receive training that enables them to receive their school board certification. Occasionally, he assists schools who need his expertise in this field.

"All my life I have been working with kids because I like to see them succeed. Furthermore, I found that I really enjoyed the administrative end of education. In administration, I found that I could work on a project and bring it to fruition," said Croisant.

Theron and his wife Judie moved to Sequoyah County in 2000 and have been members of CHEC since that time. They were blessed with two sons and enjoy spending time with their four grandchildren and great grandson. They spend much of their time traveling to their grandchildren's school activities.

"I am extremely impressed with the staff of CHEC and really like that everyone here is one big family. I look forward to serving as a trustee."

The board, management, employees, and members welcome Mr. Croisant to the cooperative family.



Theron Croisant, Board Trustee, District #2

Scholarship Deadline Approaches

April 3rd will be the last day to turn in applications for the Herman Driscoll Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship committee will award a \$500 scholarship to four area high school seniors planning to attend college or technical school.

Application and guidelines may be obtained at the CHEC offices or our website at www.cooksonhills.com under "News & Events." If you have any questions, please contact Felicia Williams at 800-328-2368.

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Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. welcomes members to submit photos, and articles which will be subject to editing. Cookson Hills reserves the right to publish or modify any article. Companies and individuals featured in the Hot Watts newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policy, position, or view of Cookson Hills.

Donna Rhodes, *Editor*
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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**

Kiosks Offer Another 24 Hour Payment Option

What method of payment is right for you?

CHEC is happy to announce our newest 24 hour payment option! For your convenience, kiosks have been installed at the Stigler office in the outside drive-thru lane, and at the Sallisaw office in the drive-thru lane on the north side of the drive-thru window. The kiosks will accept cash and credit/debit card payments 24 hours each day, seven days per week.

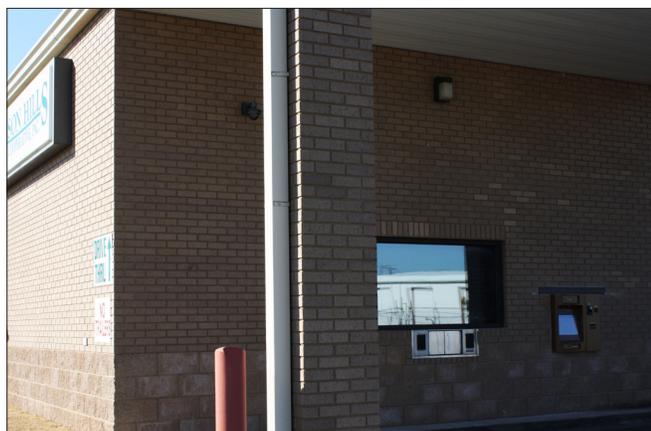
To make a payment, you will need your payment stub or your account number. If you have your payment stub, you may scan the barcode on your payment stub with the barcode reader located in the upper right corner of the kiosk. Or you may enter your account number on the screen and follow the prompts.

Please note the following: the kiosks will not make change. Your cash payment credited to your account will be equal to the exact amount of dollars you insert into the kiosk. If you want to pay the exact amount of your bill, you will either need to make your payment in the lobby during normal operating hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.) or use a credit or debit card. All credit or debit card payments will automatically be assessed a \$3.95 convenience fee when made at the kiosk. To avoid the \$3.95 convenience fee, you can continue to make face-to-face credit/debit card payments with a cashier at the drive-thru window or in the lobby, or you may enroll in the auto credit card payment program. If you must make a credit or debit card payment after normal operating hours through the kiosk, you will be assessed the \$3.95 convenience fee. The convenience fee is not applicable to cash payments; therefore, no convenience fee will be assessed for any payment made with cash.

In addition to the kiosk payment option, CHEC will continue to offer 24 hour payment access through our Secure Pay



Kiosk located in the outside drive-thru lane at the Stigler office



Kiosk located in the drive-thru lane on the north side of the drive-thru window at the Sallisaw office

line (888-678-1937), through SmartHub via our website at www.cooksonhills.com, or through your mobile device with our SmartHub app. Please keep in mind that these methods will create a \$3.95 convenience fee charge for each transaction.

We also continue to offer members the traditional payment methods with no fees. Members may make payments in person, by mail, through automatic credit/debit card draft or auto bank draft, or after hours through the night deposit boxes. Certain terms still apply for reconnection of disconnected electric services. Please call our offices for more information.

If you have questions regarding how to use the kiosk, please call us Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 800-328-2368, and we will be happy to assist you. Thank you for your business!

The evolution of your electric meter

By Tom Tate

Aside from the poles and wires, the electric meter is probably the most recognized part of your cooperative's delivery system. This device is an integral part of the objective CHEC has in providing the highest possible quality electric service at the lowest possible cost. Without the meter, we would be forced to rely on less reliable and less equitable methods of calculating the cost of each member's electric service.

Like all technology, the electric meter has evolved over the years. The original style of meter would make a watchmaker proud. It relies upon an intricate set of gears to accurately measure the amount of electricity used in the same way a mechanical watch relies on its gears to tell time. Many members will recognize the flat spinning dial, its black mark rotating under the glass cover and the set of dial hands moving. So, how does this electromechanical type of meter function?

The rotating disk is mounted to a geared vertical shaft set between a pair of electromagnets. The flow of electricity through the meter causes the magnets to power up, and their interaction makes the disk rotate. The speed of rotation depends on the amount of electricity used at the time. The shaft meshes with the gear train that turns the dial hands. The first dial registers in increments of single kilowatt hours (kWh), the next dial registers 10 kWh, then 100 and so forth up to 10,000 kWh.

Highly accurate and reliable, the drawback to the mechanical meter is that a human must read the consumption and input 426800 it into a billing system, a process both time intensive and susceptible to human error.

The next major evolution of the meter came with the introduction of

an electronic module. This module is added to the mechanical meter just described. It reads the rotations of the meter's flat dial and captures that data in memory. At regular intervals, this module reports consumption via the power lines or radio signals to the electric co-op's offices where it is automatically entered into the billing system. This advancement eliminates human error and greatly reduces costs for the cooperative.

The all-digital meter reflects the current stage of meter evolution. As the name suggests, there are no longer any gears and rotating disks. Using electronics, the meter measures the use of electricity, stores the data and reports that data in the same manner as the electronic module. In a little homage to the original spinning disk, many digital meters replicate that feature with a series of horizontal bars that march across the face of the display. Depending upon the meter make, the member can use a button to cycle through the display to get basic service data.

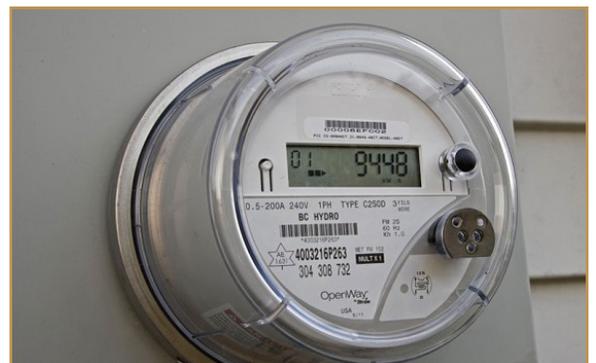
So where will meters go from here? It seems that the next step in meter evolution will depend largely upon how far the smart home develops. As more appliances, devices and even light bulbs become accessible via the Internet, members may drive the development of a new generation of meters that can also communicate with their smart phone, tablet or PC. Seems like we'll have to wait and see, but it should be interesting. Rest assured, CHEC will make the best use of available technology to control costs, render accurate bills and keep your service quality high.



The electromechanical meter relies upon an intricate set of gears to accurately measure the amount of electricity used



The introduction of an electronic module is an addition to the mechanical meter



The all-digital meter or smart meter measures the use of electricity and stores and reports that data

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues 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.

CHEC Members Save on Prescription Drugs



If you've filled a prescription recently, you were probably shocked by the price tag. By using your Co-op Connections Card you may be able to receive 10% to 85% discount off retail prices on prescription drugs at many pharmacies – including CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Target and many local pharmacies.

CHEC participates in the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives' Co-op Connections® Program. One of the benefits of that program is the pharmacy discounts offered by using the card. CHEC members saved \$14,776.22 or an average of 45.17 percent in pharmaceutical discounts during 2014.

Present your Co-op Connections Card along with your prescriptions to the pharmacist. The pharmacy can compare the cost using your insurance or by using the Co-op Connections card. Pharmacy discounts are not insurance and are not intended to replace insurance.

Members without prescription drug coverage will see the greatest benefit utilizing this program.

The Co-op Connections program is free to all members of CHEC. For more details, please visit the Co-op Connections page on our website at www.cooksonhills.com or www.connections.coop or call Co-op Connections at 800-800-7616.



LOCAL PHARMACIES

Broadway Corner Drug-Muldraw
Clif's Pharmacy-Sallisaw
Gore Green Country Drug
Head's Pharmacy-Stigler
Hoover Drug-Stigler
Johnny's Hometown Pharmacy-Roland
Muldraw Pharmacy
Roland Pharmacy
S & H Pharmacy-Muldraw
Sallisaw Pharmacy
Vian Pharmacy
Walmart Pharmacies

For a complete listing of participating pharmacies in your area visit www.connections.coop

WATT'S COOKING?



Potato Soup *Submitted by the Reed Family*

Ingredients:

- 4 slices of bacon chopped
(you can use turkey bacon)
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 4 cups water
- 2 ½ cups potatoes peeled cut into ¼ cubes
- ¼ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons soup base (we use chicken)
- ½ cup flour
- 1 cup lukewarm water
- 1 cup half and half
- 8 oz. light Velveeta cheese cubed



Coat skillet with olive oil. Sauté bacon until crispy. Add onions and celery and sauté until transparent. In a large pot add 4 cups of water, bacon, onions, celery, and potatoes. Heat until boiling, then reduce to medium heat and cook until tender. Next, add Worcestershire sauce, pepper, and soup base. Make slurry out of flour and a cup of lukewarm water. Gradually stir into potato mixture cooking about 10 minutes. Add half and half and cheese. Stir until cheese has melted. Makes about 8 cups.