

# The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



*“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”*

VOLUME 63

April 13, 2020

NUMBER 8

## Cooperative responds to COVID-19 pandemic

At Cotton Electric, the most important thing we can do in a time like this is keep the power on. We want to assure members that we have plans in place for the continued delivery of reliable power to homes, businesses, farms and families.

We are following the Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines and taking steps to help protect our community and keep our employees healthy and on the job. We will continue to provide the excellent service you expect.

The lobbies of our Walters and Duncan offices

remain closed for community health until further notice.

To comply with social distancing, all engineering appointments will be rescheduled to a later date. We have assigned crews to two-person teams and staggered pickup times for supplies to limit contact. Many office employees have been working remotely or on a rotating shift to ensure the continued operation of the co-op and health of employees.

We have suspended disconnects for nonpayment through April 30. We encourage members to keep

up with payments, so they don't fall too far behind. Members will still be responsible for full payment of their electric bill. Members who have been directly affected by COVID-19 may call 580-875-3351 for assistance. One of the co-op's Member Services Representatives would be happy to help.

Cotton Electric has a variety of contactless pay options available for members, including by mail, phone, SmartHub App online, drive-thru windows, kiosk and more. Learn more about these options below. Stay safe!

## Co-op offers contactless payment options

### Online

Members can sign up for online account access at [CottonElectric.com/payment-options](http://CottonElectric.com/payment-options) and pay via electronic check, Visa, MasterCard or Discover credit cards any time of day. Credit cards will not be accepted for payment on commercial accounts.

Payments made through our website are applied to your account within 20 minutes from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Payments made after this deadline will be applied to your account the following day. You can also select this option to view your bill history, payment history or energy use charts.

There is no additional charge for using electronic check or credit card payment methods.



### Phone

To make a payment using a series of menu choices in an automated system, call 1-855-730-8711. The system requires a Cotton Electric account number and credit/debit card or banking account numbers.



### SmartHub App

Members using smart phones or tablets can download the free SmartHub App by searching SmartHub in the App Store or Google Play.

Credit cards will not be accepted for payment on commercial accounts. There is no additional charge for using credit card payment methods.



### Drive-Thru Window

We enjoy seeing your smile, even if it is just at the drive-thru window. Except for holidays, windows are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for cash and check payments.

Come see us at our headquarters, 226 N. Broadway in Walters, or at the Duncan office, 1101 W. Oak.

### Moneygram

Moneygram transactions are handled at Walmart and CVS stores anywhere in the United States. There is a fee for this transaction. To make a payment using this method, you will need your account number and our biller code: 7933.

At CVS stores, there is a kiosk that accepts cash payments during regular store hours, which, under normal circumstances, in many locations is 24 hours.

At Walmart stores, Moneygram payments can be made in cash or with a PIN debit card. Instead of a kiosk, these transactions are made by filling out a blue form at the Walmart Money Center or Customer Service during the hours those departments are open. Hours may be modified during pandemic.

Moneygram locations can be found at [Moneygram.com](http://Moneygram.com)

### Kiosk

Credit card payments can be made at the outside kiosk at the Duncan office, 1101 W. Oak. Credit cards will not be accepted for payment on commercial accounts. Cash payments may also be accepted here. However, the machine will not make change and instead will apply the change to your account as credit.



### Mail

Use the return envelope that comes with a power bill. Enclose a check and the bottom portion of the bill. Do not send cash.



### Liberty National Bank

Cash payments are accepted at Liberty National Bank's branches in Lawton, Medicine Park and Elgin.



**For assistance,  
please call us at  
580-875-3351  
or 800-522-3520**

Cotton Electric is owned by the members it serves. We care about the safety and well-being of those we distribute power to.

Disconnects for non-payment have been temporarily suspended until April 30. Members are still responsible for their electric bill and are encouraged to pay what they can.

Members who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are encouraged to call us. Our Member Services Representatives are happy to help.

### Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after April 1, 2020, is (\$0.00219) per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1,300 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a credit of \$2.85 on the April bill.

### March 2020 Temperature Extremes

| Day | High | Low | Avg. | Day | High | Low | Avg. |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| 1   | 82   | 43  | 63   | 16  | 61   | 47  | 54   |
| 2   | 62   | 41  | 52   | 17  | 58   | 53  | 56   |
| 3   | 69   | 41  | 55   | 18  | 78   | 55  | 67   |
| 4   | 60   | 40  | 50   | 19  | 78   | 56  | 67   |
| 5   | 70   | 27  | 49   | 20  | 61   | 39  | 50   |
| 6   | 67   | 25  | 46   | 21  | 60   | 35  | 48   |
| 7   | 70   | 29  | 50   | 22  | 59   | 48  | 54   |
| 8   | 59   | 45  | 52   | 23  | 71   | 53  | 62   |
| 9   | 73   | 49  | 61   | 24  | 76   | 55  | 66   |
| 10  | 76   | 38  | 57   | 25  | 85   | 47  | 66   |
| 11  | 76   | 52  | 64   | 26  | 92   | 52  | 72   |
| 12  | 87   | 49  | 68   | 27  | 81   | 60  | 71   |
| 13  | 61   | 48  | 55   | 28  | 72   | 53  | 63   |
| 14  | 59   | 45  | 52   | 29  | 71   | 39  | 55   |
| 15  | 49   | 43  | 46   | 30  | 62   | 51  | 57   |
|     |      |     |      | 31  | 67   | 49  | 58   |

Source: [srh.noaa.gov/oun/](http://srh.noaa.gov/oun/)

Average Daily High: 69 Average Daily Low: 45

### Did You Know?

We are committed to the health and safety of our members and employees. Due to the threat of COVID-19, our lobbies will be closed until further notice. For assistance, call 580-875-3351.

The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on May 11, 2020.

### Contact Us

Do you have a story idea for The Current or do you need to place an ad? If so, let us know.

We can be reached at 580-875-3351 or by email at [TheCurrent@cottonelectric.com](mailto:TheCurrent@cottonelectric.com).

You can also drop us a line at Cotton Electric Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.

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More news at [cottonelectric.com](http://cottonelectric.com)



From the CEO

Co-op remains committed to providing power

Cotton Electric Cooperative’s purpose is to provide our members and communities with power that is safe, reliable and affordable - regardless of circumstances. We’re accustomed to working under adverse conditions like windstorms, thunderstorms, fires and ice. Now we’ve been faced with a new challenge, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cotton Electric employees have risen to that challenge as we have modified our operations to protect employees and our members while continuing to provide you with reliable power.

Although we have temporarily closed our Walters and Duncan lobbies and temporarily suspended in-person appointments, our drive-thru windows at



Jennifer Meason, CEO

both office locations remain open. We can also be reached by phone at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

We know that many of you have been affected financially by this crisis, so we have temporarily suspended disconnecting electric service for non-payment through April 30. Please note that the disconnect suspensions are not bill waivers and we encourage you to pay at least a

portion of your bill as you are able. Taking this simple step can help avoid a large multi-month balance down the road. If you have any questions about payment arrangements, please contact our member service representatives.

As you’re spending more time at home, you may see a surge in home energy use. I’d like to share a few steps you can take to help control your energy bill:

- Program your thermostat to maximize energy savings. Setting your thermostat one degree lower when heating or one degree higher when cooling can reduce energy use by up to 5 percent.
- Do full loads of laundry and wash with cold water. Using

warm water instead of hot can cut a load’s energy use in half and using cold water will save even more.

- Air dry dishes. This step can cut your dishwasher’s energy use by up to 50 percent.

- Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use. Small appliances and electronics use energy even when not in use. When powered on, game consoles, televisions and similar electronics are responsible for up to 12 percent of energy use.

I’m extremely thankful and proud of the employees who continue to serve our communities. When outages occur, we will be ready to respond.

We’re here for you and thank you for your continued support.



#ThankALineworker


When you find yourself in the dark, we’ve got your back.

NATIONAL LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY IS APRIL 13

THANK YOU TO OUR HEROES IN HARD HATS WHO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON FOR OUR MEMBERS.

WE APPRECIATE YOU, EVERYDAY.


**COTTON**  
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Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

This spring, consider using a rain barrel to save energy. Rain barrels capture rainwater from a roof that can be used later for watering your lawn, garden or indoor plants.

TheCurrent


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**COTTON**  
ELECTRIC CO-OP

**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.

**February 2020 Operating Stats**

|   | 2020        | 2019        |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Total Amount Billed/Accrued             | \$4,888,439 | \$4,928,245 |
| Cost of Purchased Power                 | 3,967,448   | 4,012,564   |
| Taxes                                   | 114,321     | 121,589     |
| Total Operating Expense Per Mile        | 1,091       | 1,084       |
| Average Farm and Residential Bill       | 125         | 124         |
| Average Farm and Residential kWh        | 1,088       | 964         |
| Total Meters Billed (farm, residential) | 18,478      | 18,407      |
| Miles Energized                         | 5,201       | 5,197       |
| Density Per Mile                        | 3.55        | 3.54        |
| New Service Connects YTD                | 65          | 45          |
| Services Retired                        | 42          | 24          |



# Community Spotlight

All events are up to date as of April 6. If you would like your community event listed in the May issue, please submit information by April 29 by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to [TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com](mailto:TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com). Events occurring before May 11 will not be published in the next issue.

LPS provides meal sites

Lawton Public Schools are handing out free meals to all students ages 18 and below. Pick-up will be from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at these LPS affiliated locations: MacArthur High School, Central Middle School, Eisenhower Middle School, Tomlinson Middle School, Adams, Almor West, Carriage Hills, Cleveland, Crosby Park, Edison, Freedom, Hugh Bish, Learning Tree Academy, Lincoln, Pat Henry, Pioneer Park, Ridgecrest, Sullivan Village, Washington, Whittier and Woodland Hills. Pick-up will be available in the drop-off lanes and main entrances. Meals are packed in a “lunch today, breakfast tomorrow” combo. There will be no public access to buildings and children are not allowed to be left on site. Students do not have to be affiliated with LPS in order to receive a free meal, they need only be currently enrolled in school. Information can be found at [LawtonPS.org](http://LawtonPS.org) or at the Lawton Public Schools Facebook page.

CVS offers free delivery

CVS Pharmacy is offering free delivery on prescriptions and everyday essentials in an effort to help customers be prepared and stay safe. Options include 1- to 2-day shipping or same-day delivery. To get started, search for CVS Pharmacy in the App Store or Google Play or call your local store to ask that your prescriptions be delivered. Information can be found at [CVS.com](http://CVS.com).

Church offers food, assistance

Medicine Park First Baptist Church is offering a food pantry to the community. If you are a Medicine Park resident in need of food or counseling, or you would like to donate, you can contact the church on their Facebook page, First Baptist Church Medicine Park, OK.

City of Lawton gives reminders

Here are a few general updates and reminders for the City of Lawton: City Hall and various offices remain generally closed to the public but contact information for each department can be found at [LawtonOK.gov](http://LawtonOK.gov). Low-income senior discounts for the City of Lawton utility department will not need to be renewed in April. Discounts will remain in effect. Customers will be notified for further instruction about renewal later. For information, call 580-581-3308. Municipal Court is closed to the public but individuals may still make phone and online payments or contact the court for rescheduling of appearances. Learn more at [LawtonOK.gov/departments/municipalcourt](http://LawtonOK.gov/departments/municipalcourt). Lawton Public Library is performing curbside pickup for library books and materials. For details, call 580-581-3450. All Parks events slated to occur in April have been cancelled or rescheduled. For information, call 580-581-3400.

Walmart accommodates seniors

Walmart dedicated senior shopping hours to take place every Tuesday from 6-7 a.m. To help serve as many people as possible and minimize wait time, customers are encouraged to call in any prescription refills 24 hours in advance. Call your local store to confirm.

EPS offers ‘grab and go’ meals

The Elgin Public Schools Child Nutrition Department will be serving “grab and go” meals from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday in front of the Fine Arts Center located on Mighty Owl Ave. Meals will be a lunch and breakfast combo package and are available to children 18 years old and younger. One meal package per child.

Walmart adjusts pharmacy pickup

Walmart Pharmacy located on N.W. Sheridan Rd. in Lawton is now offering curbside pickup and mail out delivery for prescriptions. Call ahead to request prescription refills. Text message notifications are available on the status of prescriptions. Call the Pharmacy at 580-357-4842 to let them know you have arrived for curbside pickup or let them know you would like your prescription mailed to your doorstep.

DPS updates meal schedule

Duncan Public Schools has changed meal pickup days to Monday and Wednesday only. On these days, any child 18 years old or younger, regardless of meal status or school, will receive two meals and an extra bag of food. Children must be present to pick up meals. Pickup will be from 11-11:30 a.m. at Emerson Elementary, Woodrow Wilson Elementary and Elm Terrace Apartments and from 12-12:30 p.m. at Mark Twain Elementary, Horace Mann Elementary and Plato Elementary. For information, email [Questions@DuncanPS.org](mailto:Questions@DuncanPS.org).

DRH limits visitors

Until further notice, no visitors will be allowed at Duncan Regional Hospital. Exceptions include: Imaging procedures are limited to one visitor and may come to the Imaging Center entrance to check in. Birth center patients will be limited to one visitor. No one under the age of 18 is allowed in the hospital unless they are a patient. Patients needing emergency care need to check in at the emergency department where visitors will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

WC updates services

Waste Connections of Oklahoma, which serves Duncan, Marlow and Comanche, will continue operations in the face of COVID-19, though some pickup services may change temporarily. Beginning in April, residential bulk and brush services will be temporarily suspended, and residential trash serviced will be limited to only the collection of contents within carts. This change will remain in effect through April. When COVID-19 begins to lift off Oklahoma, Waste Connections anticipates moving back to regular services.

Information above is as of April 6

# Photo OF THE Month



Cotton Electric employee Ely King submitted this photo of two calves in the pasture on a beautifully, cloudy day. Enter your “best shot” in our Photo of the Month contest. Theme for May is Happiness. Entries can be emailed to [TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com](mailto:TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com) or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric prize package of CEC goodies.

## City of Lawton extends Civil Emergency

A proclamation extending the declaration of Civil Emergency in the City of Lawton to April 30 was signed by Mayor Stan Booker on April 3. The document further details and clarifies essential business and activities for citizens. The new document includes information such as: The closure of campgrounds and most outdoor public restrooms owned by the city; specifications on allowable activity by staff and management at nonessential businesses; penalties for the failure to comply; and clarification on gatherings of six or less. Additional discussion surrounding COVID-19 concerns and governmental action in the City of Lawton was discussed at the April 7 Special Lawton City Council hybrid meeting. Latest updates can be found at [LawtonOK.gov](http://LawtonOK.gov).

WE LOVE YOUR ENERGY

And we think you're going to love ours. As a member of Cotton Electric Cooperative, you can help guide our future as we efficiently deliver affordable, reliable and safe energy.

COTTON

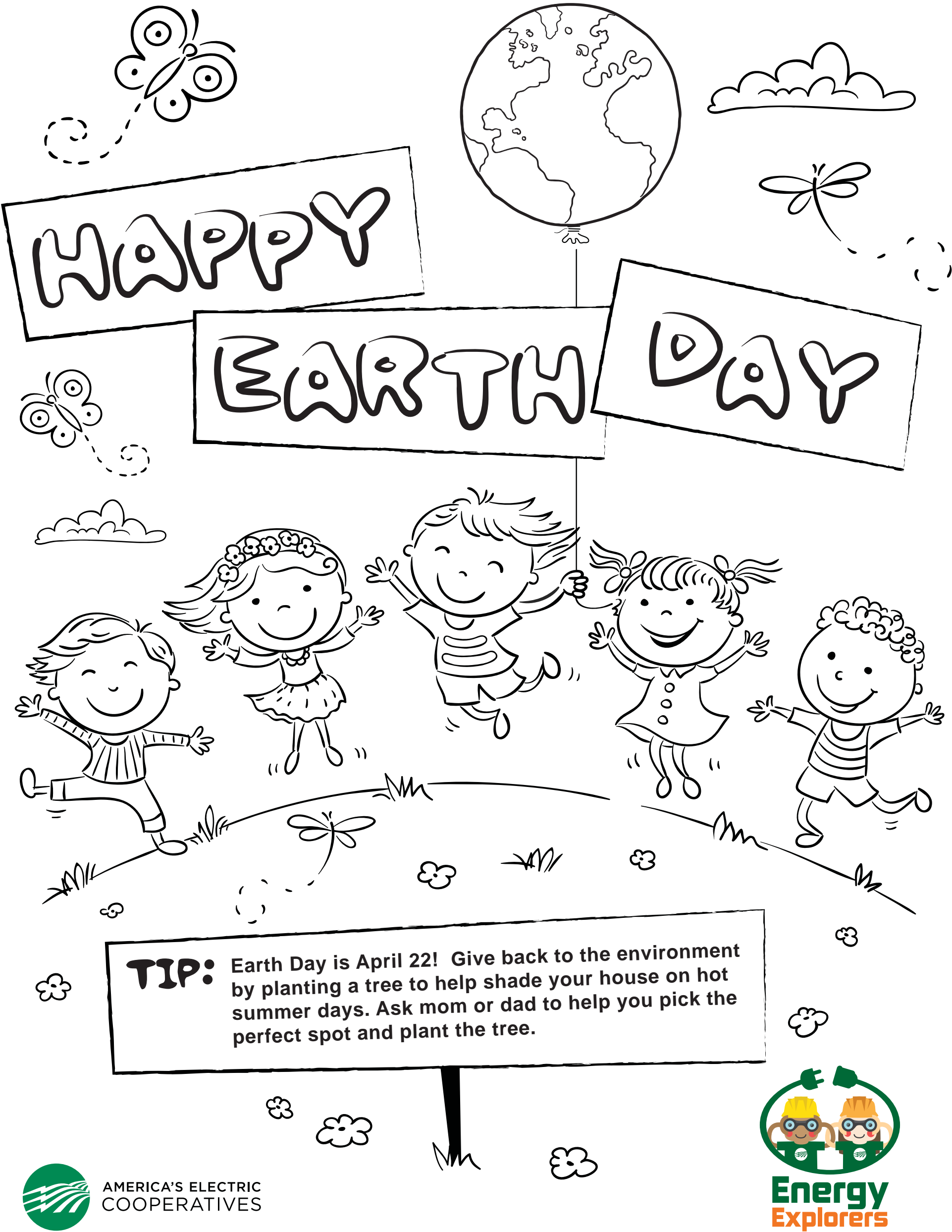
ELECTRIC CO-OP

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

| May          |         | June         |         | July         |         |
|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| Ad Sales     | Apr. 24 | Ad Sales     | May 29  | Ad Sales     | June 26 |
| Classified   | Apr. 29 | Classified   | June 3  | Classified   | July 1  |
| Publish Date | May 11  | Publish Date | June 15 | Publish Date | July 13 |



# CO-OP COLORING CONTEST



Step One: Color this Earth Day coloring page.  
Step Two: Take a picture of yourself with your masterpiece.  
Step Three: Email your picture to [TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com](mailto:TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com) by 5 p.m. on April 21 and it could be published in the May edition of The Current! Happy Earth Day!



ENGINEERING SERVICE & CONTRACTING

5755 N. Highway 81, Duncan, OK  
580-252-2205  
[www.dehartair.com](http://www.dehartair.com)

**Kill Bacteria, Viruses and Mold with a Global Plasma Solutions Ionization Device**

- Particle Reduction & Smoke Control
- Odors neutralized by destroying VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds)
- Pathogens Killed (Bacteria, Viruses, Mold) Helps to control Allergens/Asthma\*, Prevents dirty sock syndrome
- Energy Savings of 30% by Reducing Outdoor Air Intake by up to 75%, reduces pressure loss by keeping coils clean without expensive UV system, and requires No Maintenance!

\*These statements are based on numerous customer testimonials and have not been evaluated by the FDA

**Call us today for more information! 580-252-2205**



**Cotton Electric Co-Op Rebates Available On: \*16 Seer, 17 Seer, 18 Seer(+) Air Source Heat Pumps. \*New Water Heaters And Mini-Splits. \*New Geo-Thermal Systems & Replacement Systems. [srice@dehartair.com](mailto:srice@dehartair.com)**

Dehart Air Conditioning offers preventative maintenance plans to keep systems healthy!

\*Rebates Available in many OMPA Member cities \*Restrictions apply



**26% Federal Tax Credit for Geothermal Systems**



# WFEC’s integration of zero carbon energy

Carbon-free resources have been a part of Western Farmers Electric Cooperative’s (WFEC) wholesale power mix for many years, with development and growth playing essential roles in providing a diversified portfolio.

Hydro power was among the first zero-carbon energy sources to be included in WFEC’s portfolio. Hydro power generation generally came from the Southwest Power Administration (SWPA) and Corps of Engineers resources in eastern Oklahoma, northeast Arkansas and southwest Missouri. In 2000, outside of these hydro resources, the remainder of the energy provided to our members was from fossil fuel generation, which was a mix of coal and natural gas.

After the turn of the century, WFEC’s Board of Trustees considered the possibilities of wind energy as a new power source – solar was not available at the time – and whether adding this resource would “over time lower the wholesale power cost to our members.” In 2001, WFEC sold approximately 5,425 gigawatt-hours (GWh) to its members at a cost of 4.9 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) delivered to the low side of substation delivery locations.

In 2003, WFEC added the energy produced by the 74 megawatt (MW) Blue Canyon Wind facility, north of Lawton, to its generation mix, through a long-term Purchase Power Agreement (PPA). Since that time, through various wind projects, WFEC has increased its available wind generation to 709 MW, with projects in Oklahoma and New Mexico. All of these projects were achieved with the same guidelines of helping lower our overall cost of wholesale power to our members.

In 2016, WFEC added a 25 MW tilt-panel solar project to its gener-



Gary Roulet,  
CEO of WFEC

ation mix through long-term PPAs. This project, Caprock Solar, is south of Tucumcari, N.M. Since then, WFEC has added 26 additional MW of solar energy in New Mexico and Oklahoma on behalf of its member owners. Again, the addition of solar was made with the premise of lowering our overall cost of wholesale power.

By the end of 2019, hydro, wind and solar generation resources provided approximately 33% of the wholesale power WFEC delivered to member owners. Nineteen years after first considering carbon-free resources, WFEC sold 11,468 GWh to our members at a cost of 5.4 cents per kWh delivered to the low side of substation delivery points.

That is an increased cost of about 12.5%. Over the same period, inflation has increased about 49%. While WFEC’s wholesale power cost did not go down, it increased far less than inflation, while sales increased more than double.

With the strategy to keep wholesale power cost low, where do we expect to go over the next 5 years? That’s a fairly easy future to predict, as WFEC and

our member-owners have PPAs already in place to continue our evolution toward increasing zero-carbon energy. These new projects will be completed and commercial by 2023.

One project, a new 220 MW solar project in southeastern New Mexico, will add 600,000 MWh of energy in 2022. Another project has three parts. First, a 250 MW Oklahoma wind project that will deliver over 1,000,000 MWh of energy will be completed in late 2020. Second, a 250 MW Oklahoma solar project, with completion set for 2023, will add an additional 650,000 MWh of energy. The final piece of this three-part project is a 200 MW battery that can discharge 200 MW continually over a 4-hour period to help meet peak load. The battery will be recharged from the solar project for an initial term. After that opening period, it can re-charge from the wind or solar project, or from the electric grid, using the source that is lowest and available.

Once these new resources are commercial in late 2024, WFEC will provide nearly 50% of all the wholesale power our 22 members use from zero-carbon generating resources.

The majority of these current and future resources are a fixed cost, with no escalators over the next 20 years, which helps keep wholesale power costs low for an extended period of time.

By 2025, WFEC may add a modest amount of natural gas generation in order to keep generation resources spread out, so as not to “put all our eggs in one basket.” However, this proposed project has not yet been totally evaluated.

What does all of this mean for the future of wholesale power costs for WFEC’s member owners? By select-

ing beneficial locations for high output from wind, maximum sunshine for solar, and consideration of positive locations for price, WFEC can maximize their potential. Also, WFEC hopes to continue slightly reducing its wholesale power cost to member owners, with a goal of reaching the 2000 wholesale power cost by 2025.

Carbon-free resources have not been the only factors allowing for a flattening of costs. The region served by WFEC and our Oklahoma and New Mexico members, is part of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) Regional Transmission Organization. This allows low-cost access to a regional transmission grid, plus the SPP Integrated Market, which oversees regional least-cost economic dispatch of regional resources. Both are beneficial to the addition of carbon-free resources, and their operation and lowering cost.

The development of carbon-free resources is not a quick process, and it probably does not lend itself to a total use of renewable sources. The sun doesn’t always shine and the wind doesn’t always blow. Fossil fuel sources to operate during periods of changing wind, water and solar conditions are necessary.

It also illustrates the value of cooperatives working together with quality Board of Director leadership and direction to provide benefit to the end-use consumer-owners of both the distribution cooperative members and owners of WFEC. Doing these large projects individually would be difficult and likely unsuccessful, however, almost anything is possible when cooperatives work together toward a common consumer-benefitting goal.

## Green power essential part of generation mix

This year will mark the 50th anniversary of what is now recognized as the world’s largest civic event, Earth Day. The first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970 and is credited with sparking the modern environmental movement and the creation of The Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



Heath Morgan,  
Energy Efficiency  
Coordinator

Earth Day 2020 is themed “Climate Action.” One of the major topics around climate action is the implementation of renewable energy sources, or green power. The EPA defines green power as a subset of renewable energy and represents those renewable energy resources and technologies that provide the highest environmental benefit.

In the United States, the electricity supplied to homes and business comes from a wide array of sources. Figure 1 shows the different forms of fuel used to produce that energy and how each is categorized. The most common resources utilized by our power provider, Western Famers Electric Cooperative, are wind, natural gas, coal, hydro and solar. These production assets are used daily to provide a forecasted amount of power to be consumed by all their member co-ops, like Cotton Electric. The amount of each asset used is determined by availability and price, among other factors. All the time spent forecasting and negotiating generation and power purchase contracts aims to satisfy one common goal: To provide affordable and reliable power to their member co-ops who distribute it to their member-owners.

The different methods of electricity generation each have their own cost associated with them and can range significantly. These costs are directly related to what is charged for the energy produced by each method. The cost includes the initial investment related to the facility and/or equipment and cost of operation, fuel and maintenance. This data goes into the calculation for Levelized Cost of Energy (LCOE), which is used to show a cost per unit of energy. LCOE is normally expressed in cost per kilowatt-hour (kWh) or megawatt-hour (MWh). For anyone who would like to do some calculations of their own, refer to Formula 1.

LCOE provides a metric for which different fuel sources can be directly compared to determine which source, over its operational lifespan, will produce the most affordable power. According to Annual Energy Outlook reports published by the U.S Energy Infor-

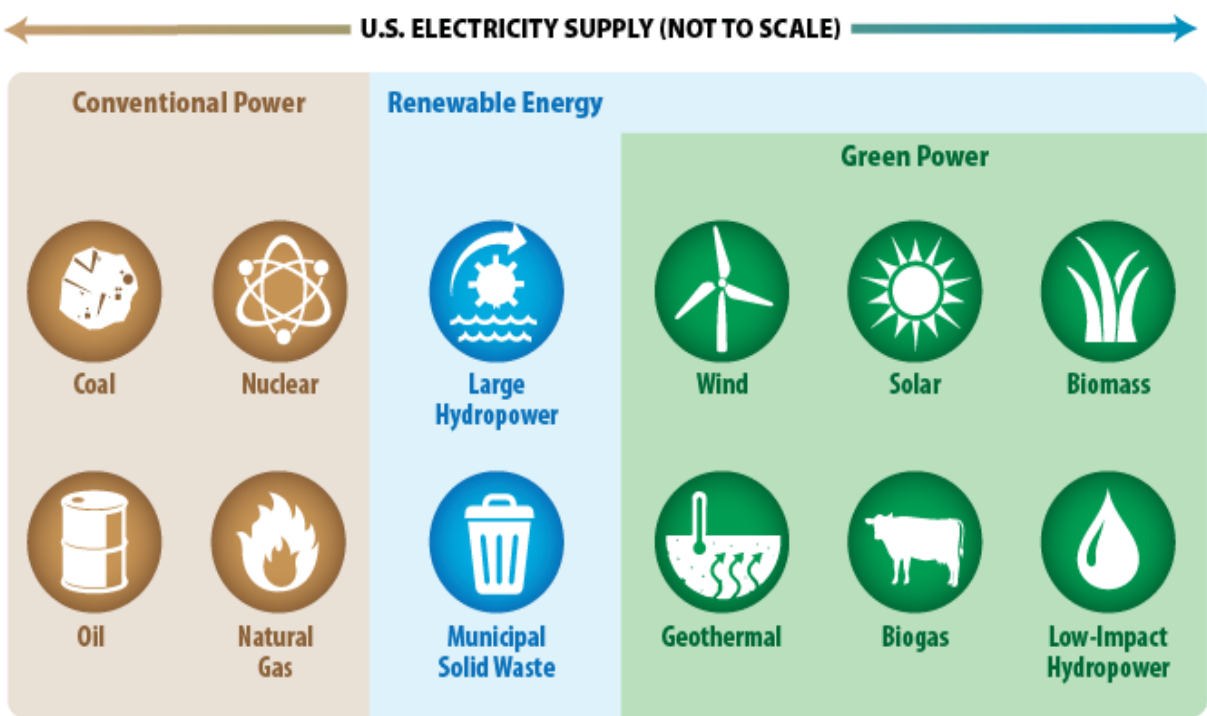


Figure 1

$$\text{LCOE} = \frac{\text{sum of costs over lifetime}}{\text{sum of electrical energy produced over lifetime}} = \frac{\sum_{t=1}^n \frac{I_t + M_t + F_t}{(1+r)^t}}{\sum_{t=1}^n \frac{E_t}{(1+r)^t}}$$

Formula 1

mation Administration Utility Scale Solar, Onshore Wind and Combined Cycle Natural Gas generation are three of the most cost efficient. The LCOE for these sources have been trending down over the last decade, while LCOE for others have virtually remained the same.

When these numbers are referenced to the article by Gary Roulet above, it is clear why WFEC has invested heavily in these technologies. The variety of WFEC’s power generation mix allows the cooperative to provide power to members at the lowest rate possible. This is credited to the innovation and foresight of our cooperatives and their commitment to providing reliable power at the most affordable rates.

There are a variety of opinions about how “green” generation sources can be. Many are concerned with the materials and production methods used to produce equipment not being as “green” as the power they generate. In my opinion, these are largely the same materials and methods used to produce equipment for energy production across the entire spectrum, resulting in a somewhat level starting point for all fuel sources.

Diversity in WFEC’s power generation mix also helps Cotton Electric provide reliable energy. The unique ability of natural gas generators to be brought online in short notice when other sources aren’t available is essential to reliable power.

The advancement in energy storage technology will only help with energy reliability. In his article, Roulet references WFEC’s investment in battery storage to boost system resiliency and manage power demand. Other methods of energy storage, beyond batteries, are being realized through mechanical storage, pumped hydropower, thermal storage and compressed air. These may be the next “green” technologies to be introduced into our power generation mix.

I hope this article finds you safe and healthy. We look forward to fulfilling our mission to be the leader in providing the most reliable and innovative electric service with affordable rates, through the positive, enthusiastic and professional use of its resources and people. I pray you all have a happy Easter and Earth Day!



# SUPER SNACKING

## Let kids get hands-on with healthy, easy treats

### Red, White and Blue Greek Yogurt Bark

Prep time: 5 minutes  
Servings: 12

- 3 cups plain non-fat Greek yogurt
- 1/3 cup honey, plus additional for drizzling (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup strawberries, sliced into rounds
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup raspberries, halved

In medium mixing bowl combine Greek yogurt, 1/3 cup honey and vanilla.

On parchment paper-lined baking sheet, spread Greek yogurt mixture to 1/4-inch thickness. Press strawberries, blueberries and raspberries into yogurt. Freeze at least 3 hours. Break into pieces upon removing from freezer.



FAMILY FEATURES

Snacks are a way of life for people of all ages, but especially children, who consume about 25% of their daily calories from snacks, according to research published in the “Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.” Providing nutritionally balanced snacks for your children at home can make for a happy and healthy day.

Planning snacks that are as delicious as they are healthy is a winning solution, and snacks are a simple way to add more nutrition to your child’s diet.

For example, low-fat and fat-free dairy foods are essential to children’s growth and overall wellness. They provide calcium and vitamin D, two nutrients kids don’t get enough of, according to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The guidelines recommend 2-3 servings of low-fat and fat-free dairy foods every day, depending on the child’s age.


Giving kids a role in the preparation can give them added incentive to enjoy healthy treats, and these recipes are all easy enough that kids can make them on their own (or with minimal assistance). Giving your kids the ability to play a role in the kitchen and create is a gift that can last a lifetime. The culinary skills they develop early in life can give them the confidence and know-how to cook nutritious meals for themselves as teens and adults.

Get more ideas to get kids cooking and snacking smart at [milkmeansmore.org](http://milkmeansmore.org).

### Dairy: Did You Know?

Dairy foods can add taste and versatility to your plate, but they also deliver a unique package of essential nutrients important for good health.

- Milk has a unique combination of nine essential nutrients: protein; calcium; potassium; phosphorus; vitamins A, D and B12; riboflavin and niacin. Each of these nutrients is a key ingredient of milk and they all work together to help keep bodies healthy.
- Milk, cheese and yogurt are good sources of high-quality protein, which is essential for growth and maintenance of muscle and other proteins within the body.
- Enjoying dairy foods like milk, cheese and yogurt as part of a healthy diet is associated with many health bonuses, including reduced risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.



### Good Morning Yogurt Parfait

Prep time: 5 minutes  
Servings: 1

- 1/2 cup sliced or diced fruit, any variety
- 6 ounces low-fat or fat-free vanilla yogurt
- 1/4 cup granola or other cereal (optional)

In small bowl or cup, layer fruit and yogurt, starting with fruit on bottom. Top with cereal or granola, if desired.

**Note:** This recipe can be made using low-fat or non-fat cottage cheese sweetened with honey and cinnamon.

### Peanut Butter Yogurt Dip

Prep time: 5 minutes  
Servings: 4

- 3/4 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 dash cinnamon
- apples, graham crackers or other dipper of choice

In bowl, mix Greek yogurt, peanut butter and cinnamon until smooth.

Serve with apples, graham crackers or another dipper of choice.



### Frozen Banana Pops

Prep time: 2 hours  
Servings: 8

- 4 large bananas, peeled
- 8 wooden ice pop sticks
- 2 cups vanilla non-fat Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup creamy natural peanut butter

Cut each banana in half and carefully insert wooden ice pop stick in bottom of each, about one-third into banana. Place bananas on large baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Freeze bananas until partially frozen, about 30 minutes.

Carefully dip each banana in tall pint glass of vanilla yogurt to coat, leaving 1/2-inch at bottom of banana uncoated. Return yogurt-coated bananas to parchment paper-lined baking sheet and freeze until completely firm, about 1 hour.

Microwave peanut butter until smooth and creamy, about 30-45 seconds. Drizzle peanut butter evenly over bananas then place on baking sheet to freeze until peanut butter is firm, about 30 minutes.

Serve immediately or wrap each banana in plastic wrap and store in freezer up to 3 months.

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# Fresh Salads Perfect for Spring

FAMILY FEATURES

The spring season brings to mind flowers blooming and plants springing back to life, making it the ideal time to enjoy fresh produce in meals throughout the day. Salads are of course one of the easiest ways to combine the flavors of your favorite fruits and veggies, but you can take your greens to the next level with refreshing recipe ideas.

Creating a cool, satisfying salad can be easy when you start with quality ingredients like Fresh Express salad blends, NatureSweet Cherubs Tomatoes and Litehouse dressings for versatile bases in a nearly endless array of options. For example, salads aren't limited to lunch or appetizers – this Breakfast Salad Bowl makes for an energizing start to the day by combining classic salad ingredients with quinoa, bacon and avocado.

Perfect for those busy weeknights, heartier salad recipes can also provide quick, simple dinner options. As a more traditional mix to enjoy at the family table, this Salmon and Grains Salad Bowl brings together salmon, chickpeas and chickpeas on a bed of lettuce topped with ranch dressing.

Find more ways to create hearty salads this spring at [lighthousefoods.com/iheartsalad](http://lighthousefoods.com/iheartsalad).

## Salmon and Grains Salad Bowl

Servings: 2

- 4 ounces salmon
- 2 tablespoons paprika, divided
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 15 ounces chickpeas
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 ounces Fresh Express Sweet Butter Lettuce
- 1 cup red quinoa, cooked
- 6 ounces NatureSweet Cherubs Tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons Litehouse Homestyle Ranch Dressing

Heat oven to 350 F. Sprinkle salmon with 1 teaspoon paprika; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Bake on lined baking sheet 15 minutes, or until it reaches desired doneness.

In bowl, toss chickpeas in olive oil and remaining paprika; add salt and pepper, to taste. Add chickpeas to lined baking sheet. Bake at 400 F 30-40 minutes.

Add lettuce to plate or bowl. Top with quinoa, chickpeas, salmon and tomatoes. Drizzle with ranch dressing.



## Breakfast Salad Bowl

Servings: 2

- 10 ounces NatureSweet Cherubs Tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 ounces Fresh Express Baby Spinach
- 1 egg
- 2 bacon strips, halved
- 1 cup quinoa, cooked
- 1/2 avocado, sliced
- 2 tablespoons Litehouse Jalapeno Ranch Dressing

Heat oven to 400 F. Toss tomatoes in 1 table-spoon olive oil. Bake tomatoes on lined baking sheet 40 minutes.

In skillet, add remaining olive oil and cook baby spinach until wilted, stirring as necessary. Cook egg as desired. Remove egg from skillet and set aside. Add bacon to skillet and cook until crispy, turning halfway through.

In bowl, layer quinoa, bacon, avocado, egg, spinach and tomatoes. Drizzle with jalapeno ranch dressing.



# Food safety guidelines designed for pandemic

While authorities continue to assure us that the food supply is robust and safe, we all see changes to what is available on the shelf and changes to how we go about grocery shopping. What should you prioritize as you work to provide your household with food in these challenging times?



Kim Bandler, MPH, RD, LD

**Food For THOUGHT**

Your top priority should be safety while acquiring your groceries. If you must physically go to the grocery store, the Centers for Disease and Control (CDC) recommends you avoid touching your face, sanitize your hands often,

maintain six feet away from other shoppers and, most recently, wear a mask.

Keep shopping time to a minimum by preparing a list. Have groceries delivered if possible. While there is no current recommendation from the CDC to sanitize your groceries before putting them away, you can wipe down packages with sanitizing wipes if that makes you feel better. The most important thing is to wash your hands after putting away your groceries, and always avoid touching your face.

Once you safely acquire groceries, focus on maintaining food safety guidelines in your kitchen. Before consuming, wash fresh produce with water and scrub to make sure any dirt or insects are removed. Do not wash fresh produce with chemicals or soap.

Keep cold foods below 40 degrees Fahrenheit and

hot foods above 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Put food in the refrigerator after sitting out for two hours. Leftovers should be reheated to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Eat leftovers within 3 to 4 days. Avoid cross contamination by keeping fresh foods that will not be cooked away from raw meat and seafood. Wash your hands before doing any food preparation. The last thing anyone needs in the middle of a pandemic is food poisoning.

There is a lot of misinformation about the food supply and food safety online. The best sources of information remain the Food and Drug Administration ([www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) and the United States Department of Agriculture ([www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)).

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# 2020 Cotton Electric essay topic: What do you find most interesting about electric cooperatives?

Marlon Banner  
Comanche High School



## Cooperatives important to local communities

*Editors note: Four area high school juniors received top honors in Cotton Electric's annual essay contest. Each of the essays will appear in The Current.*

According to <https://www.electric.coop/>, there are over 900 cooperatives that operate in 47 states, and they provide electricity to more than 56 percent of the landmass in our nation. Electric co-ops provide power to more than 19 million homes, businesses, farms and many more crucial local infrastructures.

In addition to electricity, co-ops provide over 71,000 jobs to Americans. Also, according to <https://www.electric.coop/>, electric co-ops generate more than 5 percent of the total electricity produced in the U.S. every year.

When one views all of these facts, it's hard not to understand the importance of electric cooperatives

to local communities, in which electricity is crucial to maintaining largely rural economies.

In addition to all of the services provided by electric cooperatives, according to <http://barryelectric.com/>, they are member operated and owned. They use the democratic method in electing new directors with members of the cooperative voting. This allows for each member to have a say in the decisions made and all members are on the same level and work together to provide services.

When joining a cooperative, you are essentially an owner, rather than a customer, and your ideas and thoughts have value in a cooperative. Cooperatives are also very service-focused and provide service to very rural areas rather than strictly commercial utilities that largely provide their service to more urban areas.

In my opinion, electric cooperatives are largely

overlooked and underappreciated. We often take the time we charge our phones, the heat our ovens produce, and the amount of time we flip our lights on and off for granted. It requires a large amount of unseen work to power our everyday, and electric cooperatives are especially crucial for an area such as Oklahoma, which is a very rural state.

I live down an old dirt road far from town, and our way of life would be much harder without power. To fuel our tractor, to power our heat lamps to keep our chickens warm this winter, to power our tools to keep working and improving our land; all of that requires power, and in my rural community, all of that requires cooperatives.

Every little ranch and farm owes at least part of their success and way of life to electric cooperatives, and not only do I see them as interesting, I also see them as necessary.

## Sharing too much poses risk to data security

Most people would never consider walking into a crowded room and loudly broadcasting, to total strangers, all the details of their private life — from their health issues to their family and friends' names, ages, jobs or school locations. But often these same individuals won't think twice about posting that same information on social media.

The ramifications of sharing too much can have an impact not only on your personal and professional life but also the lives of your family and friends.

Social media is a great place to reconnect, share and learn. However, just ensuring that your social media privacy settings are strong isn't the only way to protect yourself. Once you post anything online, you have lost control of it. You need to understand what is being collected and how it is being used.

Here are some privacy concerns you should have when using social media:

- Privacy Settings: Carefully create and frequently review privacy settings for all of your social media accounts, especially when changes in terms of service and privacy policies take place. Remember that even if you have secured your settings for who can view your postings, all your information is being collected, mined, and stored on the social media platform servers — perhaps forever.
- Privacy Tree: Social media settings can't protect you from friends, relatives and co-workers who view your postings and then have the ability to share those postings with their circle of friends and so on.
- Family Sharing: Everyone loves to talk about their friends and family. But posting silly birthday cake pictures or health and behavior problems can



lead to bullying, especially for those who are younger, and could impact their personal lives.

- Information Sharing: If a service is “free,” then you are the product. Investigations have found that what you are doing online may be sold to others.
- Location Services: Check-in data can be added to other personal data to create a profile of your life and habits, which can lead to stalking and open you to other harassing events. In addition, be aware of any location information included in any pictures or videos you post.
- Artificial Intelligence: AI, social media, and marketing are the perfect combination. Marketers now use information gathered from your habits online to feed you ads focused on your last search or purchase, and thereby continue to learn even more about you.
- Digital Death: When a person dies, their online

presence becomes more vulnerable to malicious individuals if their accounts aren't being maintained or eliminated by their survivors. The privacy of an individual is not just about that person alone; it also can impact extended family and friends.

- Unintentional Disclosure: The information you post about yourself may reveal much of your personal history, and thus the answers to your online secret security questions.

Privacy is far more than just setting the privacy options in your social media accounts. The more information you share, and the more others share about you, the more information that is collected and used by corporations, governments, and others. One of the best ways to protect yourself is to consider and limit what you share and what others share about you, regardless of the privacy options you use.

Source: SANS Awareness

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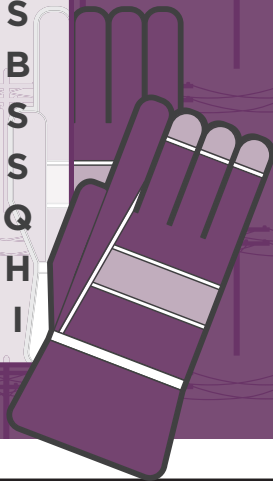
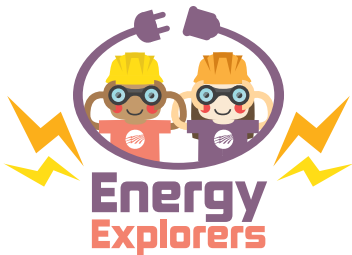
# LINEWORKER GEAR WORD SEARCH

Did you know lineworkers wear special protective gear to keep them safe while working on power lines and other electrical equipment?

Read the descriptions to learn about a lineworker's gear and find the bolded words in the puzzle below.

- **Safety goggles** keep debris away from lineworkers' eyes while on the job.
- **Hard hats** protect lineworkers from head injuries and falling debris.

- **Work boots** provide extra protection while lineworkers work with heavy materials that could fall near their feet.
- **Flame-resistant** clothing keeps lineworkers safe from electrical hazards.
- **Insulated gloves** protect lineworkers from electrical shock while working on power lines.
- **Equipment belts** hold several tools that lineworkers need to get the job done.



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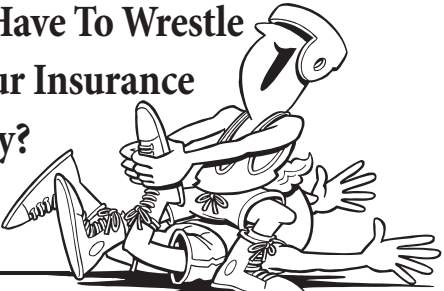


**ACROSS**  
1. Germanic mytholog-  
ical god  
4. Cash machine  
7. Improvement  
12. What voters want  
15. Sheepish  
16. Placed at powerful  
level  
18. Measure of illumi-  
nation  
19. Trent Reznor's  
band  
20. Commercial  
21. Amounts of time  
24. English Broadcaster  
27. Rolls of tobacco  
30. Position  
31. Expresses pleasure  
33. Corporate exec  
(abbr.)  
34. Body part  
35. Bleated  
37. Businessman  
39. Beats per minute  
41. Defunct Italian  
monetary unit  
42. Broken branch  
44. Put in advance  
47. Arrest  
48. Prefix indicating  
adjacent to  
49. Artificial intelli-  
gence  
50. Disfigure  
52. The Fighting Irish  
(abbr.)  
53. Not in any place  
56. Predict  
61. A system of getting  
stuff from one  
place to another  
63. Philosophy of the  
principles of things  
64. US gov't office  
(abbr.)  
65. Seaborgium's former  
name (abbr.)



**DOWN**  
1. Network connector  
2. Primordial matter  
3. Get up  
4 Uncoordinated  
5. Ill-fated cruise ship  
6. Work hard  
7. Drivers' speed  
8. Largest English dic-  
tionary (abbr.)  
9. Healthcare pro  
10. Egyptian Sun god  
11. Expresses the neg-  
ative  
12. Some are three-  
legged  
13. Clothing manufac-  
turer  
14. Close by  
17. Tooth caregiver  
22. Housing material  
23. Flows through  
24. Founder of Babism  
25. Honorific title  
26. A type of letter  
28. Seize and hold  
firmly  
29. Artery  
32. Body fluids  
36. Press against  
38. An island in the  
Pacific  
40. A reminder of past  
events  
43. Austrian spa town  
44. Peter's last name  
45. Something a mob  
might do  
46. Of the bones of the  
feet.  
51. "Amazing Stories"  
writer  
54. Nazi-resistant youth  
group (abbr.)  
55. Used to have (Scot-  
tish)  
56. A way to cook  
57. Japanese port city  
58. Type of precipita-  
tion  
59. Engrave  
60. Female sibling  
62. Expresses emotion

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