Another new year, another light bulb efficiency deadline

By Karen Kaley

A few weeks ago, we took down that 2013 calendar and replaced it with a new one from Cotton Electric. January 1 is a day that inspires many of us to clear out much more than old calendars and make room for new things, new resolve and new outlooks.

Many individuals choose Jan. 1 as the day to begin making adjustments in daily routines that will improve the quality of his or her life. Similar to that, lawmakers often choose Jan. 1 as a day for new rules and regulations to take effect and begin improving the quality of life for everyone. Take light bulbs, for example. Way back in 2007, President George W. Bush signed the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) into law. It included several Jan. 1 deadlines for general service incandescent light bulbs to become more efficient.

EISA has one more deadline. By Jan. 1, 2020, light bulbs must be 70 percent more efficient than those commonly in use for the past century. This is a misunderstood law, perceived as a ban on incandescent light bulbs but really a ban on their wastefulness. It is estimated that about only 10 percent of the energy used by a traditional bulb actually produces light. The remaining 90 percent produces waste heat. So, the lighting industry was required to make a better light bulb. And it has.

Consumers now have a variety of choices in lighting that are more efficient in energy use and operation. Some of the choices retain the old and familiar while some embrace new technology. Incandescent bulbs are still around but improvements necessary to meet the EISA standards have made them more expensive. Halogen gas in the bulb helps stabilize the tungsten and use energy about 40 percent more efficiently than their predecessors.

Compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs have been improved in the past several years, too. Touted as the best alternative to an incandescent, the bulbs were not readily accepted by consumers. They were very expensive compared to standard bulbs and sometimes didn’t last as long as they claimed they should. They were slow to reach full brightness and the light they put out was harsh. And, well, some people thought they were just plain ugly.

Getting around those problems required effort on the part of the lighting industry and the consumer. Improved bulbs are brighter quicker, last longer and are very little less expensive. Some bulbs have the swirly tubes encased in a familiar pear-shaped bulb.

Another January 1, another light bulb efficiency deadline. Jan. 1, 2020, will amount to a charge of $0.05 on the January bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this age bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this age bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this age bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this age bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh).
Cotton Electric rebate standards for 2014 listed

Cotton Electric has announced standards for the 2014 Rebate Program for the purchase and installation of energy- efficient ground source or air source heat pumps.

A total of $200,000 in rebate funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Once rebate funds have been exhausted, the program will end for the year.

Ground source heat pumps

Members must note the minimum standards for ground source heat pumps (GSHP) are divided into two tiers for 2014.

For open loop, 18.0 EER and 3.6 COP. Rebates are $225 per ton for closed loop systems and 3.6 COP.

For members replacing an existing GSHP system with a more efficient GSHP system, the new installation must increase the EER by at least 3.0. The minimum specification for COP is 3.3 and closed loop systems and 3.6 for open loop. Rebates are $225 per ton for systems with a desuperheater and $75 per ton without.

Air source heat pumps

To qualify for air source heat pump rebates (ASHP), members must install a unit with a minimum Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) rating of 16, EER of 13.4 or greater and a Heating Seasonal Performance Factor (HSPF) of 8.5 or greater to receive a rebate of $150 per ton.

Water heater rebates

Cotton Electric offers a rebate when members purchase and install certain energy-efficient water heaters.

Water heaters should have a minimum 40-gallon capacity and an energy factor of 93 or greater. Replacing an existing electric water heater with one that meets these specifications can get a $50 rebate. There is a maximum of one rebate allowed per unit every five years.

The rebate program will end for the year when $200,000 in rebate funds are exhausted. To arrange for a rebate, members will need to provide a copy of an itemized invoice and a certificate of installation by the HVAC contractor. An inspection by Cotton Electric personnel is also required to complete the rebate process.

For more information about the rebate program, please contact Trent Marlett, Cotton Electric’s energy efficiency coordinator, at 580-875-3351 or 800-352-3520.

To qualify for a rebate, members will need to provide a copy of an itemized invoice and a certificate of installation by the HVAC contractor. An inspection by Cotton Electric personnel is also required to complete the rebate process.

Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to be the leader in providing the most reliable and innovative electric system, with affordable rates, through the positive, enthusiastic and professional use of its resources and people.
with a statue of a dog – sitter. These aging veterans – along
tination is a comedy about three old men:
Bell Avenue.
John Denney Playhouse, 1316 NW
ents “Heroes” at 8 p.m. Jan. 23, 24
and
DanceFilmFestival.com.

Bell plans ground bog susp
Methuselah Church plans its first big
Methuselah Church will accept donations to support projects throughout the year.

Horse Fair begins Feb. 7
The annual Oklahoma Horse Fair will be Feb. 7-9 at the Stephens County Fair & Expo Center.

Horse Fair is east of Lawton at the intersection of Oklahoma Hwy. 7 and Bethel Road.
The annual Oklahoma Horse Fair begins Feb. 7. The event will run through Sunday, Feb. 9. The church is east of Lawton at the intersection of Oklahoma Hwy. 7 and Bethel Road.

The meal, which the church will accept donations to support projects throughout the year.

LCT presents ‘Heroes’
Lawton Community Theatre presents “Heroes” at 8 p.m. Jan. 23, 24 and 25 at 2 p.m. Jan. 26 in the John Deeny Playhouse, 1316 NW Bell Avenue.

This Oklahoma premiere presenta-
tion is a comedy about three old men –
and a fence sitter. These aging veterans – along with a statue of a dog – find them-
AARP offers tax prep assistance
AARP offers free tax preparation to first-time, first-served basis through the tax due date of April 15 at several locations in the Cotton Electric ser-
vice area. No appointment is neces-
sary but certain documents are. Tax-
payers should take original income tax returns, all W-2 and 1099 forms, information about any other income, adjustment and deduction documents, Social Security cards for each person on a return, and property taxes if or he she plans to itemize.

Tickets will be sold at the box office or by calling 580-581-3472.

AARP offers free tax preparation to first-time, first-served basis through the tax due date of April 15 at several locations in the Cotton Electric service area. No appointment is necessary but certain documents are. Taxpayers should take original income tax returns, all W-2 and 1099 forms, information about any other income, adjustment and deduction documents, Social Security cards for each person on a return, and property taxes if or he she plans to itemize.

Tickets will be sold at the box office or by calling 580-581-3472.

AARP offers free tax preparation to first-time, first-served basis through the tax due date of April 15 at several locations in the Cotton Electric service area. No appointment is necessary but certain documents are. Taxpayers should take original income tax returns, all W-2 and 1099 forms, information about any other income, adjustment and deduction documents, Social Security cards for each person on a return, and property taxes if or he she plans to itemize.

Tickets will be sold at the box office or by calling 580-581-3472.
Scholarship offered for Young Tour alumni

By Derril Holly

A scholarship program for former Electric Coop erative Youth Tour participants aims to strengthen their commitments to the seven cooperative principles and prepare them for leadership roles within their communities.

Youth Tour alumni who’ve completed their first year of college or are pursuing equivalent training can apply for the scholarship. More than 5,000 former youth tour participants dating back to the program’s first year of 1973 are eligible to apply for the scholarship.

“Youth Tour alumni have expressed a desire to assist students,” Emerald C. Barrows, CEO Glenn English, who led the organization from 1994 until his retirement in early 2013, said. “The foundation oversees an endowment in his honor to continue this work.”

The scholarship is designed to support students who want to make a real difference,” said Curtis Nolan, president of the NRECA board and chairman of the foundation board. “The selection of our awardees will be from among those most committed to the future of their rural communities.”

Applications will be accepted from January through March. As part of the application process, applicants must include a video to a testimonial explaining how they have demonstrated one of the seven cooperative principles. The application can be found on the Young Tour portal of NRECA, coop.NRECA.org.

Derril Holly is a staff writer for KCTV5 News, a news site for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.
Cotton Electric’s Co-op Connections Card puts value where you need it: your wallet

January 21, 2014 Current News Page 5

Cotton Electric's Co-op Connections Card helps you cover the flowers, chocolates, dinner, and everything else you need for a romantic evening.

For a complete list of all participating businesses in our area, see the Co-op Connections Card link. Visit www.connections.coop or log on to our website, CottonElectric.com and follow the Co-op Connections Card link.

The card also gives you access to online savings at more than 60,000 locations, including national and regional pharmacy chains such as Walmart, Walgreens, Target and CVS. Many local independent pharmacies such as Cotton County Drug in Walters and Ken's Rx in Lawton accept the card. It can be used at more than 60,000 locations nationwide, resulting in combined increased traffic for Cotton Electric members. Businesses can sign up for the program at no cost.

Looking for a deal on windshield repair? How about a discount on monogramming or shield repair? How about a discount on prescriptions? In the Cotton Electric service area, members have saved more than $523,000 since the co-op first offered the discount in 2008. In the past month, Cotton Electric members have saved $2,578 at the pharmacy just by showing their card.

Cotton Electric strives to serve our members according to four values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. Our Co-op Connections Card is one of the ways we live up to those values. We’re eager to answer any questions you have about the card and how to take advantage of the discounts it provides. Call us at 580-875-3351 and we’ll find your Co-op Connections Card?

No problem! Log on to www.locateproviders.com and enter your ZIP code. Ours is 73501.

Can’t find your Co-op Connections Card? No problem! Just give us a call at 580-875-3351 and we’ll send you a new one.

While it is not insurance, the discount it provides can mean savings of 10 to 60 percent on prescription drugs. The logo and information on the back of your card are recognized at more than 60,000 locations nationwide, resulting in combined savings of nearly $20 million on prescriptions. In the Cotton Electric service area, members have saved more than $523,000 since the co-op first offered the discount in 2008. In the past month, Cotton Electric members have saved $2,578 at the pharmacy just by showing their card.

Many local independent pharmacies such as Cotton County Drug in Walters and Ken’s Rx in Lawton accept the card. It can be used at more than 60,000 locations nationwide, including national and regional pharmacy chains such as Walmart, Walgreens, Target and CVS.

Want to find out more? Log on to www.locateproviders.com to search for pharmacies in our area honoring the card. Use code 22203 as the group number under the “Groups” login section. Next, enter your ZIP code.

As a Touchstone Energy co-op, Cotton Electric strives to serve our members according to four core values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. Our Co-op Connections Card is one of the ways we live up to those values. We’re eager to answer any questions you have about the card and how to take advantage of the discounts it provides. Call us at 580-875-3351 and we’ll find you out more, or log onto CottonElectric.com.

Cotton Electric’s commitment to you goes beyond providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. We’re always looking for ways to provide value to our members and our community, especially during tough economic times.

The card connects you with merchants throughout our community accepting the card, including Gene Burk Glass and Mirror in Lawton, Shane Burk Glass and Mirror in Duncan, GT Designz and Rose’s in Duncan, Ringtail USA in Duncan. GT Designz and Rose’s in Duncan. GT Designz and Rose’s in Duncan. GT Designz and Rose’s in Duncan.

We’re eager to answer any questions you have about the card and how to take advantage of the discounts it provides. Call us at 580-875-3351 and we’ll find you out more, or log onto CottonElectric.com.

This Valentine’s Day, let Cotton Electric Cooperative’s Co-op Connections Card help you cover the flowers, chocolates, dinner, and everything else you need for a romantic evening.

Cotton Electric’s Co-op Connections Card...
Avoid drastic diets and toxic cleanses this new year

If you watch TV this time of year, you hear commercial after commercial promising drastic weight loss, shrinking waistlines, and cleaner colons. All for the low price of $... fill in the blank. If you happen to be looking for ways to improve your health in 2014, steer clear of these wasteful and, in some instances, unsafe products, and enlist the help of your kitchen and grocery store to get on the right track.

Your body has natural ways of "cleansing." Your digestive system is designed to eliminate solid and liquid waste. "Cleansing" should be part of your regular routine to keep you on track. Your digestive system's "cleansing" can help you naturally maintain a healthy weight and dieting products can be dangerous. Instead of buying into the diet product infomercials, find meaningful diet changes that you can sustain throughout 2014.


Dieting products are also very popular this time of year. If you are taking any medication for diabetes, heart disease, or any other chronic disease, or any medication for diabetes, heart disease, or any other chronic disease, remembering that dieting products can be dangerous. Instead of buying into the diet product infomercials, find meaningful diet changes that you can sustain throughout 2014. Save your money for real food, kitchen utensils, new herbs and spices for flavoring without added oils, or some cooking classes or new cookbooks for inspiration.


Turkey Green Bean Chili with Cheesy Corn Fritters

Prep Time: 10 minutes; cook Time: 25 minutes
Serves: 6

Chili:
1 pound ground turkey breast*
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped red bell pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced
(14.5 oz.) cans Del Monte Whole Kernel Corn, drained
(14.5 oz.) can Del Monte Green Bean Chili
Style Diced Tomatoes, undrained
1 cup water
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

For Cheesy Corn Fritters, combine muffin mix, muffin, egg, milk, and cheese in a large bowl. Heat oil in a very large skillet over medium heat. For each fritter, pour about 3 tablespoons of batter into hot skillet. Cook 4 minutes or until golden brown, turn once.**

NOTE: If desired, substitute 3 cups chopped cooked turkey for cooked ground turkey breast. Add with tomatoes in Step 2.

** Keep cooked fritters warm in a 200°F oven while cooking the remaining fritters.


Cheesy Corn Fritters:

For Cheesy Corn Fritters, combine muffin mix, muffin, egg, milk, and cheese in a large bowl. Heat oil in a very large skillet over medium heat. For each fritter, pour about 3 tablespoons of batter into hot skillet. Cook 4 minutes or until golden brown, turn once.**

NOTE: If desired, substitute 3 cups chopped cooked turkey for cooked ground turkey breast. Add with tomatoes in Step 2.

** Keep cooked fritters warm in a 200°F oven while cooking the remaining fritters.


Many of the ingredients for Turkey Green Bean Chili and Cheesy Corn Fritters can be found in the pantry of a well-stocked kitchen.

Comer Baudellier, MPH, RD, LD
Balanced eating routine can be delicious

(Family Features) Sometimes even the smallest changes can offer big results to your overall well-being.

When maintaining or pursuing a healthful eating routine, adopting a balanced approach is essential for success. Rather than restricting yourself, strive instead to make small steps toward a healthful lifestyle. A few simple changes to your daily routine can eventually turn into lasting habits that are far more enjoyable and easier to maintain.

As an expert on the positive impact of small changes, Registered Dietitian and Nutritionist Keri Gans offers these helpful tips:

Create a healthy eating schedule
Food is fuel. In order to keep energized throughout the day it is important not to skip meals. Grab a midday snack, like The Laughing Cow Light White Cheddar flavor with whole grain crackers, to help you overcome that too familiar late afternoon slump.

These cheeses are a must-have for your January shopping lists. These cheeses are a must-have for your January shopping lists.

Eat the right kinds of fats
A little healthy, yet tasty fat, such as 1/4 of an avocado or a handful of almonds, can go a long way. It can provide flavor, satiety and be good for your body, especially your heart.

Share food and good times with advance planning
To make sure healthier choices are made when dining out, be sure to grab a quick, tasty snack to tide you over before your meal. Some great snacking options include a wedge of The Laughing Cow Light Creamy Swiss flavor with pear slices, a low-sugar granola bar or 1/4 cup of roasted edamame. The less hungry you are, the easier it is to stay on track. For more great snacking tips, visit www.thelaughingcow.com.

Make savory swaps for old standbys
It is never necessary to eliminate the flavors you love, instead learn to enjoy them in a healthier way. Are you in the mood for nachos but trying to eat a little better? Swap the high-fat cheese and greasy fried chips for a wedge of The Laughing Cow Light Queso Fresco & Chipotle with a serving of baked tortilla chips. With eight delicious varieties to choose from, this cheese is the perfect snack to satisfy your cravings in the New Year.

Enjoy the foods you are craving
Want that slice of pizza or piece of chocolate? Go for it. To maintain a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle, try and eat well the majority of the time, but make sure you leave room for some of your favorite indulgences. If you don’t allow yourself to enjoy these foods on occasion, you might always be craving them, which can lead to overeating.

So, enjoy all the flavors and fun of life by adopting a small-step approach toward eating well. Every tiny change is a step in the right direction to a happier, more satisfied you.
Since 2004, CECF contributions have been made to a variety of efforts:
- Volunteer Fire Departments $211,939.00
- Communities $142,159.55
- Youth $95,273.11
- Services $81,196.55
- Schools $79,716.26
- Individuals $47,750.00
- Public Safety $40,699.00
- Seniors $28,599.00

Total $727,332.47

Bray Senior Citizens Community Food Pantry
Bray-Doyle Baseball Team
Camp Lu-Jo KISMIF, Inc.
Central High Elementary School
Town of Central High
Town of Chattanooga
Chisholm Trail Arts Council
Chisholm Trail Heritage Center
Comanche Middle School
CU International Club
Douglas Eastside Senior Citizens Center
Duncan Community Residence
Duncan Senior Citizens Center
Elgin School
Empire Schools & Boy Scout Troop #4417
Empire Volunteer Fire Department
Fiesta in Fuqua
First Christian Day Care
Genormis FFA

2013 grant recipients include:
- Bray Senior Citizens Community
- Food Pantry
- Bray-Doyle Baseball Team
- Camp Lu-Jo KISMIF, Inc.
- Central High Elementary School
- Town of Central High
- Town of Chattanooga
- Chisholm Trail Arts Council
- Chisholm Trail Heritage Center
- Comanche Middle School
- CU International Club
- Douglas Eastside Senior Citizens Center
- Duncan Community Residence
- Duncan Senior Citizens Center
- Elgin School
- Empire Schools & Boy Scout Troop #4417
- Empire Volunteer Fire Department
- Fiesta in Fuqua
- First Christian Day Care
- Genormis FFA
- Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma
- Indiahoma Public Schools
- Leadership Duncan XVI
- Prevent Blindness Oklahoma
- Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma
- Smith Stant/United Way of Stephens County
- Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth
- Stephens County Christmas Dinner
- Stephens County Humane Society
- Teen Court
- Temple Chamber of Commerce
- Tri-County Interlocal Coop-Walters
- United Way of Stephens County
- Valleyview Volunteer Fire Department
- Velma-Alma Public School
- Walters Elementary School
- City of Walters
- Waurika Chamber of Commerce

Since its beginning in 2004, Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation has distributed more than $727,000 to assist the needs of some 200 organizations and individuals.

Members contribute $87,033 through ORU in 2013

Turn out the change in your pocket or coin purse and count it up. Often, the pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters add up to less than a dollar. Now, imagine if most of the people you know did the same, making one big pile of change. It would add up to quite a bit.

Some 12,500 Cotton Electric members do something similar every month by participating in Operation Round Up. Power bills are rounded up to the nearest dollar and all of those partial dollars are pooled. It adds up to some significant funds that can make a significant difference in the quality of lives throughout the Cotton Electric service area.

During 2013, CECF issued 39 grants for a total of $87,033. Grants recipients included schools and youth programs, senior citizen programs, volunteer fire departments, non-profit organizations and communities.

Since its beginning in 2004, Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation has distributed more than $727,000 to assist the needs of some 200 organizations and individuals.

2013 grant recipients include:
- Bray Senior Citizens Community
- Food Pantry
- Bray-Doyle Baseball Team
- Camp Lu-Jo KISMIF, Inc.
- Central High Elementary School
- Town of Central High
- Town of Chattanooga
- Chisholm Trail Arts Council
- Chisholm Trail Heritage Center
- Comanche Middle School
- CU International Club
- Douglas Eastside Senior Citizens Center
- Duncan Community Residence
- Duncan Senior Citizens Center
- Elgin School
- Empire Schools & Boy Scout Troop #4417
- Empire Volunteer Fire Department
- Fiesta in Fuqua
- First Christian Day Care
- Genormis FFA
- Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma
- Indiahoma Public Schools
- Leadership Duncan XVI
- Prevent Blindness Oklahoma
- Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma
- Smith Stant/United Way of Stephens County
- Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth
- Stephens County Christmas Dinner
- Stephens County Humane Society
- Teen Court
- Temple Chamber of Commerce
- Tri-County Interlocal Coop-Walters
- United Way of Stephens County
- Valleyview Volunteer Fire Department
- Velma-Alma Public School
- Walters Elementary School
- City of Walters
- Waurika Chamber of Commerce

Download CECF grant applications at CottonElectric.com.

Deadline for first-quarter 2014 grant applications is Feb. 26.
Emergency heat setting can be costly

By Trent Marlett

I wanted to shed some light on a costly misunderstanding when it comes to operating our thermostats in heating mode.

These heat strips most always use the most energy, while LCD TVs use much less. And the bigger the television, the more power it draws. Plasma screens use electricity as a refrigerator. In general, the bigger the monitor, the more power consumed. It comes as no surprise that the array of digital and LED devices uses even less power than CRTs did.

So what does that EM or E Heat setting really mean? Remember when it is freezing up. Freezing rain or ice accumulating on the outdoor unit are the only conditions to manually switch to EM Heat. This turns the outdoor fan or motor from being damaged by trying to work when it is freezing outside.

Keep in mind what EM Heat mode really means. Remember this simple tip to save a lot of energy when it comes to heating your home.

Premature death — None of our co-ops can predict our long lifetime, if something happens to you, would you be able to take the time to stay in your home? Ashley Anonymous, 14th year in the co-op business and still attending college. Think before you make your decisions. You may want to take some time before you make your decisions.

As you approach retirement, and during your retirement years, you should have a plan to focus on these challenges.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When you’re working to achieve your financial objectives, you will encounter obstacles. Some of these can be anticipated — for example, you won’t be able to invest as much as you want for retirement because you have to pay for your mortgage. Other challenges can’t be easily anticipated, but you can still plan for them — you should. Obviously, the worst “unexpected,” by definition, implies an unexpected number of years. Given these risks, you may want to take for some “unexpected” unexpected developments.

For example, during your working years, be prepared for the following:

Emergency expenses — If you need a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These costs are expected — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to twelve months’ worth of living expenses. These funds, it is important to remember, are not investments. Investment risk and market stability are unimportant, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gau- ror in the market, a well-diversified portfolio is the only way to go.

Emergency expenses — If you need a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These costs are expected — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to twelve months’ worth of living expenses. These funds, it is important to remember, are not investments. Investment risk and market stability are unimportant, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gau- ror in the market, a well-diversified portfolio is the only way to go.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When you’re working to achieve your financial objectives, you will encounter obstacles. Some of these can be anticipated — for example, you won’t be able to invest as much as you want for retirement because you have to pay for your mortgage. Other challenges can’t be easily anticipated, but you can still plan for them — you should. Obviously, the worst “unexpected,” by definition, implies an unexpected number of years. Given these risks, you may want to take for some “unexpected” unexpected developments.

For example, during your working years, be prepared for the following:

Emergency expenses — If you need a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These costs are expected — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to twelve months’ worth of living expenses. These funds, it is important to remember, are not investments. Investment risk and market stability are unimportant, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gau- ror in the market, a well-diversified portfolio is the only way to go.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When you’re working to achieve your financial objectives, you will encounter obstacles. Some of these can be anticipated — for example, you won’t be able to invest as much as you want for retirement because you have to pay for your mortgage. Other challenges can’t be easily anticipated, but you can still plan for them — you should. Obviously, the worst “unexpected,” by definition, implies an unexpected number of years. Given these risks, you may want to take for some “unexpected” unexpected developments.

For example, during your working years, be prepared for the following:

Emergency expenses — If you need a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These costs are expected — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to twelve months’ worth of living expenses. These funds, it is important to remember, are not investments. Investment risk and market stability are unimportant, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gau- ror in the market, a well-diversified portfolio is the only way to go.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When you’re working to achieve your financial objectives, you will encounter obstacles. Some of these can be anticipated — for example, you won’t be able to invest as much as you want for retirement because you have to pay for your mortgage. Other challenges can’t be easily anticipated, but you can still plan for them — you should. Obviously, the worst “unexpected,” by definition, implies an unexpected number of years. Given these risks, you may want to take for some “unexpected” unexpected developments.

For example, during your working years, be prepared for the following:

Emergency expenses — If you need a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These costs are expected — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to twelve months’ worth of living expenses. These funds, it is important to remember, are not investments. Investment risk and market stability are unimportant, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gau- ror in the market, a well-diversified portfolio is the only way to go.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When you’re working to achieve your financial objectives, you will encounter obstacles. Some of these can be anticipated — for example, you won’t be able to invest as much as you want for retirement because you have to pay for your mortgage. Other challenges can’t be easily anticipated, but you can still plan for them — you should. Obviously, the worst “unexpected,” by definition, implies an unexpected number of years. Given these risks, you may want to take for some “unexpected” unexpected developments.

For example, during your working years, be prepared for the following:

Emergency expenses — If you need a major car or home repair, could you handle it? What about a temporary job loss? These costs are expected — especially if you are forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for them. To help guard against these threats, try to build an emergency fund containing six to twelve months’ worth of living expenses. These funds, it is important to remember, are not investments. Investment risk and market stability are unimportant, and they can affect your investment success. To defend yourself against wild gau- ror in the market, a well-diversified portfolio is the only way to go.
Scott Dennis works to keep system in top shape

By Karen Kaley

Of all the tasks journeyman lineman Scott Dennis works on, he prefers what he calls reworking transformers.

A typical workday’s chores may include working on security lights, clearing trees, working flags to show underground wiring, hanging transformers and meter loops and trimming and spraying vegetation that interferes with the delivery of electricity. But Dennis feels reworking transformers is probably the best investment of his time.

So, as he goes about his day, working through a stack of work orders that may include any or all of those other tasks, he may spend a few minutes longer at a location to address the transformer.

“If we have an order to fix a light, while we’re there we move to the transformer and rework the connections,” Dennis said.

This reworking is aimed at preventing critters from interrupting the flow of electricity. It is something he and his fellow linemen started doing during the past year as a preventive measure. Uninsulated wiring is replaced and covers are added and all connections are tightened.

“We add bird wire, an insulated primary wire that goes from the primary line to the top of the transformer,” Dennis said. “We also add bushing covers to try and keep birds, squirrels or snakes from causing blinks.

“We also tighten all the hardware, pull guy wires and anchors into place. We add a bolt at the top of the pole, but the bolt will make that the wire will eventually split the top of the pole. Wind, ice and the weight of the pole, but the bolt will make that.

The reasons for the rework are simple, Dennis explained. “A transformer is grounded. If a critter on the transformer touches an uninsulated hot wire, it opens the circuit, which will cause a blink on the line.

“A breaker down the line sees it as a fault, and closes the circuit. If that doesn’t clear the fault, if the animal is still on line, the device will try two more times, then it turns things off and we have to go out.”

Ah, there it is. Dennis, like any other line worker, would rather spend time during the workday making the system stronger, more reliable, than have to come back after hours to address an outage.

Because, well, he’s busy. He and his wife, Latisa, have four children. Mason, 8; Tanner, 15; and Samantha, 18; all attend school in Rush Springs and are very active in sports. Dennis ticked off his weekly schedule: Monday and Thursday, junior high basketball; Tuesday and Friday is high school basketball, and there’s church on Wednesday.

“It gets pretty hectic.”

Then there is the grandson, Ayden, born this year to his oldest son, Tyler, and Jordan Parker. The new family lives in Marlow.

There is another motivation for Dennis’ diligence when it comes to keeping transformers in good working order.

“I am a Cotton Electric member, too. I don’t like it when my power blinks or goes out,” he said.

While the area Dennis maintains in Stephens County does not include his home northwest of Marlow, he works to keep the power flowing just as though it does. He pointed out that Cotton Electric late workers and all other employees do the same.

“It’s not just me,” he said, “We all care about keeping the members’ lights on. Every person, from bottom to top, it takes all of us to make the co-op. We all have an important job. It takes everybody here to make this co-op work for our members.”

Building Farm Ponds & Private Lakes In the Cotton Electric Service Area

Bruce At 580-641-1952

They Think We’re Just Fishin’

DEALERS

-Farm Pond and Lake Construction- Along With
- Fencing Rows
- Building Pads
- Land Clearing & Shearing

Serving the Southwest Area

Bulldozers Trackhoes

“AND A Strong Desire To Please!”

Call Bruce At- 580-641-1952

Lawton Septic Tank & Storm Shelter


580-248-3131

Employee Spotlight

Scott Dennis

Keeping the lights on

BY SCOTT DENNIS

On a cold Tuesday morning, Dennis, a 15-year journeyman lineman with Cotton Electric, was on the job in Rush Springs, working on a transformer.

Dennis was one of the linemen who had to work through the weekend to replace a transformer that went out. The transformer that went out is a primary transformer, which is used to supply power to the members.

Dennis said he was grateful to be able to work through the weekend to replace the transformer.

“Any time we can help our members, we always do,” Dennis said.

Dennis said he was glad to be able to work through the weekend to replace the transformer.

“We always try to be available to our members,” Dennis said.

Dennis said he was grateful to be able to work through the weekend to replace the transformer.

“Any time we can help our members, we always do,” Dennis said.

Dennis said he was glad to be able to work through the weekend to replace the transformer.

“We always try to be available to our members,” Dennis said.

Dennis said he was grateful to be able to work through the weekend to replace the transformer.

“Any time we can help our members, we always do,” Dennis said.

Dennis said he was glad to be able to work through the weekend to replace the transformer.

“We always try to be available to our members,” Dennis said.
Roy Mason was surprised to hear his name called when the 2013 Employee of the Year was announced recently. He said he was quite humbled by the unexpected honor.

Employees were asked to describe how a person they nominated went above and beyond in his or her job, showed integrity and honesty in the workplace and provided excellent customer service. Mason is a heavy-equipment operator on the co-op’s construction crew. The nomination submitted by a fellow employee focused on his pleasant and helpful attitude when working with others. “He takes the time to show and explain the different aspects of the jobs. He does so with a smile.

“Roy is always in a good mood with a smile on his face,” his nominator said. “He never complains, never disapproves. When the work starts, he does whatever is needed, when it is needed. He may not be looking for recognition but he is in the background making a huge difference.”

Congratulations, Roy!
A total of $42,690 was discounted for an average on 1,715 prescriptions not covered by insurance.