



2 Notes From the Chair



3 Winter Preparation



4 Kiflings

country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Co-op Model versus the 100-year Storm

This story continues “Weathering the Storm: Recovery From February Polar Vortex Still Underway” from the November edition of Country Living. To read the first half of this narrative, please visit ecoec.com.

The polar vortex that rocked Oklahoma and Texas in February had devastating consequences for human life.

Sustained sub-zero temperatures, historically high natural gas prices, and an unprecedented energy demand tested the reliability and resolve of the cooperative system.

Distribution Cooperatives like East Central Electric are locally owned and controlled by the members we serve. In order to provide power to our members, we purchase power from Generation and Transmission Cooperatives (G&Ts). Our G&Ts, KAMO and Western Farmers, are each part of a larger system that balances power availability across multiple states to ensure large-scale reliability. KAMO is a member of Associated Electric Cooperative and Western Farmers is part of the Southwest Power Pool.

Our G&Ts were prepared for the storm with well-maintained and winter-ready coal and natural gas plants. Additional fuel sources were purchased in advance.

On Monday, February 15, both G&Ts set all-time-high peaks for winter usage without losing power that day.

“Reliable energy in a cold event like that saves lives,” ECE General Manager Tim Smith said. “At each level, the co-ops were working for our members.”

The following day, Southwest Power Pool mandated that Western Farmers, and in turn East Central, take on temporary service outages on one substation to help ease the multi-state strain. That outage lasted just two hours.

Unlike other utilities, East Central and our cooperative partners were not required to implement rolling blackouts or immediate, dramatic power cost increases.

“In overcoming a 100-year storm, we feel the strength and power of the cooperative model,” Smith said.

The financial impact of the storm will still be felt by East Central members, but not nearly to the same extent as is being felt by the recipients of for-profit utility providers.

On average, ECE members will see a per meter increase to their bill of approximately \$3 per month for just 12 months. This increase will be reflected in the Power Cost Adjustment section of their bill.

“As not-for-profit cooperatives, we have a whole different philosophy and motivation. We are mindful of our members’ needs. In times like these, that’s who we are,” Smith said. “We can’t always control the costs, but with the value of this three-tiered system working together, we can reduce the impact on our members.”



Temperatures: 40° below normal with multiple days sub-zero from Feb. 10 - 19 as reported by NOAA



Total Polar Vortex Damage: \$20.8 Billion as reported by NOAA



Cost per meter: \$3 per month for 12 months

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.

notes from the chair



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

What Leadership Looks Like

I have been asked to speak to a group of young 4-H club members. What an honor! What can I say to them that they can remember and that will improve their lives. Many things have come to mind, for instance, “Be part of something bigger than you can be by yourself.” And, “you are responsible for someone other than yourself.”; “It’s not all about you or me--you can make an impact on your family and community that will make life better for you and others.”

As I read and listen to our national politics, I am disturbed at the division in our country. One political party opposing the other party rather than doing what is good for all our citizens.

“Our goal is always, always, always to help improve the lives of our members.”

- LOWELL HOBBS

The Board of Directors at East Central Electric is a model governing body. We have different thoughts that are shared as we reach consensus. Our goal is always, always, always to help improve the lives of our members. We were not the very first but “one” of the first to promote high speed internet to our rural areas. As we enter the final stages of this effort, we are already planning to assist non-members with broadband to the home. If our Board had started bickering about this idea, a lot of time, energy, and expense would have been wasted. Rather, our staff, employees, and leadership rallied together to make it happen as soon as possible. I am proud to serve our members and communities with reliable, affordable electricity and now high speed internet.

Put a smile on your face with joy and love in your heart- praising God for this great country he has given us and go to church to honor Him.

I have told you before about living with my Grandma and Grandpa Hobbs for 3 1/2 years of my young life. My grandparents were believers and taught us many Christian principles. Each night we gathered up and had nightly Bible readings and prayer before each meal. (Back in those days we all ate together at the table.) Before breakfast we again had scripture readings. Attendance at church Sunday morning and night and sometimes Wednesday night. I’m

sure later in life they wondered if I retained the many lessons they shared with me.

My Granddad’s east 40 acres had a narrow strip between the

property fence line and Concharty Creek that crossed his land. He had grubbed out the under brush, cleared some larger trees, and plowed the approximate 2 acre strip with his team of horses. He loaded his wagon with bermuda grass sod growing in the barnyard, and with his team of horses drove over the soft ground and dropped the sod in front of the wheels to establish a flourishing stand of grass. My Dad and I were visiting, and Daddy’s younger brother Clyde showed up. Grandpa couldn’t wait to show his accomplishments, and it was a stunning success. He was so proud. My Uncle Clyde remarked, “it’s really great what God can do with a little tract of land.” As Grandpa stammered for words, he came out with, “You should have seen it when He had it by Himself!”

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



Introducing Pluggy the Pug among Youth Power Programs

At East Central Electric Cooperative, we adhere to seven Cooperative Principles.

Our Youth Power program is the perfect example of two of our core values — Education, Training, and Information and Commitment to Community.

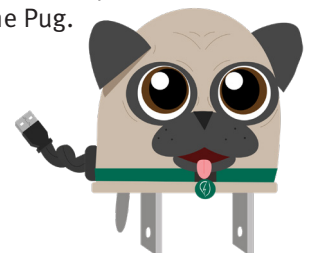
Impacting the lives of young people is extremely important to us. We have opportunities and experiences for every age group and are excited to share them.

- Safety Demos - available for on-site demonstrations of electrical hazards.
- Energy Camp - a weeklong summer camp introducing 8th graders to team building, leadership skills, and electrical safety.
- Youth Tour - an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. for 11th graders to tour landmarks, meet representatives, and learn about active citizenship and leadership.
- Scholarships - one student from each high school in the ECE service area is eligible to receive \$1,000.

And now:

- Electrical safety curriculum and resources for ages pre-K through 12th grade, featuring among other characters and topics, Pluggy the Pug.

Contact 918-756-0833 to learn more.



Q&A on Increasing Load Demand

Q: How does East Central ensure that they have enough power in each of the areas they serve to supply increasing demand?

A: Our routine process is to perform a load forecast study with our power suppliers annually. Western Farmers and KAMO factor that information into our system planning to ensure we have adequate power for our load growth.

Q: How does East Central handle circumstances where an individual members' load requirements exceed the ability to serve?

A: The availability of power goes all the way back to the generation source. So, depending on the location of the load, we coordinate with our suppliers to upgrade infrastructure and make sure we can meet that capacity need.

Q: Has East Central been impacted by pandemic-related supply chain problems?

A: Yes. Some of our recent delays in meeting load demand have nothing to do with the availability of power. Instead they are caused by our ability to get the equipment we need. The lead time on certain transformers, for example, is now 18-20 weeks as opposed to 4-6 normally.



The holiday season can be difficult.

By donating to Give A Watt, you can help a struggling member pay their electric bill. Recipients and donors remain anonymous.

To participate please:

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

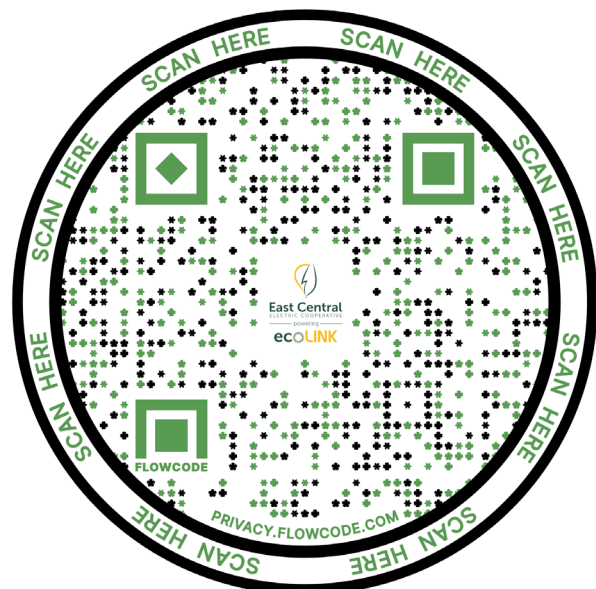
If paying by check, please make your check payable to East Central Electric and write Give A Watt in the memo area.



Happy Holidays East Central Electric Member!

Before the winter weather rolls in, we want to help you get prepared with tips and tricks to save money and stay safe. Visit www.ecoec.com or scan the code below to view a web page built for you with topics including: preparing your home for cold weather, easy energy savers, electrical fire prevention, winter weather preparedness, and children's activities.

We hope you have a wonderful and safe holiday season!



Operation Roundup

MONTHLY UPDATE



Operation Roundup funds support local charitable organizations, civic groups, youth programs, community services, and needy families. For more information on this voluntary bill roundup program, please visit us online at www.ecoec.com.

Applications reviewed	1,261
Applications granted	865
Applications denied	369
Applications tabled	15
Scholarships awarded	\$284,500

Total Disbursements \$2,081,606.43

Average member contribution 48¢

RECIPES



Kiflings - Austrian Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1 lb. butter | 1 C. powdered sugar |
| 4 C. flour | 2 tsp. vanilla |
| 2 C. nuts | 4 tsp. condensed milk |

DIRECTIONS

Cream butter; add powdered sugar, milk, and vanilla. Add flour and nuts. Roll out on floured board, 1/4 inch thick. Cut into half-moon shapes. Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes. When ready, and while still hot, roll in powdered sugar. These are delightful cookies for weddings and Christmas.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH



If you're using a space heater, never leave it unattended. Be sure to switch it off every time you leave the room or whenever you are sleeping. And never plug a space heater into an extension cord.

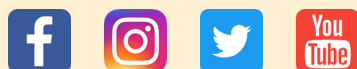
SOURCE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

SOURCE: ECE 80TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



East Central ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Pay online using SmartHub.

Pay by phone using VISA, Mastercard or Discover at 866-999-4584. Available 24/7. Convenience fee associated with payments.

Pay with cash or credit/debit card at participating Moneygram or Pay Site locations. Convenience fee associated with payments.

Pay using our drive-thru window Monday - Friday from 8 am to 4:45 pm.

Pay via automatic draft of your checking or savings account. Sign up online or download the ebill form at www.ecoec.com, or set up online payments through your bank. No convenience fee.