What's Inside



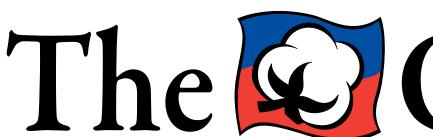
2026 Youth Tour essay contest deadline quickly approaches Page 5



Employees recognized for their commitment to safe service Page 9



Snowball Cookies



Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

"The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957"

VOLUME 69 December 19, 2025 **NUMBER 4**



Stay safe and warm: Your winter home-readiness guide

Preparing your home for winter involves several key steps to ensure safety, shovels and ice melt. efficiency and warmth. Here are some tips to help you prepare before the temperatures drop:

Inspect your heating system

- Have your heating system professionally serviced.
- Replace air filters if needed.
- Ensure vents and radiators are unblocked for efficient heat distribution.

Prepare pipes and water supply

- Insulate exposed pipes to prevent
- Drain and shut off outdoor faucets and irrigation systems.
- Know the location of your water shutoff valve in case of emergencies.

Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test detectors to ensure they are ger sources functioning properly.

Prepare your home's exterior

- Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and debris to prevent ice dams.
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house to prevent damage from heavy snow.
- Ensure downspouts extend away from your home's foundation.
- Drain and store garden hoses to prevent freezing.
- Service and store outdoor equipment such as lawnmowers and trimmers.

Increase home energy efficiency

- Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors with weather stripping or caulk.
- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise to circulate warm air.
- Lower your thermostat a few degrees to save on heating costs.

Stock emergency supplies

At home, have enough nonperishable food and water for 72 hours in case of power outages or severe weather. Experts suggest storing 1 gallon of and be sure to ventilate properly. water per person per day.

Include these essentials in your emergency kit:

- First-aid kit
- Flashlights and batteries
- Warm clothing
- Blankets
- Phone chargers and backup char-

Gather important documents, medical supplies/medicines and medical records. Don't forget your pets. Make sure you have enough supplies for them as well.

What to do if the power goes

Winter weather is unpredictable, with high winds, whiteouts and ice storms. These conditions can cause hazardous roads and power outages.

If the electricity goes out due to a winter storm, you might be in for a prolonged power outage as crews work

• Gather winter tools such as snow through the harsh weather to get the ators out of the house, basement and power back on.

If this happens, contact your electrical utility as soon as you can so they ing a portable generator if conditions know you have lost power.

Other actions you can take to stay safe:

- warmly in layered clothing.
- entering the house.
- When using an alternative heat
 - Keep grills, camp stoves and gener- safety or www.safeelectricity.org.

garage.

- Use a protective canopy when us-
- are damp or wet. • Move fuel-powered generators at
- least 20 feet away from the house. • Keep a close eye on the temperature • Avoid travel. Stay inside and dress in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are often more suscepti-• Place a draft block at the bottom ble to the cold. You may want to stay of doors to minimize cold drafts from with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you can't keep your home warm.

For more information on keeping source, follow operating instructions your family safe during the winter season, visit www.cottonelectric.com/



Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after Dec. 1, 2025, is \$0.01380 per kilowatt-hours (kWh).

On a member's average bill of 1,300 kWh, this will amount to a charge of \$17.94 on the December bill.

100	vemt	oer 20	125 Te	mper	ature	Extr	emes
Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg
1	68	39	54	16	82	53	68
2	72	32	52	17	83	50	67
3	80	39	60	18	80	47	64
4	80	48	64	19	80	53	67
5	80	46	63	20	75	58	67
6	79	50	65	21	70	49	60
7	80	43	62	22	66	42	54
8	79	38	59	23	68	35	52
9	56	31	44	24	69	49	59
10	55	24	40	25	69	42	56
11	78	30	54	26	55	33	44
12	78	34	56	27	59	30	45
13	83	41	62	28	55	34	45
14	86	51	69	29	65	33	49
15	92	47	70	30	35	26	31
Source.	srh.noaa.	gov/oun/					

Average Daily High: 72 Average Daily Low: 41

Did You Know?

Cotton Electric offices will be closed Dec. 24 and 25 for Christmas and Jan. 1, 2026, for New Year's. Emergency calls will be answered at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

The next issue of *The* Current should arrive in mailboxes Jan. 16, 2026.

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.

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



Mission Statement

Our mission is to safely deliver reliable and affordable power, provide excellent member service, and improve the quality of life in the communities we serve.

From the CEO

Grid investments necessary for reliability

uring Winter Storm 2021, the Cotton Electric system hit a historic peak level of electricity demand. For the first time in 80 years, the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), the independent, nonprofit power grid operator for a 14-state region that includes Oklahoma, had to implement controlled, temporary service interruptions that affected our service territory to prevent widespread blackouts. The SPP footprint was affected again by record cold temperatures during Winter Storm Elliott the following year.

Following these events, the SPP published a report entitled Our Generational Challenge: A Reliable Future for Electricity. The report focuses on the multitude of factors that have attributed to how the demand for electricity is outpacing the supply from the existing generation fleet, resulting in increased reliability threats. The SPP and its 120 members, including our power provider Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC), have made concerted efforts to address these issues to keep the lights on.

Uri in February of members was an increase to the winter-season planning reserve margin (PRM) from 16% to 36%. This means that our generation and transmission provider, WFEC, must have enough generating capacity to serve its peak consumption with at least 36% margin during the winter season. Based upon the load of WFEC's 21 distribution members, the reserve requirement will increase from 352 megawatts (MW) to 792 MW. Overall load growth is also occurring, requiring an ad-

One action taken by SPP and its ditional 160 MW of generation over the next five years.

> The SPP has also issued Notifications to Construct (NTCs), which are formal directives to build approved transmission system upgrades to ensure that new generation can reliably reach consumers. The current estimated cost for NTCs within WFEC's footprint is \$250 mil-

> These additional expenses and investments may increase power costs but are necessary to maintain reliability and deliverabil-



Jennifer Meason, CEO

ity to consumers. As your notfor-profit electric cooperatives, Cotton Electric and WFEC will continue to work together to provide safe, reliable service at a competitive price.

For more information, visit our website at www.cottonelectric. com/grid-reliability.



Cotton Electric Cooperative and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC) work on maintenance and repair at one of WFEC's substations in our service territory. Photo courtesy of Braylin Dowlen.





Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

To maximize your fireplace's efficiency, always keep the damper closed when the fireplace is not in use. An open damper is like an open window, allowing warm indoor air to escape and cold air to enter. Consider installing a fireplace insert, which improves heat output by circulating warm air into the room rather than letting it escape up the chimney. Also, burn only seasoned hardwood to ensure a hotter, cleaner burn. Regularly clean and inspect your chimney to maintain safe and efficient operation.

Source: Energy.gov

October 2025 Operating Stats

	_	
	<u> 2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$6,216,995	\$6,131,927
Cost of Purchased Power	4,467,621	4,507,746
Taxes	128,208	124,016
Total Operating Expense per Mile	1,184	1,234
Average Farm and Residential Bill	132	129
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,006	1,042
Total Meters Billed (Farm, Residential) 19,935	19,768
Miles Energized	5,288	5,281
Density per Mile	3.77	3.74
New Service Connects YTD	341	372
Services Retired	122	163

Upcoming Deadlines for

The Current

January

Ad Sales Jan. 2 Classified Jan. 2 Publish Jan. 16

February

Ad Sales Jan. 30 Classified Jan. 30 Publish Feb. 13

The Current

Published monthly at Walters, Oklahoma, by Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Jennifer MeasonCEO Shane Bowers......Vice President Zach YoungDirector Carli Eubank......Communications Specialist

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Energy Efficiency

A history of Christmas lights

Long before electricity, people Lady Frances Cleveland, helped boost holiday lighting turns neighborhoods brightened the dark winter months with firelight — from the burning of the Yule log to candles placed around the home. The first recorded candlelit Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1660 and eventually spread across Europe, reaching the United States later in the century.

While the glow of the candles was festive, it also posed a serious fire hazard, so the light could only be enjoyed for a short time.

A revolutionary spark

While Thomas Edison invented the incandescent light bulb in 1879, it was his colleague, Edward H. Johnson, who created the first electric Christmas tree lights in 1882. He hand wired 80 colored bulbs around a revolving tree in his parlor, all powered by a generator.

Johnson's lights were ahead of their time, as electricity was not yet routinely available, and electric lights were considered expensive. President Grover Cleveland and his wife, First Great Christmas Light Fight, modern

acceptance in the 1890s, when the White House Christmas tree was illuminated with colored bulbs to delight their young daughters.

The tradition of outdoor light displays, which we now associate with driving around to view beautifully lit homes and elaborate light shows, began in North America. This expansion was made possible by the development of safe outdoor Christmas light bulbs and light strings in the 1920s.

LEDs, smart displays and sustainability

Christmas lights have come a long way. Today's LED lights shine brighter than ever, creating beautiful displays while using less energy — they're built

Every holiday season, millions of light sets brighten homes across the country. From twinkling displays set to music to TV favorites like ABC's The

into dazzling shows filled with festive "flip the switch" moments.

Year after year, Christmas lights continue to brighten our lives and homes. The evolution reflects our desire to bring light, warmth and joy to the darkest winter days — with a mix of new technology and timeless tradition that makes holiday lights truly magical.



Heath Morgan, **Energy Efficiency** Coordinator





Simple changes make a big difference and add up to savings.

Learn more at

www.cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency or www.touchstoneenergy.com.



Heating Degree Day and Cooling Degree Day Calendar

NOVEMB

HDD YEAR CDD

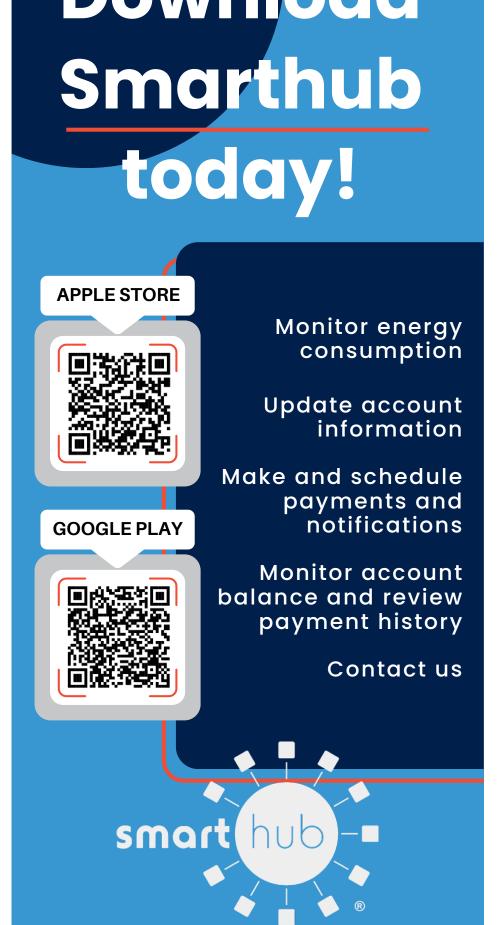
2025

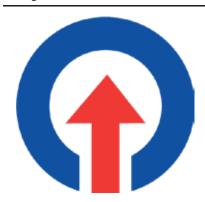
2024

2023 16

Degree days measure how cold or warm a location is by comparing the average of the high and low (mean) of the outdoor temperatures recorded in that location to the standard U.S. temperature, which is 65 F. The assumption is that we don't need heating or cooling to be comfortable when this is the outdoor temperature.







Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation

CECF encourages applicants

of the generosity of Cotton Electric's members and is designed to provide financial assistance to worthwhile individuals and organizations.

For those interested in seeking funds for local individuals or organizations, below is a portion of the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation(CECF) grant application guidelines.

Grant application guidelines

- The CECF provides funds for Charitable purposes within the service area of Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Grant applications are reviewed quarterly. Applications are to be received in the Cotton Electric offices by the close of business 14 days before the quarterly meeting of the CECF Board of Directors.
- Grants to any group, organization, charity or similar organization will not exceed \$10,000, and grants to individuals will not exceed \$2,500.

Requirement for school applications

Applications for grants benefiting schools require the signature of the school superintendent.

This includes applications submitted by booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations and other school-related groups, teachers and principals. This requirement was established to ensure coordinated communication on projects that fit a school district's priorities.

Application instructions

Please complete all sections of the application. If an item is not applicable to your organization, please make note in the space provided.

- If you are exempt from income tax, please attach verification such as a copy of letter 501(c)(3) from the Internal Revenue Service or an explanation of why your organization is considered to be exempt.
- Please include a recent financial statement. If your organization completes an annual audit, please attach

Operation Round Up exists because a copy with your application. If your organization does not complete an annual audit, please attach a copy of your treasurer's report and bank statements to verify your source of funding, funds available, etc.

> Please be specific when describing how the funds will be used if approved, and attach price estimates if available.

Categories of assistance

1. Communities

 Programs, projects and organizations that are important components of a community's overall quality of life, with emphasis on public safety, health care, self-sufficiency, and basic human needs.

2. Education and youth

- Programs and projects designed to combat critical social problems affecting youth, particularly children and teens at risk.
- Programs and projects that promote youth wellness.
- Programs and projects that work to provide supplemental materials and equipment for schools.
- Programs and projects to enhance school facilities.

3. Seniors

 Programs and projects to support organizations and the facilities serving senior citizens.

4. Volunteer fire departments

- Programs and projects to enhance volunteer fire department facilities and vehicles.
- Equipment and gear purchases and upgrades.

5. Individuals

- An individual or family in need of assistance may request a grant. Examples of need conditions may include the consequences of a disaster, catastrophic illness, or permanent dis-
- Individual applications must include a letter of referral from a sponsoring group such as a church, civic organization or other group wanting to raise funds for the individual.

The CECF will not consider requests for general operating funds,

HOW TO **APPLY**







WEBSITE

EMAIL

zyoung@cottonelectric.com

226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572

www.cottonelectric.com/ grant-applications

capital campaigns or support for salaries. The Foundation prefers requests for program needs.

The CECF will not consider requests for the benefit of an individual or family unit unless the application includes a letter from a sponsoring group. Grants will be issued to the sponsoring group.

Applicant eligibility

Contributions will generally be made only to not-for-profit organizations that have been granted tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service; and to civic-based entities.

- The organization must contribute to the community's health and/or welfare.
- The organization's services must be nondiscriminatory in nature.
- Activities affiliated with a religious organization with a secular community designation are eligible for the Foundation's consideration of support. A secular designation is defined as an organization separate from the church or religious organization that provides services to people regardless of their religious beliefs and does not propagate a belief in a specific faith. (Example: A food bank that is a separate 501(c)(3) organization from a church and provides food and meals to anyone who qualifies for services, regardless of religious belief.)

Evaluation factors

The following factors will be consid-

ered in the evaluation of all funding

- Potential benefit to residents of the Cotton Electric service area and the entire community.
- Prior contribution level of Foundation or community support for the program or project or the organization requesting the funds.
- Fiscal and administrative capability of the organization to deliver a quality service or program.
- Results that are predictable and can be evaluated.

The CECF Board of Directors shall evaluate all funding requests and determine whether to issue a grant for all or a portion of the funds requested.

Project timing

Requests for funding should state whether the funds are intended for ongoing operations or for a specific project that will terminate at some point in the future. Whenever possible, requests for funding should be for projects that will be completed within 12 months following the Foundation's approval of the grant application.

For a complete overview of CECF grant application guidelines, please visit our website at www.cottonelectric.com/grant-applications. Applications may be submitted via email to zyoung@cottonelectric.com, online at www.cottonelectric.com/grant-applications or mailed to 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.









2026 Youth Tour essay contest deadline quickly approaches

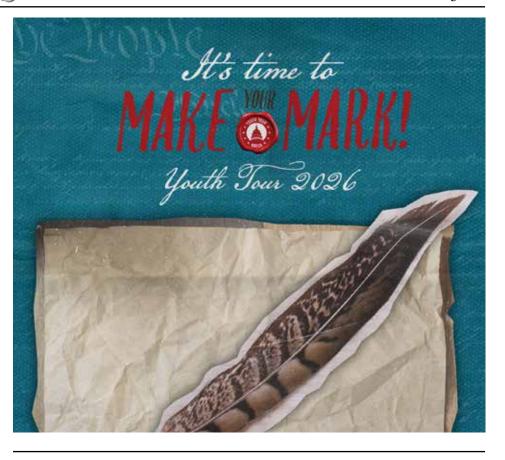
If you or someone you know is a high school junior looking for an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., next summer, then look no further than Oklahoma Youth Tour. This weeklong experience is a fun mixture of learning about the cooperative business model; touring historic monuments, museums and memorials; gaining leadership experience; networking with students across the state and country; and making memories that will last a lifetime.

To be entered into the running for Oklahoma Youth Tour delegate, contestants must be a high school junior in the Cotton Electric service territory. The student and their families do not have to be Cotton Electric members; however, sons or daughters of Cotton Electric employees and board members are not eligible to participate.

This year's contest is broken into two rounds. First, applicants will write a professional letter to a local, state or federal elected official about a topic that is important to them. Writers of the top 10 essays will move on to the second round for a live video interview with independent judges arranged by Cotton Electric. The top two presenters will be awarded the all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., and represent Cotton Electric in June 2026 at Oklahoma Youth Tour.

The deadline for the 2026 Youth Tour contest is 3 p.m. Jan. 15, 2026. To apply online today, visit www.cottonelectric.com/youthtour. For questions or more information about the contest, please call us at 580-875-3351 or email zyoung@cottonelectric.com.









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3 ton minimum delivery Mix feeds, cubes, pellets and straight commodities



'Tis the season to be skeptical: Shopping online securely

brand wireless headphones advertised at 70% off. The website looked professional, the holiday promotion felt urgent, and she even received a confirmaturned into weeks, and nothing arrived. Her emails and phone calls went unanswered, and soon after, her credit card was used for unauthorized charges. What started as a bargain became a costly lesson. Maya had been tricked by a fake online store designed to scam holiday shoppers.

Unfortunately, Maya's story is not unique. As online shopping continues to grow, especially during the holiday season, cybercriminals are seizing the opportunity to lure victims with fake websites, counterfeit promotions, and shopping scams. The good news? You can shop online safely by recognizing common red flags and following a few simple tips.

Fake online stores

Cybercriminals create fake websites that mimic legitimate retailers or use the names of well-known brands. When you search for the best online deals, you may find yourself at one of these fake sites. Criminals often promote them on social media with wildly discounted items. By purchasing from such websites, you can end up with your credit card information stolen, counterfeit or stolen goods, or no delivery at all.

Protect yourself by taking the following steps:

- Shop with trusted retailers. Buy from online stores you already know and have done business with previously. Bookmark them in your browser. You may not find that incredible deal, but you are far less likely to get scammed.
- Be suspicious of deep discounts. If an ad or promotion is significantly lower than those you see at established online stores, it's probably a scam.
- Check for contact details. Avoid websites with no contact information, broken contact forms, or

clear return policies are also often clues of suspicious

- Examine the web address. Be suspicious if a webtion email minutes after placing her order. But days site looks just like one you've used in the past, but the domain name or store name is different. For example, you may be used to shopping at Amazon, whose website address is www.amazon.com, but end up at a fake website that looks similar, but has the website address www.aamazon.deals.
 - Search for reviews. Type the store's name or URL into a search engine to see what others have said about it. Look for terms like "fraud," "scam," "never again," and "fake."
 - Be wary of payment methods. Sites that only accept wire transfers, gift cards, or cryptocurrency are often used by scammers.
 - Secure your accounts. Protect your online accounts by using a unique, strong password. If remembering them is difficult, consider storing them in a password manager. Enable additional security features such as multi-factor authentication (MFA) and passkeys wherever they're available.

Maya was thrilled when she found a pair of name- es, phone numbers, customer service contacts, and Scammers on legitimate shopping websites

Some online stores offer products sold by individuals or small businesses, and scammers can hide among them. Check each seller's reputation before placing the order by reading their reviews. Be wary of sellers who are new to the online store, lack reviews, or who sell items at unusually low prices.

Online payments for purchases

Another way to protect yourself is to regularly review your credit card statements to identify suspicious charges. If possible, enable your credit card account to notify you by email, text, or by app whenever a charge is made to your credit card. If you find any suspicious activity, report it to your credit card company immediately. Use credit cards instead of debit cards for online payments. Debit cards take money directly from your bank account; if fraud is committed, you'll have a much harder time getting your money back.

Electronic payment services or e-wallets such as PayPal are also a safer option for online purchases, since they do not require you to disclose a credit card number to the vendor.

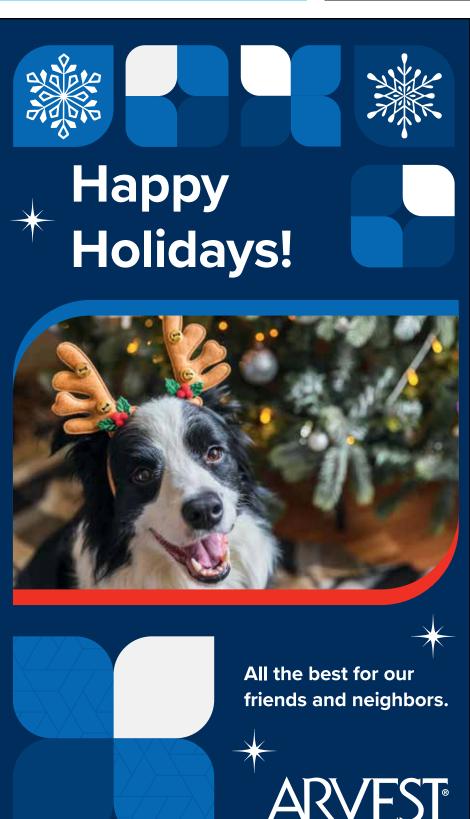


personal email addresses. A lack of physical address- Keep these tips in mind when shopping online this holiday season. Photo courtesy of MetroCreative.









YOUR FIGHT IS OUR FIGHT!

We embrace new and innovative treatments that emerge each year in the fight against cancer! Our doctors and nurses are cancer specialists. Our staff is highly trained to support you as a patient. You will not fight alone.

We encourage you to get routine cancer screenings. Early detection improves outcomes and saves lives.





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Should I use a space heater or turn up the heat?

Drafty room? Before reaching for your space heat-needed. er, consider whether it's better to plug it in or simply turn up the thermostat.

Space heaters are designed to warm small, targeted spaces — not your entire home. If you find yourself relying on one often, it may be time to address your home's energy efficiency.

Fix efficiency first, then supplement with a space heater

Improving your home's efficiency helps it retain heat, reduces drafts and reduces your energy use. Many solutions are affordable and DIY-friendly, such as:

- Seal air leaks. Use caulk and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors to prevent drafts.
- Add insulation where it matters. Attic insulation has the biggest return on investment, and loose-fill insulation is an affordable option.
- Check your heating system. Schedule regular ser- surface never on carpets or rugs. vice for your furnace or heat pump. If it's outdated or struggling, it could be time for an upgrade. Check er use extension cords or power strips. with your utility for potential rebates and incentives.
- Use programmable thermostats. These can help reduce energy waste by heating only when and where the heater.

Once your home is sealed and insulated, a space cluding: heater can be used to increase comfort and warm specific rooms, like a home office or bedroom, without turning up the heat for the whole house.

A space heater is like a ceiling fan; it can improve comfort in a small area, but it's not a whole-house solution.

Use space heaters efficiently:

- Heat only the room you're currently in.
- Close doors to keep heat contained.
- Choose the right size too small and it won't warm you; too big and it wastes energy. Check manufacturer sizing guides.
- Use a heater with a thermostat and timer to avoid overheating the room or wasting electricity.

Stay safe while staying warm:

- Place the heater on a solid, flat, nonflammable
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Nev-
- Keep children, pets and anything flammable, such as curtains or bedding, at least 3 feet away from

- Choose a heater with built-in safety features in
 - o Overheat sensor.
 - o Tip-over shutoff switch.
- o UL, ETL or CSA International certification la-
- Never leave a space heater unattended, especially around children or pets.
- Turn off the heater when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Unplug it when not in use to prevent electrical hazards.













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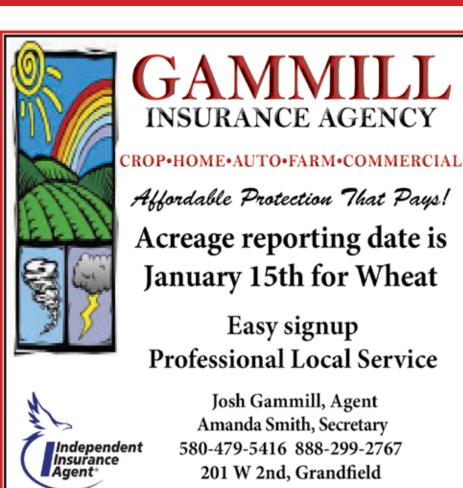












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Air Evac Lifeteam

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Member Discount on Monthly Specials.

Arvest Bank

Open new checking account and receive a free financial review. Valid at the Lawton, Duncan and Chickasha branches.

Billingsley Ford of Lawton, Inc.

10% discount on all service department repairs, up to a \$40 discount. No parts or body shop repairs included.

Billingsley Ford Lincoln Mercury of Duncan, Inc.

10% discount on all service department repairs, up to a \$40 discount. No parts or body shop repairs included.

Brooks Meat Market

10% off meat purchases over \$20.

Cast & Bang Outfitters Authorized ASF Dealer

10% Off ASF Products and 5% Off Guided Hunts. Discount can not be applied to transportation quotes for ASF products. Discount can not be applied to food and lodging on guided hunts.

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center

\$1 off admission per card, per visit.

Cinnabon

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Cosmetic Specialty Labs, Inc.

50% off open stock products.

Debbie's Little Books

10% off of regular purchase price of personalized books.

Edwards Family Vision

10% off of complete glasses.

Horse Sense Graphics

15% off orders over \$100.

Infinity Computer Systems

10% off all labor.

Johnson & Johnson Locksmith and Door

10% off of all services. Card must be present at time of service and prior to any ordering of parts.

Linda and Sarah's Carpets

Free vacuum cleaner with purchase of \$2,000 on Stainmaster carpets.

Marlow Kwik Lube

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\$10.00 off adoption fee.

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\$500 off seller's closing costs.

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Wichita Furniture

10% off new purchases.



Co-op Life

It's a year-end tradition at Cotton Electric to honor Board Members and employees for their years of service.



Employees recognized for their commitment to safe service

Safety is the focus of everything we do at Cotton Electric. It's even in our mission statement: to "safely deliver reliable and affordable power."

Providing electric service requires equipment ranging from computer keyboards to large digging augers. Cotton Electric employees carry out tasks as varied as pushing reams of old documents into a paper shredder to riding a bucket 60 feet in the air to repair a high-voltage line.

Every piece of equipment and every task presents a potential accident, yet Cotton Electric employees have a pretty good record of safe work that extends over quite a bit of time.

That is an important accomplishment - so important that once a year the co-op recognizes the

employees whose safe work records have passed fiveyear increments.

In 2025, 11 Cotton Electric employees achieved those five-year marks for a combined total of 135 years of accident-free service.

Employees recognized include Prestin Green, Case Hurst, Ely King, Joe Moore, Brady Stapp and Jeremy Stewart, who have each worked five years with a safe work record, and Dillon Wiygul, who has worked safely for 10 years. Bobby Shortt has worked safely for 20 years, and Stephanie Christman, Scott Dennis and Kim Johnson have a 25-year safe working record.





Employee of the Year Zack Smith

Cotton Electric Crew Chief



Cotton Electric Crew Chief Zack Smith completes his pole top rescue safety training. Photo by Carli Eubank.



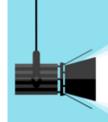
Cooperative Spirit Award

Clint Ingram

Cotton Electric West Operations Superintendent



Leadership in Health/Safety
Braylin Dowlen
Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman



Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the January issue, please submit information by calling 580-875-3351 or emailing TheCurrent@ CottonElectric.com by Jan. 2. Only events occurring after Jan. 16 will be published in the next issue.

Editor's Note: We recommend checking for cancellations with local sources before attending any event.

Pecan Creek VFD golf tournament

The Pecan Creek Volunteer Fire Department is hosting a two-man scramble that will be held on Jan. 3, 2026 at 10 a.m. at the Lawton Municipal Golf Course. Team spots are \$100 each. Call 580-351-4316 for information and sign-up.

Local church hosts Christmas play

The Crossroads Baptist Church of Elgin is presenting a Christmas play, Bethlehem's Inn Dec. 19 and 20 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 21 at 10:30 a.m. The play is a musical drama in a realistic Bethlehem setting with wonderful costumes provided by The Holy City. There will be some fun comedy and singing, along with a few prizes. Admission is free. All are welcome to come and celebrate the birth of Jesus with us and join the cast in singing some traditional Christmas Carols.

Food pantry open once monthly

Walters Community Food Pantry is open from 8 to 11 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. The pantry is in the old City Hall, 131 1/2 W. California St. Pantry organizers try to provide a two-week supply of basic staples to anyone with identification and proof of Cotton County residency. Monetary donations may be sent to Food Pantry, c/o Paul Metcalfe, 211 E. Colorado St., Walters, OK 73572. For information, call Roger Noland at 580-591-6826.

Blessings Boutique open monthly

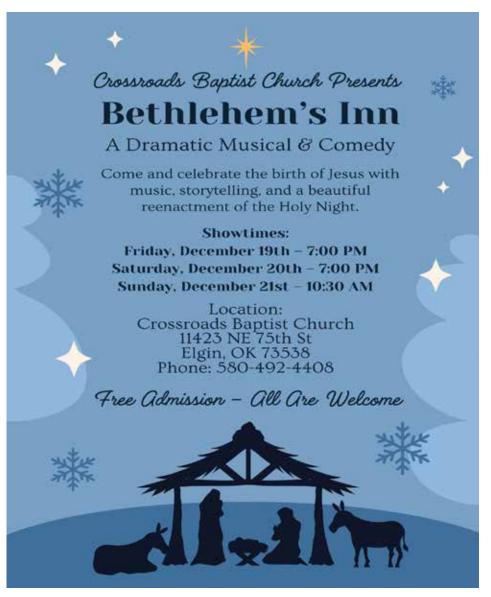
Marlow First United Methodist Church opens its Blessings Boutique from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. every first and third Tuesday of the month. Clothing donation drop-off days are Tuesdays, or donors can call 580-658-2765 to make other arrangements.

PHOTO MONTH



Cotton Electric member Verda Langford snaps a photo of her cat, Kattywampus, showing she will always be her best gift under the Christmas tree.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. The theme for January is Hobbies! Entries can be emailed to TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric prize.















UNCOMFORTABLE?

Does your home have any of these symptoms?

- Rooms that get too hot or too cold?
- High utility bills?
- Thermostat wars with your spouse? **High humidity in summer?**
- House just never seems comfortable?
- There doesn't seem to be enough airflow?
- □ Dust buildup within 2 days of dusting?
- Problems with your system since it's been installed?
- Anyone with allergies or asthma?
- AC starts and stops frequently or runs all the time, and house is still not cool?
- □ Have been told by other contractors that the problem cannot be fixed?

If you answered <u>YES</u> to any of these questions, we can help!

Pippin Brothers has specialists that can pinpoint and correct these problems and, in many cases, you don't even have to replace your equipment, with the solution usually being easier and costing a lot less than you may think. There is no other contractor in Lawton more qualified than Pippin Brothers at diagnosing and correcting these annoying, inconvenient, unhealthy, comfort-compromising and energywasting concerns. Call us today and let us make your home Feel As Good As It Looks! After all, your home is your largest investment and you and your family deserve to be comfortable - don't you?



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Knowing the signals of chronic inflammation and heart health



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food **W THOUGHT**

If you are considering working on your heart health in 2026, a new report from the American College of Cardiology (ACC) points to the need to identify and control chronic inflammation. This is in addition to the traditional ways in which we measure and manage heart health, like total cholesterol and the components of total cholesterol (LDL - low density lipoprotein; HDL - high density lipoprotein), blood pressure and triglycerides. The report released in Nov. 2025, states the research related to chronic inflammation and heart disease is now "compelling and clinically actionable." If you

health, it's time.

defense mechanism against harm, such vider about adding it to your next lab as infection, injury or irritation. The check. According to the new ACC good kind of inflammation is acute in- guidelines, hsCRP should be measured flammation. It is the immediate, short- in people with normal cholesterol/ term response to a sudden problem like LDL levels as well as people with elea scrape, splinter or bacterial infection. vated cholesterol/LDL levels. A sin-Signs of acute inflammation can in- gle measure greater than 3 (hcCRP > clude redness, heat, swelling, pain and 3 mg/L) generally indicates increased temporary loss of function. This is an inflammatory risk, but it is important important, normal bodily response. to discuss any results with your health The concern in heart health is chron- care team. ic inflammation. Chronic inflammation is a prolonged inflammatory state can contribute to chronic inflammathat can last for months or years. The tion, the most common and potenbody continues to send inflammatory signals even when they are not needed, scientific community is now pointing in atherosclerosis, the disease process that happens when your arteries become narrowed and hardened, reduc- ist to review your diet, exercise and ing blood flow. This can contribute to weight as they relate to chronic inflamheart attack, angina (chest pain or dismation and devise an individual plan comfort during exertion), heart failure of action for changing habits. Your and stroke. It can also restrict or cut off health care team can also point you toblood flow to limbs and organs.

The first step in assessing chronic in- and managing stress. flammation is to discuss with your provider about testing for hsCRP, which chronic inflammation, the ACC re-

aren't currently talking to your doctor stands for "high-sensitivity c-reactive port mentions there is not one food about chronic inflammation and heart protein." This may have been part of or supplement that will do the trick. your most recent lab work. If it was Rather, you must adopt a dietary pat-Inflammation is the body's natural not, consider speaking with your pro-

While there are genetic factors that tially modifiable causes of chronic inflammation are certain dietary choices, and this causes internal damage. The unhealthy weight, physical inactivity, smoking and persistent stress. All of to chronic inflammation as a key driver these should be discussed with your doctor, but you can also seek the support of a registered dietitian nutritionward resources for smoking cessation beans, lentils, nuts and seeds in your

tern that increases intake of less inflammatory foods (fruits, vegetables, lean protein, healthy fats, less processed foods, less added sugar) and lowers intake of more inflammatory foods. The Mediterranean diet and the DASH diet are mentioned in the new ACC guidelines as examples of less inflammatory dietary patterns. You can learn general information about the Mediterranean diet at https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/16037-mediterranean-diet and the DASH diet at https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/dash-eating-plan.

For many, the changes needed to adopt these dietary patterns may seem overwhelming. This is where a registered dietitian nutritionist can help guide you to an individualized dietary pattern that incorporates your personal preferences as well as work with your doctor to identify potential beneficial supplements. If you want to get started now, brainstorm ways in which you can incorporate fruits, vegetables, fish, diet. Make 2026 the year that you shift Related to dietary choices and to a lifestyle that lowers chronic inflammation and supports heart health.



How to make snowball cookies

(Family Features) When it's cold outside and snow blankets the ground, try heating up the oven and whipping up a batch of Snowball Cookies. These cookies are crisp on the outside and soft on the inside, and with a hint of coconut added to the frosting, your senses might think you've been transported to a tropical beach.

For more cookie recipes, visit culinary.net.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt 3 3/4 cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 2 teaspoons coconut extract
- 1 cup shredded coconut

Directions:

Heat oven to 400 F.

Cream together shortening, sugar,

egg and vanilla extract.

Snowball Cookies

Sift together flour, salt and baking soda. Add mixture to wet ingredients, alternatively adding in Greek yogurt.

Flour surface and roll out cookie dough. Use top of jar or biscuit cutter to make round cookie shapes.

Bake 8 minutes. Transfer to cooling rack immediately.

In medium bowl, using mixer on low, mix powdered sugar, butter, milk and coconut extract until thoroughly combined. Beat on high until frosting is smooth and fluffy.

Spread frosting on cookies. Pour shredded coconut into small bowl. Press cookies, frosting side down, into shredded coconut.

Store in airtight container.







HIGH'S AUCTION & REAL ESTATE SERVICE **Appraisal Services, Inc.**

LISTING 1:

187677 N. 2590 Rd. Walters, OK 73572

Price Reduced: \$550,000 SE S17 T3S R11W, Cotton County From Walters: 5 south to 5A, then 3 West to 2590 Rd, Then North to property. 160 Acres native grass, hill top view. + 2641 sf home with 4

beds and 3 baths. **LISTING 2:**

317 E. Nebraska, Walters, Ok 73572 Lots 17, 18 Block 84,

Walters Addition Very clean and neat property, updated. HVAC 2 bedroom 1 bath home, Close proximity to youth park.

List price: \$73,000

LISTING 3:

112-114 Ross. Walters, OK 73572 Duplex for sale. 4 bed, 2 bath, 2 car garage. Across from the youth park.

List price: \$85,000 Sale Pending:

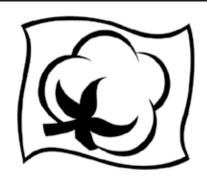
SE S28 T1S R11W, Cotton County 160 acres, 123 cultivation bal. From Walters West 2 miles to 2600 road Then North 5 miles to property. List price: \$400,000

Sale Pending:

W2 NE S1 T2S R12W Cotton County, 78 acres, m/l per survey. All grass, good fences, ponds, access to rural water **List price:** \$194,000

Rick High 580-875-6500 210 N. BROADWAY, WALTERS OK 73572

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COTTON

ELECTRIC CO-OP

HOLIDAY EFFICIENCY WORD SEARCH

The holidays are a fun, festive time of year! But this is also a time when we typically use more electricity at home because the weather is colder and we're home for the holiday season.

Read the efficiency tips below, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.

Energy

Holiday Efficiency Tips:

Decorate your tree with energy-saving **LED lights.**

Save energy by using a **timer** to turn off holiday lights when you're sleeping.

If you have a fireplace in your home, remind an adult to close the damper when a fire is not burning.

Open blinds and curtains during the day to let **sunlight** in to warm your home.

Lower the **thermostat** when you invite friends or family over.

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Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!





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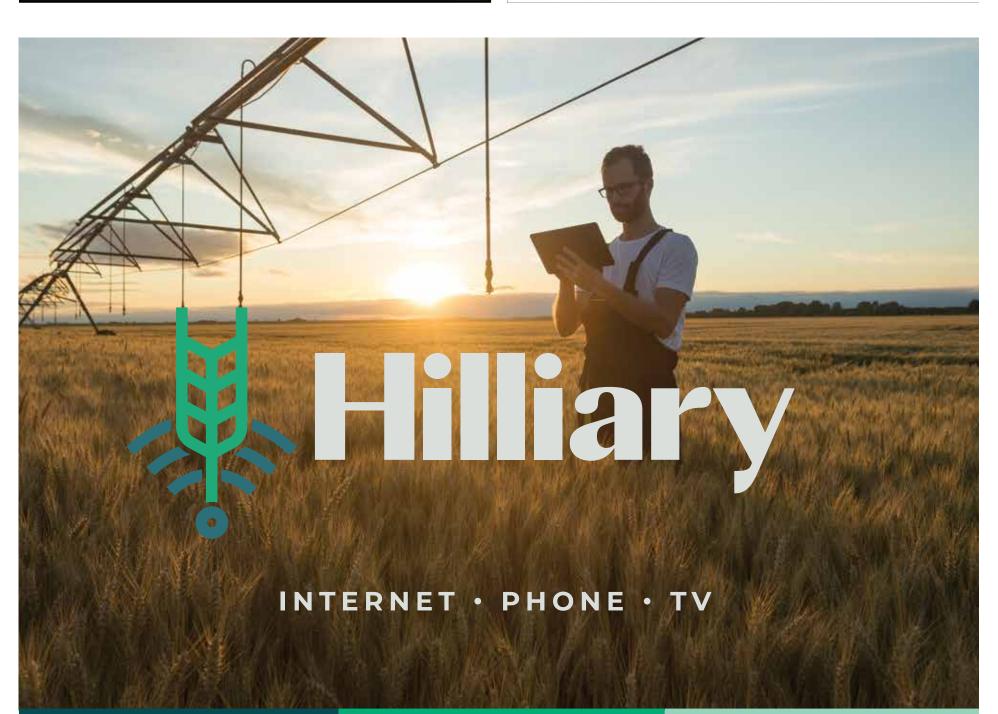
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