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A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

Current

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

"The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957"

VOLUME 67 January 12, 2024 NUMBER 5



Members reach \$1.5 million milestone with ORU in 2023

Pennies, nickels and dimes do not seem like much, but when you add them together with more than 16,000 members, the impact can be great. That is the mission of Operation Round Up.

When members participate in Operation Round Up, their power bills are rounded up to the nearest dollar, and all of those partial dollars are pooled. It adds up to some significant funds that can make a huge difference in the quality of lives throughout the Cotton Electric service area.

During 2023, Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) issued 29 grants for a total of \$87,287.05. Grant recipients included schools and youth programs, volunteer fire departments, non-profit organizations and communities. Thanks to you, our generous members, CECF hit a huge milestone last September of awarded grants that totaled more than \$1.5 million.

Since its beginning in 2004, CECF has awarded more than 600 grants for a total of \$1,535,271.12 to assist the needs of organizations and individuals in our community.

2023 grant recipients include:

AmVets Post 11 Big Pasture School District Chattanooga, Town of Chisholm Trail Kiwanis Club of Dun-

Comanche Fire Department Duncan Area Literacy Council Duncan Community Residence Duncan New Beginnings Methodist

Fairview Cemetery of Randlett Gabriel's House Inc. Grandfield Senior Citizens Center Hulen Volunteer Fire Department Indiahoma Fire Department Indiahoma Public Schools

Indiahoma, City of Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma Rush Springs United Methodist Church

Stephens County Honor Guard Stephens County Humane Society Teen Court Temple Public Schools Terral Volunteer Fire Department Velma-Alma FFA Velma-Alma Public School Von Hawks Rising, Inc.

Walters Senior Citizens Center Waurika Senior Citizens Center Will Rogers Pre-K Center (Duncan

Public Schools)

2024 Youth Tour essay contest deadline quickly approaches

school juniors to submit their essay for the Youth Tour contest. Two winners will be selected to attend an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., this summer.

Youth Tour is a week of hands-on learning while making memories that will last a long time. Student finalists will learn about government and the cooperative business model, see historic monuments, gain leadership experience and meet new people.

To be eligible to enter the competition, contestants must be high school juniors in the Cotton Electric service territory. Students and their families do not have to be Cotton Electric members. Sons and daughters of Cotton Electric employees and Board Members are not eligible to participate.

The contest is broken into three rounds. For the first round, applicants will submit an essay of 400-500 words on this topic: "You are in charge of getting as many cooperative members as possible to attend an Annual Meeting. How would you do it?"

Jan. 17 at 3 p.m. is the deadline for area high Sources must be cited and do not count toward the word count.

> Essays will be judged by the following criteria: knowledge of subject, 40%; originality, 30%; composition, 10%; grammar, 10%; and spelling and punctuation, 10%. All submissions are made anonymous before submission to judges.

> The top 15 essays to move onto the second round - a live video interview, via Zoom. The guestion-and-answer interview between students and judges will be arranged by Cotton Electric. From there, the top five contestants will advance to the final round, where they will submit a recorded oral presentation of their essay. The top two presenters will be awarded with an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June 2024.

> The deadline to submit an essay is 3 p.m. on Jan. 17. Apply online at www.cottonelectric.com/youthtour. For questions, please call us at 580-875-3351 or email zyoung@cottonelectric.com.



Owen Long, back row, was Cotton Electric's representative for the 2023 Youth Tour. Photo courtesy of Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after January 1, 2024, is \$0.00300per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1,300 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$3.90 on the January bill.

December 2023 Temperature Extreme									
Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Av		
1	50	33	42	16	59	32	40		
2	66	30	48	17	71	27	49		
3	69	26	48	18	59	30	4.		
4	60	27	44	19	57	28	43		
5	66	27	47	20	62	43	53		
6	66	29	48	21	63	53	58		
7	73	37	55	22	65	44	5.5		
8	67	41	54	23	70	43	51		
9	55	38	47	24	63	40	52		
10	52	23	38	25	48	25	37		
11	64	24	44	26	52	21	31		
12	62	28	45	27	48	32	40		
13	62	45	54	28	42	28	3.5		
14	59	44	52	29	56	26	4		
15	56	40	48	30	63	23	43		
Source: www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/				31	53	28	4		
Average Daily High: 60				Average Daily Low: 33					

Did You Know?

Have you downloaded the SmartHub app? With SmartHub, co-op members can check energy use, pay power bills and more! Download SmartHub in Google Play or the Apple Store.

Current should arrive in mailboxes on Feb. 9, 2023.

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 The next issue of The a line at Cotton Electric Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.



ELECTRIC CO-OP 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

How extreme winter weather impacts reliability

hen outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. That's because we're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evenings—and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Cotton Electric Cooperative, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) co-op, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC), in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local cooperative and G&T.

In winter months, when even more electricity is being used

try, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment malfunction occurs. This would be a rare event but was experienced by our members during Winter Storm Uri in February 2021. When this happens, the grid operator for our region of the country, which is the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid. As soon as Cotton Electric is aware of the situation, we will inform our members through our social media channels.

Cotton Electric Cooperative and WFEC take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and

simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity it takes everyone to keep the grid demand to exceed supply, esperies reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid if needed (and save a little money along the way):

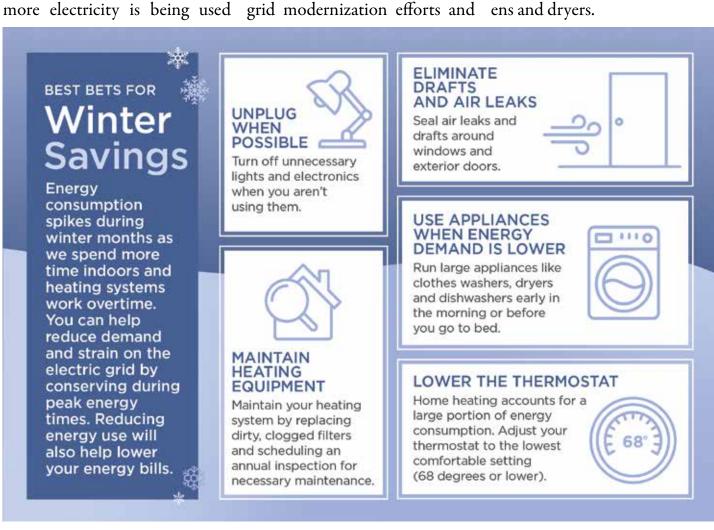
- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temperature and the outdoor temperature.
- o Pro tip: Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers.



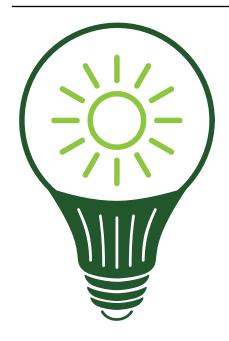
Jennifer Meason, CEO

- o Pro tip: Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.
- Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
- o Pro tip: Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed.
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water-heating costs.
- o Pro tip: Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
- o Pro tip: Plug devices in to a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy-conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also each contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.



HAPPY NEW YEAR May the New Year bring you peace, love, and endless possibilities.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed and properly insulated to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills.

Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is needed.

Source: www.Energy.gov

November 2023 Operating Stats

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,716,190	\$6,910,452
Cost of Purchased Power	3,809,283	4,920,740
Taxes	109,537	123,112
Total Operating Expense per Mile	1,090	1,280
Average Farm and Residential Bill	134	160
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,099	1,183
Total Meters Billed (Farm, Residential) 19,510	19,327
Miles Energized	5,265	5,248
Density per Mile	3.71	3.68
New Service Connects YTD	408	524
Services Retired	176	129

Upcoming Deadlines for The Current

February

Ad Sales Jan. 26 Classified Jan. 26 Publish Feb. 9

March

Ad Sales Feb. 23 Classified Feb. 23 Publish March 8

The Current

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Energy Efficiency

New year, new fee: Oklahoma's EV charging tax

to Public Electric Vehicle charging, marking a significant development in the state's approach to alternative transportation types. On Jan. 1, 2024, the state will begin implementing the unique tax to address the potential revenue shortfall resulting from the growing popularity of electric vehicles.

owners will now be subject to a \$0.03 per kilowatt-hour tax when using public charging stations. The tax, calcuconsumed during the charging session, will be apportioned to the Driving on Road Infrastructure with Vehicles of Electricity revolving fund. Oklahoma than 50 kilowatts, or public charging

troduced a new tax related electric vehicles but rather to ensure that EV owners bear a fair share of the costs associated with maintenance and development of the state's transportation infrastructure. Typically, owners of gas or diesel vehicles contribute to infrastructure funding through fuel taxes incorporated in the cost of fuel at the pump. This new EV charging tax, Under the new law, electric vehicle along with the state's annual EV registration fee, is designed to help recoup the state's revenue lost at the pump.

According to the U.S. Department lated based on the amount of energy of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center, the new tax will not be applicable to private residential chargers, public chargers with a capacity of less

s of the latest legislative officials emphasize that this tax is not stations that do not require payment session, Oklahoma has in-meant to discourage the adoption of for use. Station owners are required to disclose the rates for charging at each charging station location, as well as on their website and mobile software applications. Rates can vary dramatically depending on the size, location, and owner of the charging station. There are a number of phone applications that can be utilized by EV owners to search for charging sites and their rates.

> The implementation of the Oklahoma EV Charging Tax underscores the evolving nature of transportation policies in response to changes in automotive technology. As electric vehicles gain traction nationwide, Oklahoma's approach will now be a part of ongoing debates about the most equitable and effective ways to replace lost tax reve-



Heath Morgan, **Energy Efficiency** Coordinator

nue used to maintain our transportation infrastructure.

More information about Oklahoma's EV laws and incentives can be found on the U.S. Department of Energy's website, https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/ all?state=OK.



Oklahoma will implement a new tax for electric vehicle charging at the beginning of 2024. Photo courtesy of Safe Electricity.



DECEMBER

HDD **YEAR** CDD

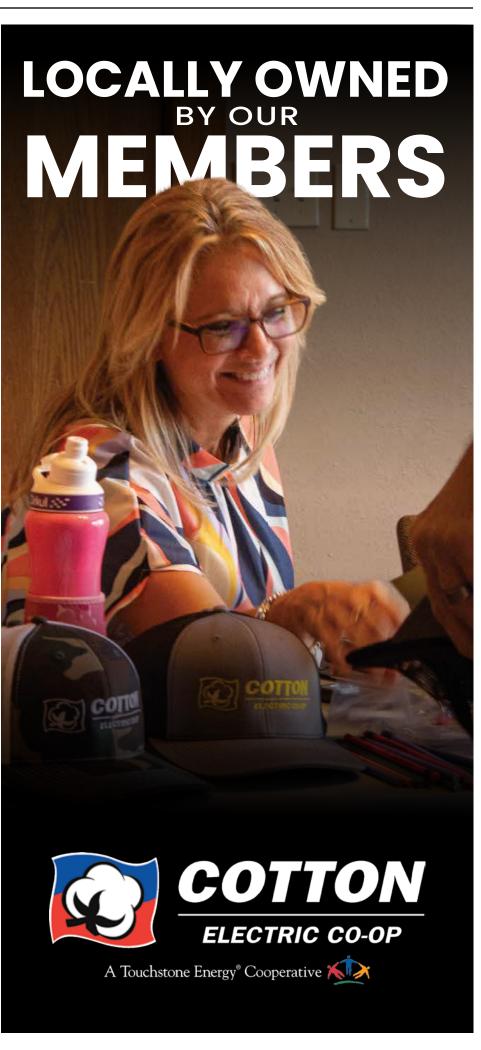
2023 563

662 2022

> 2021 392

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



Duncan New Beginnings Methodist Church received a Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) grant for supplies to build a Blessing Box. Pictured left to right: Cotton Electric Director of Marketing and Communications Zach Young, Craig Lowe, Max Gallaway, Lisa Gallaway, Rev. Lisa Beavers, Cathy Weisner, Gina Flesher, Earl Weisner, and Donna McConnell.



A recent CECF grant was awarded to the Walters Senior Citizens Center for roof repairs. Pictured left to right: Board President Christian Thomas, Board Vice President Jamon Kelley, Board Treasurer Michael Flanagan, Board Member Sherri Flanagan, and Cotton Electric Director of Marketing and Communications Zach Young.



A recent CECF grant was awarded to the Waurika Senior Citizens Center for a roof replacement. Pictured left to right: Cotton Electric Director of Marketing and Communications Zach Young, Bill Eakin, Jeannie Bookout, Mark Hammond, Judith Henderson, Lori Wesberry, and Debi Jinks.



Terral Volunteer Fire Department was awarded a CECF grant to purchase a stream power portable pump. Pictured left to right: Terral Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief Cash Alsup and Cotton Electric Communications Specialist Carli Eubank.



Stephens County Humane Society was awarded a CECF grant for facility repairs. Pictured left to right: (front row) Zach Young, Cotton Electric director of marketing and communications, Michael Harris, Santa Claus; Kelly Nelson, executive director; John Losurdo, Board Member; (back row) Jealena Himes, Board Member; Courtney Myrmel, staff; Zeva the puppy; Patti Whitaker, Board Member; Janet Cole, staff; Coal the puppy; and Jessica Moore, Board Member.



Temple Public Schools was awarded a CECF grant to purchase Chromebooks and charging cart. Pictured left to right: Cotton Electric Vice President of Administration Shane Bowers, Temple Public Schools students, and Cotton Electric Communications Specialist Carli Eubank.





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LARRABEE, MARVIN L.

Cotton Electric seeks addresses for returned capital credit checks

were issued recently to people and businesses.

A retirement of capital credits demonstrates incorrect or insufficient addresses. how a not-for-profit electric cooperative works. Annually, money over and above the cost of operations and other necessary expenses and reserves is declared margins. When the board of trustees determines that a portion of those margins can be refunded, members who contributed to those margins receive a share.

A share of the capital credits was allocated among active and inactive members and a check was mailed to the latest known valid address for THE MEMBER'S IDENTITY.

BOLIN, RONNIE D.

BOOHER NADINE

BOOKER, JOHN T.

WFEC capital credit checks totalling \$500,000 the member. Checks addressed to members listed here were returned to the cooperative because of

> Cotton Electric Cooperative needs help finding the people listed here. If you see a name on the list that you recognize and if you have information about a current address, please call 580-875-3351 or email info@cottonelectric.com.

TO CLAIM YOUR CAPITAL CRED-IT CHECK, WE REQUIRE A SOCIAL **SECURITY NUMBER TO VERIFY**

ABASTA, HENRY J ABBOTT, ZACHARY ABSHER, LEWIS O. III ABSHIRE, RON ACREY, RALSTON ADAMS, PHIL ADAMS, LOUISE ADAMS, JULIA ADAMS, JOHN Q. ADAMS, RICHARD D. AHLSKOG, RICHARD H. ALBERTSON, DEVERA ALEXANDER, L. T. ALEXANDER, LEONA T. ALEXANDER, VANESSA G. ALFORD, SHARON ALLEN, DALE ALLEN, R ALLEN, THORSTEN H. ALMANZA, RAYMOND ALMENDAREZ, CARRIE ALMON, CHRISTOPHER R. ANDERSON, DUSTIN W. ANDERSON, ARLA F. ANDERSON, CHARLES ANDERSON, ROBERT E ANDERSON, MARGIE F. ANDERSON, HOLLY A. ANDERSON, AMANDA ANDREWS, BERTA L. ARA. JAMES A. ARBUCKLE, A. J. ARMENTROUT, STEPHANIE ARMSTRONG, CRISTY ARMSTRONG, CHRIS C. ARMSTRONG, MISTI S. ARNETT, THOMAS J. ARNOLD, WALTER ARTER, RODGER K. ASHCRAFT, LOIS J ATWOOD, DOROTHY N. AUGUSTINE, DANIEL A. AUTREY, MEGAN AVANTS, KARLEY M.

BABER, JERE M. BAGLEY, DANA K. BAIRD, GUY T. BAKER, BARBARA S. BAKER, LEONA M. BAKER, MICHAEL P. BALDWIN, RONALD BALL JENNIFER A BALLARD, H. O. BANKERT, LORE BARBE, JERRY BARBER, MELVIN RARGER BARKER, KAY BARKER, BILL P. BARKEY, RYAN H. BARNARD, RONNIE BARNETT, J. C. BARNETT, MARILYN J. BARRICK, G. E. BARRON, JORGE W.

BARRINGTON, JESSICA BARRY, LANCE W. BARTLETT, WALTER L BARTLING, LACI R. BATEMAN, SHERI BATES, JERRY D. II BAXTER, LEO BEAIRD, PAULA J. BEAN, B. H. BEASLER, APRIL BEAVERS, LARRY JR BECERRA, LISA D. BECK, ROY BECK, LEO E. BECKER, F. BECKHAM, EDITH BECKMAN, KEVIN P. BENCH, CAROLYN J. BENCH JERRY BENNETT, PENNY BENSON, JENNIFER BENTLEY, CODY W. BENTLEY, DONALD S BENTON, LOYAL BENTON, GAIL D. BEREND, ARACELY

BERNARD, HENRY D. BERNDSEN, LEO BERRY, CHARLIE BERRY, SAMMY E. BERRY, JACK BERRY, WENDELL BERTI, JONATHAN R. BEST, FRANK BEST, KEVIN BIGGS, TOM BIGGS, KATHY BIGGS, CHARLES W. BILLS, EDITH JR BISBEE, MILTON L. BISHOP, JOSHUA J. BITNER, MICHAEL BITTICK, EARL BIVINGS, SHARON G. BIVINS, RUSSELL A. BLACK, BRYAN K. BLACKBERRY, ROYCE BLACKBURN, ROBERT BLACKWELL, BILLY D. BLAND, CLEO BLANTON, MISTY BLEER, BENJAMIN L. BLUM, GRACE L. BLUNDELL, RYAN BOHL, MEDREATH M.

BOHOT. DEBBIE D.

BOLES, LONNIE

BOLEY, MELISSA

BOONE, DALE BOONE, TIM BORDEN, DUSTIN BOUISRI, SHIRLEY BOURLAND, EWELL W. BOWEN, JOE BOWEN, BILLY J BOWLING, FRANCES BOWMAN, BERTA F. BOWMAN, UNA BOYCE, CRISSY R. BOYD, REGINA A. BOYD, RUSSELL BRADFORD, RAMONA R. BRADFORD, KATHRYN J. BRADLEY, WILLIAM B. BRAKE, MARION BRALY, AMY M. BRANCH, ALEX G. BRANSCUM, BOB BRANSON, BEN BRATCHER, AARON A. BRAVIS DAVID BRAY, MAURICE BRENNER, ROBERT I. BREWER, BILLY R. SR. BRIDGES, CLIFTON BRIGGS ROBERT BRINSON, DAVID B. BROCK, JAMES BROTHERS, H. BROWN, LEE BROWN W BROWN, RAYMOND L. BROWN, BARNEY BROWN, TESA BROWN, TRACIR. BROWN, BOBBY D. BROWN, DANIEL BRUBAKER, CLOVON BRUCE, BRYAN D. BRUNER, BRENT BRUNER, MICHELE BRUNER, JERRY BRYANT, CYNTHIA BUBEN, JANE BUCHANAN, DENNIS BUCKALOO, KENNETH BURCH, FERN R. BURDICK, WAYNE BURK, JIGGS BURK, TYLER BURKETT, DAVID K. BURKHART, EDWARD L. BURNAM, MARK A. BURNS, RICHARD A BURRIS, JORDAN M

C

BURROW, LILLIAN M

BURTON MICHAEL I

BURTON, PAUL E.

BUSCH, TWYLA

BUTLER, RANDY J.

CADELL, DAVID L. CADY, SHELLY CADY, MARIAH N. CALDWELL, JOHNNY D. CALDWELL, RAY W. SR. CALFY, B. J. CAMERON, MICHAEL CAMPBELL, SUE CAMPBELL, CONNIE CAMPBELL, JESSECA R. CAMPICHE, A. A. CANNON, WILLIAM T. CANNON, RONNIE CARDEN, COBY L. CARL, RICHARD CARLUCCI, CHERYL CARMANY, CHARLES CARPENTER, FORREST L. CARR, W. CARSON, HARVEY J. CARUSO, CLARISSA CASADOR, ALFONSO CASH, STANLEY CASTEEL, DEBBIE CASTLEBERRY, KRISTI L. CATHEY, JAMES H. CAVEL, WANDA J. CAVES, JOHN CECIL, J. CERRONI, ERIC CHACON, DANNY CHAMBERLAIN, DENNIS CHAMP CRAIG CHARLSON, SHERRY A. CHASTEEN, W. A. CHAVEZ, WILLIAM A. CHEEK, LEON S. CHIBITTY, KYLE B. CHILDERS, MARY L. CHRISMAN, NOLA C. CHRISTENSEN, LORENA V CHRISTIAN, BETTY L. CLAGG, KILEY CLAIR, DOVEY CLARK, BETTY A. CLARK, ROSEMARIE CLARK, NOEL D. CLARK, DANIEL CLARK, RONALD L. CLAY, RICHARD A. CLAYBORN, MARK COBB. R. CRAG COCHRAN, GARY P. COFFEE, WAYNE F. COFFIN, KRISTIE COFFMAN, VIRGIL R.

COHEE, BETSY S.

COHN, EDWARD

COLE, LOUISE

COLE, C. L.

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DYER, CHARLES

DYER, JOHN S.

DYER, STEVEN

ELDER, HANK W. ELLER, HOWARD D. ELLIFF, ALBERT ELLIOTT, JAMES ELLIOTT, PHYLLIS ENNIS, CLOYD ESPINOZA, TAYLOR L. ESTES, RUFE C. EVANS, LEONA F. EVERETT, JACKYE L.

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- 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?

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Cotton Electric announces rebate standards for 2024

Cotton Electric has announced standards for the 2024 Rebate Program for the purchase and installation of certain energy-efficient equipment and fuel conversion measures. The program expanded in recent years to include rebates for air source heat pumps, mini-splits and water heaters installed under certain conditions. Rebate funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Once rebate funds have been exhausted, the program will end for the year.

The maximum rebate in 2024 will be \$4,000 per residence. Heat pumps and mini-splits must be installed by a licensed contractor. Indoor and outdoor equipment must be replaced at the same time. Members will need to provide a rebate application, a copy of their itemized invoice and, from the HVAC contractor or supplier, an AHRI certification and Manual J calculation in order to qualify for the program. Verification by Cotton Electric personnel and an energy-efficiency home evaluation are also required to receive the rebate.

Ground source heat pumps (GSHP)

Rebates are paid on new installations or GSHP to GSHP replacements. A desuperheater is not required but additional rebates are available if one is part of a GSHP installation. Minimum standards vary for closed and open loop installations and apply to the full load operation of a GSHP, not the partial

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580-467-1468

Venessa Swanson

580-775-7468

load. The amount of rebate is determined by the size of each unit, its Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) and Coefficient of Performance (COP).

- Qualifying units can receive a rebate of up to \$750 per ton installed if the unit meets the minimum specifications, which are 15.9 EER and 3.3 COP for closed loop systems and 15.9 EER and 3.6 COP for open loop.
- To qualify for a rebate when replacing an existing GSHP system with another GSHP system, the new installation must increase the EER by at least 3.0. The minimum specification for COP is 3.3 for closed loop systems and 3.6 for open loop. Rebates are \$300 per ton.

Air-source heat pumps / Mini-splits

Rebates are paid on replacement of existing heat pumps, new construction or conversion from natural gas or propane furnaces to total electric heat pumps. Rebates are per unit, not per ton. To qualify, units must meet standards that vary with the Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) rating.

- A unit with a 17.00 to 17.99 SEER must have an SEER2 of 16.2 to 17.2. Rebates are \$500 per unit for a replacement and \$750 per unit for a fuel conversion or new construction.
- A unit with an 18.00 to 19.99 SEER must have an SEER2 of 17.1 to 19.0. Rebates are \$600 per unit

for a replacement and \$850 per unit for fuel conversion or new construction.

• A unit with 20.00 or greater SEER must have a SEER2 of 19.1 or greater. Rebates are \$750 per unit for a replacement and \$1,000 per unit for fuel conversions or new construction.

Heat pump water heaters

Rebates are offered for heat pump water heaters replacing traditional resistance water heaters. Conversion from natural gas or propane to an electric, and new construction projects, also qualifies for a rebate.

• The per-unit rebate for a replacement is \$250 and \$500 per unit for a fuel switching or new construction.

Water heaters should have a minimum 40-gallon capacity, an energy factor of 2.8 or greater and a manufacturer's warranty of 10 years or greater. Tankless water heaters are not eligible. Collecting the rebate requires a rebate application, AHRI reference sheet, invoice or receipt dated after Jan. 1, 2024, and an inspection by Cotton Electric.

For questions or to arrange an inspection, call 580-875-3351 or visit www.cottonelectric.com/rebate-program.



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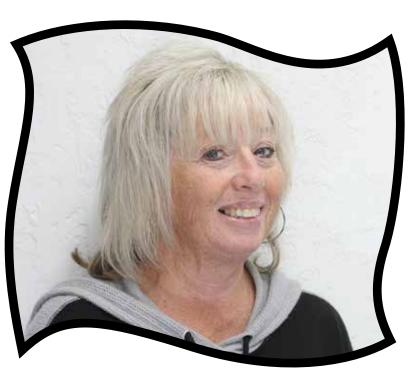
Cotton Electric Member Service Representative



Cotton Electric Member Service Representative Stephanie Christman helps with prize drawings at the 2022 Annual Meeting. Photo by Carli Eubank.



Cooperative Spirit Award Heath Morgan Cotton Electric Energy Efficiency Coordinator



Leadership in Health/Safety **Angel Bowles** Cotton Electric Cashier, Receptionist, Operator

APPLY NOW!

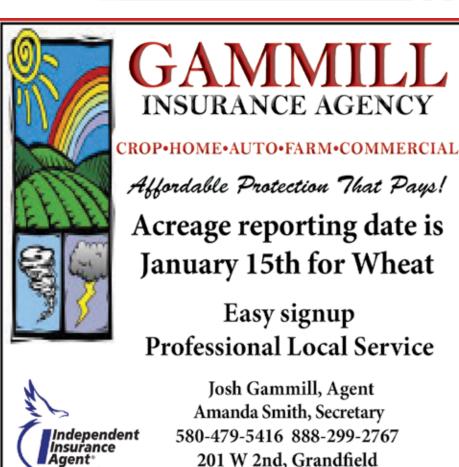


Jefferson County Rural Water #1 in Hastings is currently accepting applications for a field technician. Applicants must have a CDL or be able to obtain a CDL within 3 months. Applicants must also be able to obtain DEQ licensing within 3 months. Applicants must pass

pre-employment drug screening and background check. Duties include meter reading, operating equipment, physical labor. Minimum of 40 hours with overtime. Must be able to be on call nights and weekends. Must be organized and punctual. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Applications are available online at jeffersonrwd1.org. No phone calls please. Questions will not be answered via phone, messenger, or text message. Paid time off, retirement, and health insurance provided. Jefferson County Rural Water #1 is an equal opportunity employer.







201 W 2nd, Grandfield

Understanding your electric bill

Your monthly Cotton Electric bill includes a lot of information. The example below shows a typical residential bill and explanations of expanded information.

Call us at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520 to get help with:

- Discontinuing paper bills through the mail and having them delivered via email instead.
- Signing up for automatic bank drafts, or switching from traditional to prepaid billing.

Account information

A member's account number, contact information, service address and statement date for this bill. In the case of a bill for multiple meters, there will be a member number and invoice number listed here.

Account Detail

This area will list your meter(s), bill type, service dates, readings and energy use recorded by the meter.

Energy Use Graph

Shows energy use history over the past 24 months. Members can spot their energy use trends at a glance.

Monthly Comparisons

Compares this month's energy use with the previous month and also the same month from the previous year.

Contact Us

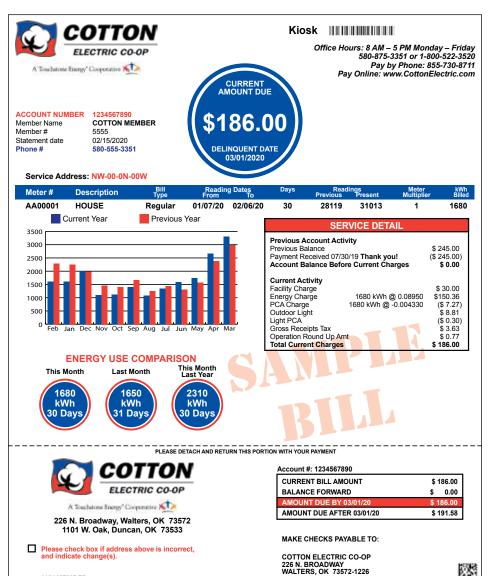
General information about our business hours and phone numbers is located in the upper right corner. The Pay By Phone number can be used to make electronic check or credit/debit card payments.

Current Amount Due

We know most members want to know only two things: What do I owe and how soon do I need to get it paid? That's why we made this big and put it at the top, so you can tell at a glance. If an account has an outstanding balance, the outer circle will be in red. Avoid a late fee and pay before the delinquent date.

Kiosk Bar Code

Unique to each member account, this bar code will automatically pull up the account when exposed to the code reader of a payment kiosk at the Cotton Electric office at 1101 W. Oak in Duncan. Cash or credit/debit card payments can be made at any time at this outside kiosk.



Service Detail

This shows a detailed breakdown of charges. There are no increases or additions to the fee structure; we're just breaking everything out for you. This section shows the previous balance, payments, and the components of current charges.

Depending on the type of service a meter provides, the Service Detail box may include some of this information:

Facility Charge A cooperative member's equal share of fixed costs so power can be available at your location. This includes the cost of poles, wires, trucks, billing, vegetation management, meters, transformers and substations. This is a fixed cost attached to all me-

Energy Charge The amount of electricity used as measured in kilowatt-hours, multiplied by the current rate. The amount of electricity used is controlled by you, the member.

Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) This can be a decrease or increase, depending on the true cost of wholesale power purchased from our G&T. PCA is applied to kWh consumed and to fees for lights.

Outdoor Light Charges vary according to the type of light installed.

Gross Receipts Tax Cotton Electric is required to collect a 2% state gross receipts tax on all power bills. This is NOT a sales tax and is not eligible for exemption.

Operation Round Up Participants in Operation Round Up can see how much the bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar, an amount that will never be more than 99 cents.

2024 Electrical

General Service Monthly Rate **Customer Charge:**

Single-Phase Service \$30.00 per month Three-Phase Service \$35.00 per month

Energy Charges: All kWh \$0.08950 per kWh

The rate includes 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power in our base charge for electricity. Any amount above or below 6.25 cents will be computed in the Power Cost Adjustment.

Available To:

Available to general service customers for farm, home and residential use subject to the established rules and regulations of the Cooperative. No resale, standby or auxiliary service permitted.

Type of Service:

Single-phase, at available secondary voltage or three-phase at the discretion of the Cooperative.

Minimum Charges:

(1) A charge of \$30.00 per month for single-phase service and \$35.00 per month for three-phase ser-

(2) Compliance with Operational Policy 556,if applicable, of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

(3) A charge of \$30.00 per month for single-phase service and \$35.00 per month for three-phase service, plus a charge of \$1.00 per kVA of transformer capacity in excess of ten (10) kVA.

Adjustments:

The listed rates do not include power cost adjustments, Winter Storm Uri recovery, gross receipts tax and franchise taxes where applicable.

Service Reconnection:

When a reconnection of service is made for a Member at the same location within a 12-month period after the date the service was disconnected at the Member's request, a charge equal to the sum of the minimum monthly bills determined for the months that service was disconnected will be billed to the customer and must be paid, in addition to the charges for connection in compliance with Operational Policy 553 of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

General Service HD Monthly Rate **Customer Charge:**

Single-Phase Service \$25.00 per month Three-Phase Service \$30.00 per month

Energy Charges:

All kWh \$0.07690 per kWh

The rate includes 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power in our base charge for electricity. Any amount above or below 6.25 cents will be computed in the Power Cost Adjustment.

Available To:

Available to residential consumers in franchised municipal areas with a line density of 11 customers per mile or greater, subject to the established rules and regulations of the Cooperative. No resale, standby or auxiliary service permitted.

Type of Service: Single-phase, at available secondary voltage or

three-phase at the discretion of the Cooperative. Minimum Charges:

(1) A charge of \$25.00 per month for single-phase service and \$30.00 per month for three-phase service; or (2) Compliance with Operational Policy 556,if applicable, of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

(3) A charge of \$25.00 per month for single-phase service and \$35.00 per month for three-phase service, plus a charge of \$1.00 per kVA of transformer capacity in excess of ten (10) kVA.

Adjustments:

The listed rates do not include power cost adjust-

ments, Winter Storm Uri recovery, gross receipts tax and franchise taxes where applicable.

ANY MEMBER 123 ANY STREET ANYTOWN, OK 00000

Service Reconnection:

When a reconnection of service is made for a Member at the same location within a twelve-month period after the date the service was disconnected at the Member's request, a charge equal to the sum of the minimum monthly bills determined for the months that service was disconnected will be billed to the customer and must be paid, in addition to the charges for connection in compliance with Operational Policy 553 of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Commercial Service Monthly Rate **Customer Charge:**

Single-Phase Service \$40.00 per month Three-Phase Service \$45.00 per month

Energy Charges: All kWh \$0.08620 per kWh

The rate includes 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power in the base charge for electricity. Any amount above or below 6.25 cents will be computed in the Power Cost Adjustment.

Available To:

Available for commercial and industrial consumers up to fifty (50) kVA of transformer capacity, subject to the rules and regulations of the Cooperative. Available for commercial and industrial consumers to one hundred fifty (150) kVA of transformer capacity at the discretion of the Cooperative. Service under this rate is not available wherein transformer capacity reauirements exceed one hundred fifty (150) kVA. No resale, standby or auxiliary service permitted.

Type of Service:

Single-phase or three-phase at available secondary

Minimum Charges:

(1) A charge of \$40.00 per month for single-phase and \$45.00 per month for three-phase service plus a charge of \$1.00 per kVA of transformer capacity in excess of ten (10) kVA; or

(2) Compliance with Operational Policy 556,if applicable, of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Adjustments:

The listed rates do not include power cost adjustments, Winter Storm Uri recovery, gross receipts tax and franchise taxes where applicable

Commercial Service HD Monthly Rate **Customer Charge:**

Single-Phase Service \$35.00 per month Three-Phase Service \$40.00 per month

Energy Charges: All kWh \$0.07940 per kWh

The rate includes 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power in our base charge for electricity. Any amount above or below 6.25 cents will be computed in the Power Cost Adjustment.

Available To:

Available for commercial and industrial consumers up to fifty (50) kVA of transformer capacity, in incorporated areas with a line density of 11 customers per mile or greater, subject to the rules and regulations of the Cooperative. Available for commercial and industrial consumers to one hundred fifty (150) kVA of transformer capacity at the discretion of the Cooperative. Service under this rate is not available wherein transformer capacity requirements exceed one hundred fifty (150) kVA. No resale, standby or auxiliary service permitted.

Type of Service:

Single-phase or three phase, at available secondary

Minimum Charges:

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(1) A charge of \$35.00 per month for single-phase service and \$40.00 per month for three-phase service plus a charge of \$1.00 per kVA for transformer capacity in excess of ten (10) kVA; or

(2) Compliance with Operational Policy 556,if applicable, of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Irrigation Rate Monthly Rate

Customer Charge \$32.50 per month Energy Charge \$0.06650 per kWh Horsepower Charge \$2.70 per horsepower of connected load per month

Available To:

Available to Members for pump irrigation service subject to the established rules and regulations of the Cooperative. Service under this rate shall be under the standard Cooperative contract. Motors shall be ten (10) horsepower or greater. No resale, standby or auxiliary service permitted.

Type of Service:

Single-phase or three-phase, at available secondary voltages.

Minimum Charges:

(1) \$32.50 plus a charge of \$2.70 per horsepower of connected load per year; or

(2) Compliance with Operational Policy 556, if applicable, of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Service Reconnection:

When a reconnection of service is made for a Member at the same location within a twelve-month period after the date the service was disconnected at the Member's request, a charge equal to the sum of the minimum monthly bills determined for the months that service was disconnected will be billed to the customer and must be paid, in addition to the charges for connection in compliance with Operational Policy 553 of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Interruptible Irrigation Monthly Rate

Customer Charge \$32.50 per month

Energy Charge \$0.06650 per kWh Horsepower Charge \$2.70 per horsepower of connected load per month

The Interruptible Irrigation Rate includes 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power in the basic charge for electricity. Any amount above or below 6.25 cents will be computed in the Power Cost Adjustment.

Available To:

Available to Members for pump irrigation service subject to the established rules and regulations of the Cooperative. Service under this rate shall be metered with "Time-of-Day" metering or shall have "load interrupting" devices installed on the service. Electric power and energy usage under this rate is prohibited from June 20 through Sept. 9, between the hours of 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Each year, Members will be given credit for horsepower charges, applied toward but not to exceed energy charges, if no power was used during the prohibited time period. No resale, standby or auxiliary service permitted.

Minimum Charges:

(1) \$32.50 plus a charge of \$2.70 per horsepower of connected load per year; or

(2) Compliance with Operational Policy 556, if applicable, of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Service Reconnection:

When a reconnection of service is made for a Member at the same location within a twelve-month period after the date the service was disconnected at the Member's request, a charge equal to the sum of the minimum monthly bills determined for the months that service was disconnected will be billed to the customer and must be paid, in addition to the charges for connection in compliance with Operational Policy 553 of the Terms and Conditions of Service.

Large Power Rate

Large Power Rates are available for large industrial loads with a transformer capacity of more than 50 kVA. For details about LP Rates, contact the cooperative at 580-875-3351. Special rates also are available for Cotton Gins.

Outdoor Lighting

Monthly Rate (1) Where an approved Outdoor Light is installed on an existing pole; and (a) where the Outdoor Light is installed on the Cooperative's side of the meter, the monthly charge per light shall be \$8.81 for 175-Watt Mercury Vapor, 100-Watt High Pressure Sodium or LED; and \$20.87 for 400-Watt Metal Halide; or (b) where the Outdoor Light is installed on the consumer's side of the meter, the monthly charge per light shall be \$2.60 for 175-Watt Mercury Vapor; \$3.12 for 100-Watt High Pressure Sodium or LED; and \$5.98

for 400-Watt Metal Halide. (2) Should the Member desire a location other than an existing pole, the cost of installation shall be determined by figuring the total cost of labor, materials installed, plus digging and hauling charges, and will be incurred by the consumer. The wire, pole and material will become the property of the consumer.

Available To:

Available to all Members of the Cooperative for illumination of outdoor areas at any point on the distribution or service lines, subject to the established rules and regulations of the Cooperative.

Vandalism:

In the event the Outdoor Light is damaged by vandalism, such as gun shots, rocks, or any other type of vandalism, the Member shall be responsible for the cost of repairing the Outdoor Light.

Adjustments:

The listed rates do not include power cost adjustments, Winter Storm Uri recovery, gross receipts tax and franchise taxes where applicable.

Cotton Electric is required to collect a 2% state gross receipts tax on all power bills.

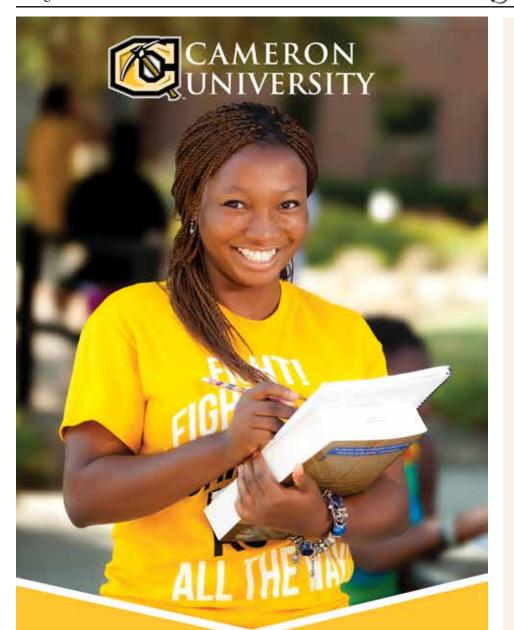
Power Cost Adjustment: Due to fluctuations in the cost of fuel for generating

wholesale power, it is impossible to buy electricity at the same cost per kWh each month. The base rates include 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power cost. Any variation above or below 6.25 cents per kWh of wholesale power cost must be computed as Power Cost Adjustment. The actual PCA factor is indicated on each power bill and is reported in your monthly Cotton Electric Current. Occasionally, when hydro or other low cost generating power is available, a credit is shown on your bill. This adjustment shall be based on 70 kWh per

month per 175-Watt Mercury Vapor Light, 40 kWh per month per 100-Watt High Pressure Sodium Light or 160 kWh per month per 400-Watt Metal Halide, applicable to Rate (1), Plan (a).

Adjustment for the recovery of Winter Storm Uri costs:

For rate classes with a Power Cost Adjustment, an adjustment for the recovery of Winter Storm Uri costs will apply. Charges for these rate classes shall be up to \$0.0045 per kWh for the costs associated with Winter Storm Uri in February 2021. This charge shall remain in effect until the entire cost obligation has been recovered, but in no event longer than December 31, 2027.



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Co-op Life



2023 Energy Trails volunteers from Oklahoma electric cooperatives include Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman Larry Crowell (third from left), Director of Safety, Loss Control and Vegetation Management Jarrod Hooper (second from right) and Energy Efficiency Coordinator Heath Morgan (far right). Photos courtesy of James Pratt.

Co-op employees give back to Guatemalan villages

By Carli Eubank

mproving the quality of life in the communities we serve is one of Cotton Electric's focuses. Recently, three cooperative employees carried that mission abroad to Guatemala. Cotton Electric Director of Safety, Loss Control and Vegetation Management Jarrod Hooper, Energy Efficiency Coordinator Heath Morgan and Journeyman Lineman Larry Crowell joined others from Oklahoma, Colorado and Arkansas electric cooperatives to volunteer for the 2023 Energy Trails project.

This year's mission project was a partnership between the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) philanthropic arm, NRECA International, and Heifer International. Volunteers completed the 14-day project wiring nearly 200 structures in 38 villages and impacting nearly 1,200 farmers and their families. They installed breaker boxes, light sockets, outlets and switches as well as meters on concrete poles outside of the homes.

Each day, crews began the day with breakfast at 6:30 a.m. and left around 7 a.m. for their assignments which could be anywhere between a 15-minute to a 2-hour drive through rough twisting dirt roads. When Morgan and his other three team members arrived at their first assignment, he described how humbling it was driving up to the village.

"You see stuff on TV, hear stories and think you're prepared for what you'll experience, but we were in awe," Morgan said. "Houses were probably no bigger than some people's living rooms with dirt floors and no plumbing. It was definitely a lot to take in the first day, but the more we interacted with the families, we saw how content they really were."

When crews pulled up to each assignment, families were eager to help them unload equipment from the truck, carrying tool bags and spools of wire uphill to the home. Morgan shared how he enjoyed when they worked in the same village all day.

"It was really neat interacting with families throughout the day, and eventually we would kind of get an entourage of the mothers and children following us from house to house in the village," Morgan said. "Over time, we got to learn some basic Spanish words, so we would ask them to hand us tools because they were eager and more than happy to help us."

Since working for Cotton Electric, Morgan has always supported the Energy Trails projects, and when this year's trip opened up to those with wir-

ing experience, he was thrilled for the opportunity to apply.

"I would go back in a heartbeat," Morgan said. "This mission was a unique experience to be able to go serve others and help somebody out that I probably wouldn't ever had the chance to do anywhere else. I'm thankful to God for allowing me to be part of this experience, to our sponsor groups, to our cooperatives, and to our host throughout the trip."

Working alongside Morgan was Larry Crowell, who was also a first-time volunteer for Energy Trails. Crowell shared that when he got off the plane and left Guatemala City, this mission was more than he could have ever imagined. Driving through the country, Crowell was shocked by the vastness and beauty of the mountains, but he soon became more amazed by the families he met.

"The people there were just as curious about us as we were them, and they were willing to help with anything," Crowell said. "They wanted to know more about what we were doing and how we did our line of work, and everyone was just so friendly."

One of the experiences that amazed Crowell the most was how quickly the villagers were able to make their own tools. A hole needed to be dug to set a pole in at an assignment, and one of the villagers cut a tree branch with his machete, created a digging tool, and dug a 3-foot hole in just 10 minutes.

"They didn't have a lot of material things, but there was nothing simple about the way they live because they work for everything, like making tools or fetching water," Crowell said. "It's really humbling to see the way other parts of the world are, and this project definitely opened up my eyes to so much."

Crews stayed busy wiring homes, but they also found some time to take a minute and interact with the families, whether it was passing out toys or playing games with the children. Volunteers wanted to take in as much as they could, Crowell shared.

"Electricity is a luxury that we take for granted, and most of us have never known life without it," Crowell said. "Those villages don't have electricity, and this mission project was one way we were able to hopefully make their way of life easier and more stress-free."

Although this was Hooper's third mission project with Energy Trails, this year he took on a new role as team leader.

In addition to a different role with the project, Hooper also experienced new sights and interactions. Hooper explained how the homes they wired were made out of concrete or cinder block instead of wood and stucco as he's seen in previous years.

"As always, interacting with the families was really cool, but this time, they wanted to take our pictures, and we've never had that happen before," Hooper said. "The hardest part was finding a balance between working and interacting with the families. We wanted to make sure we left their home in a safe state to use, and I wanted to make sure everyone was working safely and got home safely."

Hooper shared how impressed he was by the team and their huge accomplishment of completing the mission and wiring nearly 200 homes.

"Serving on this mission has been incredibly humbling. Co-ops are built to give back. It is our privilege to give the gift of light to those who never had it," Hooper said. "Their lives will never be the same, and the same can be said about the volunteers. We will always remember the villagers' kindness and resilience. We are all changed."

Oklahoma's electric cooperatives have established a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, The Oklahoma Energy Trails Foundation, to support this cause. All contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible. Learn more at: https://oaec.coop/co-op-difference/energy-trails/



One of the local children gives Cotton Electric Energy Efficiency Coordinator Heath Morgan back a tool that had fallen.



Cotton Electric Director of Safety, Loss Control and Vegetation Management Jarrod Hooper installs wiring in one of the homes.



Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman Larry Crowell installs wiring inside one of the homes.



If you would like your community event listed in the February issue, please submit information by calling 580-875-3351 or send an email to TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com by Jan. 26. Only events occurring after Feb. 9 will be published in the next issue.

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

CTAC Art Gallery Exhibit

The Chisholm Trail Arts Council (CTAC) will be showing a new art gallery exhibit of artwork by Steven Dixon. All proceeds from Dixon's artwork will be donated to The Second Chance Ranch. The exhibit will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, Jan. 11 through Feb. 28 at the CTAC Art Gallery, 810 W. Walnut Ave., Duncan. For more information, call 580-252-4160 or visit www.chisholmtrailarts.com.

Duncan hosts monster truck event

Experience the thrill of monster trucks in head-to-head competitions at Duncan Monster Truck Wars. Watch as world-famous trucks battle it out in the dirt arena. A matinee showing of the Monster Truck Wars will be from 1 to 3 p.m. and an evening show will be from 6 to 8 p.m. on Jan. 20 at the Stephens County Fairgrounds, 2002 S. 13 St., Duncan. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www. monstertrucks.fun.

Medicine Park Polar Plunge

Enjoy a day of winter events and take the Polar Bear Plunge in Bath Lake during the Medicine Park Plunge. Hear live music, sample sweet treats, and more. Costumes are encouraged. Participants will meet at the Park Tavern at 1:45 p.m. and join other plungers in a parade starting at 2 p.m. leading to the big plunge on Feb. 4. For more information, call 580-529-2825 or follow their Facebook page.

Food pantry open once monthly

Walters Community Food Pantry is open from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. The pantry is in the old City Hall, 131 1/2 W. California Street. 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 the church at 580-658-2765 to make other arrangements.

MONTH



Cotton Electric member Meg Williams is currently working on a quilt for her grandson.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. The theme for February is Loving Life! 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.

The Current

2024 Publication Dates

January

Ad Sales Deadline Dec. 29 Classified Deadline Dec. 29 Ian. 12

Publish Date

February

Ad Sales Deadline Jan. 26 Classified Deadline Jan. 26 Publish Date Feb. 9

March

Ad Sales Deadline Feb. 23 Classified Deadline Feb. 23 Publish Date March 8

April

Ad Sales Deadline March 29 Classified Deadline March 29 Publish Date April 12

May

Ad Sales Deadline April 26 Classified Deadline April 26 Publish Date May 10

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Ad Sales Deadline May 31 Classified Deadline May 31 Publish Date June 14

July

Ad Sales Deadline June 28 Classified Deadline June 28 Publish Date July 12

August Ad Sales Deadline July 26 Classified Deadline July 26 Publish Date Aug. 9

September Ad Sales Deadline Aug. 30 Classified Deadline Aug. 30 Publish Date Sept. 13

October

Ad Sales Deadline Sept. 27 Classified Deadline Sept. 27 Publish Date Oct. 11

November

Ad Sales Deadline Oct. 25 Classified Deadline Oct. 25 Publish Date Nov. 8

December

Ad Sales Deadline Nov. 29 Classified Deadline Nov. 29 Publish Date Dec. 13

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Doing dessert differently with fruit



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food THOUGHT

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025 recommend adult women consume 1.5-2 cups of fruit per day and adult men consume 2-2.5 cups of fruit per day. Are you meeting those recommendations? Fruit pies and fruit cakes don't count, but dessert with fruit as the main ingredient and limited added fat and sugar can certainly count toward your daily goal.

Fruit for dessert can be elegant, nutritious, and delicious. It can also be a great way to recover from the season of sugary treats. Change up your meal routine by using seasonal fresh fruits, dried fruits, frozen fruits, or canned fruits in their own juice as dessert. You will experience different flavors and fuel your body with beneficial nutrients - fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Apples, oranges, grapefruit, and pears are generally available fresh and affordable during January. Simply peeling, dicing, slicing and serving these fruits mixed together can be a delicious dessert. Baking, grilling, sauteing, and broiling accentuate the natural sweetness of fruit. Cooking does alter some vitamin and mineral levels, but other nutrients like polyphenols are unaffected or enhanced.

Apples can be baked or sauteed and, as long as very little fat and sugar are added, can make a scrumptiously healthy dessert (skip the a la mode). Pears can be poached or roasted and stuffed with nuts and dried fruit. You can also keep it simple - seasonal fresh fruit served with a dollop of low-fat yogurt or a sprinkle of dark chocolate chips.

Some fruits are better to cook with than others. It is best to consult several recipes before going to the store to choose the type of fruit. For example, Red Delicious apples are good for sauces, but Granny Smith, Jonagold, or Honeycrisp are better for baking due to flavor and texture. Bosc and Anju pears are best for cooking because they maintain their shape. Any citrus can be grilled to caramelize natural sugars and enhance sweetness.

Doing dessert differently with fruit can increase your intake of nutrients that can help manage weight, prevent chronic disease, and improve gut health through the addition of fiber.



Mixing dried fruit with nuts and granola can increase your intake of nutrients while enjoying a sweet treat. Photo courtesy of MetroCreative.



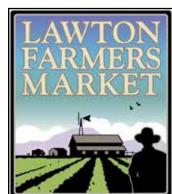
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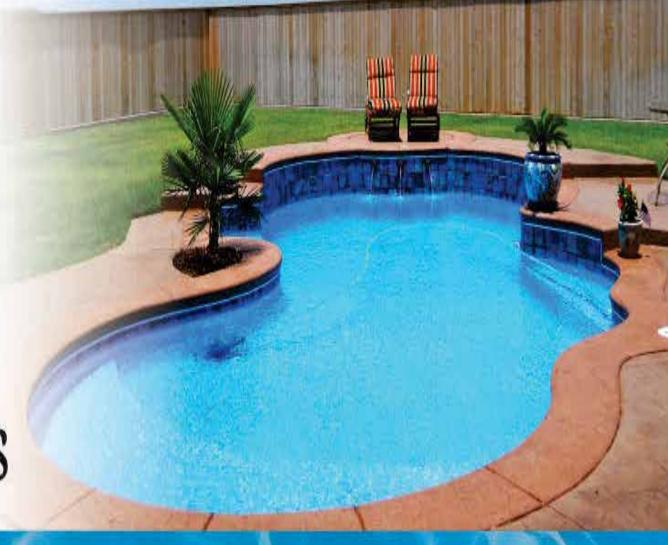
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A Reflection of Your Success

Students make winning recipes

The annual Stephens County Cook-Off was held on Oct. 30. Participants included many Cloverbuds and 4-H'ers who entered more than 60 total recipes. The young cooks prepared recipes to be judged on taste and appearance.

Awards were presented to the top three in each category. First-place winners received a monogrammed apron, and second- and third-place winners received kitchen items. Cloverbud participants received a certificate and kitchen spatula. Awards were sponsored by Stephens County Farm Bureau Women.

Over the next several months, *The Current* will include recipes from the winners in each category.



Brylee's seriously good sliders

Directions:

onion powder

grease 9x13 glass baking dish

Number of Servings: 12 (24 sliders)

By Brylee White

Ingredients:

- 1 stick of butter, melted
- 2 tbs. brown sugar 1 tbs. of Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbs. poppy seeds
- 1 tbs. dried minced onion
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 24 party pack King's Hawaiian Orig-tom of the baking dish inal Sweet Dinner Rolls
 - 2 lbs. deli ham, sliced thinly



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Fritos Corn Salad Number of Servings: 10-12 By Graycie Farris

Ingredients:

1 (15 oz.) cans whole kernel corn,

1/2 red bell pepper, finely diced

- 1 cups shredded Mexican blend cheese
- 1/2 cup mayo (can substitute light mayo)
 - 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 (9.25 oz) bag Chili Cheese Fritos, lightly crushed or ou can use plain Fritos also

Directions:

In a large mixing bowl, stir together corn, diced bell pepper, shredded cheese, mayo, and black pepper

Right before serving, stir in crushed Chili Cheese or Plain Fritos



Ingredients:

1 lb. Pintos

Water Garlic powder

Salt and pepper

1 can mild Rotel

Parsley

Directions:

Ensure there are no rocks in your beans. Cover pintos with water, add parsley and serve. seasonings and soak overnight.

with water, just over the beans, and add the seasonings.

Heat on high until boiling, stirring your food.

beans are fork-tender and the juice is thickened.

Once the juice is thickened, add the Rotel. Smash some of the beans to help thicken the juice, if needed. Continue to simmer for 30 minutes.

Remove from heat and allow to rest for at least 10 minutes. Garnish with

While cooking, think about who Discard the water and fill pot back you are making this for. Imagine your love for them trickling down into the food. Your emotions will transfer to



Blake's Meaty Jambalaya Number of Servings: 6 By Blake White

Ingredients: 3 tbs. olive oil, divided

2 tsp. Tony's Original Cajun Season-

12 oz. smoked beef sausage, cut into rounds

1 lb. chicken breast (about 2), cut into 1/2-1 inch cubes

1/2 onion, diced

1/2 green bell pepper, seeded and diced

1 stock celery, diced

4 cloves of garlic, minced

14.5 oz Italian-Style Petite Diced **Tomatoes**

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. black pepper

1 tsp. thyme

1 tsp. oregano

1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes

1/2 tsp. hot sauce (optional) 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

1 1/2 cups of uncooked white rice

3 cups of chicken broth

12 oz. (100-150) extra small peeled and deveined, tail-off shrimp, thawed

Directions:

Heat 1 tbs. of olive oil in Dutch oven absorbed, and rice is tender. over medium heat.

While heating, season sausage and cubed chicken with 2 tsp. of Tony's seasoning. Brown sausage in oil. Once browned, place on paper towel lined plate.

Add 1 tbs. of oil to same pan and saute chicken until browned on all sides, place on paper towel lined plate.

Saute onion, green bell pepper, and celery until onion is soft and transparent. Add garlic and cook until fragrant (30 seconds).

Stir in tomatoes and season with salt, black pepper, thhyme, oregano, and red pepper flakes. Add hot sauce, if desired. Add Worcestershire sauce and still well to combine.

Stir in chicken and sausage and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add in the rice and chicken broth, stir, and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat cooking for 20-25 minutes.

Uncover and add shrimp, stir and replace lid. Cook for additional 5 minutes or until shrimp is pink, liquid is

Serve and enjoy!



Cowboy Cookies

Makes 50-52 cookies

Ingredients:

- and leveled
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate
- 3/4 cup sweetened shredded coco-
- 1 cup chopped pecans (see baking tip)

Directions:

- 1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, ground cinnamon, and salt until well combined. Stir in the old-fashioned rolled oats and set aside.
- 2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fit-pletely. ted with the paddle attachment or in a large mixing bowl using a handheld mixer, beat the butter, brown sugar to one week. and granulated sugar together for 1 to 2 minutes, or until well combined.
- 3. Mix in the eggs, one at a time, then mix in the vanilla extract until

fully combined, making sure to stop 2 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed.

- 4. Mix in the dry ingredients until just combined, then mix in the chocolate chips, shredded coconut and chopped pecans on low speed until fully incorporated.
- 5. Cover tightly and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
- 6. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats and set aside.
- 7. Using a 11Ú2-tablespoon cookie scoop, scoop the cookie dough onto the prepared baking sheets, making sure to leave a little room between each one. Gently press each ball of cookie dough down to slightly flatten it.
- 8. Bake for 10 to 13 minutes, or until the tops of the cookies are set and the edges are lightly browned. Remove from the oven, and allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheets for 5 to 10 minutes, then carefully transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool com-
- 9. Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up

Baking tip: For even more flavor, try toasting the pecans. Just cool them completely before adding them to the cookie dough.



Recipe and photo courtesy of MetroCreativeConnection.com.



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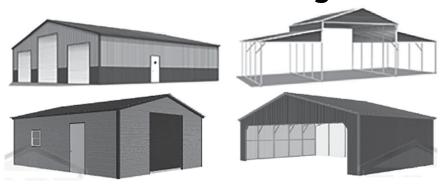
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Consider family meeting to discuss estate plans

t some point, you'll A want to share your estate plans with your loved ones — and the first step in this process may be to hold a family meeting.

The best time to hold this meeting is when you're still in good mental and physical shape, and the enactment of your estate plans may well be years away. But what topics should you cover?



Consider these main areas:

• Your wishes — and those of your family. Use this meeting to introduce your estate plans and, in a basic sense, what you hope to accomplish with them leave money to your family, support charitable groups and so on. You'll want to emphasize that you want to be equitable in what you leave behind, but there may be issues that affect this decision, such as disparities in income between grown children or an allowance for a special-needs child. But you'll also want to listen to what your family members want — and you might be surprised at what they tell

you. Consider this: More than 80% of the millennial generation would rather know their parents are financially secure throughout their retirement, even if this means that their parents will pass on less money to them, according to an Edward Jones/Age Wave study.

 Estate planning documents - At the time of your family meeting, you may or may not have already created your estate planning documents, but in either case, this would be a good time to discuss them. These documents may include a will, a living trust, financial power of attorney, health care power of attorney and possibly other arrangements.

At a minimum, you'd like to give a general overview of what these documents mean, but at an initial family meeting, you don't necessarily have to get too detailed. For example, you might not want to talk about specific inheritances. This is also an opportunity to inform your loved ones of the professionals involved in your estate plans, such as your attorney and your tax advisor.

 Roles of everyone involved- Not only does a comprehensive estate plan involve moving parts, such as the necessary documents, but it also includes actual human beings who may need to take on different

roles. You will need an executor for your will and, if you have a living trust, you'll need a trustee. Even if you choose to serve as the initial trustee, you'll still need to identify one or more successor trustees to take your place if you become incapacitated, or upon your death. Plus, you'll need to name people to act as your power of attorney for health care and finances. Choosing the right people for these roles involves thought and sensitivity. Obviously, you want individuals who are competent and reliable, but you also need to be aware that some family members could feel slighted if others are assigned roles they feel

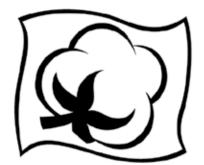
they could do. By being aware of these possible conflicts, you can be better prepared to address them.

Here's one more suggestion: Let your family know that this initial meeting doesn't mean the end of communications about your estate plans. Encourage your loved ones to contact you with questions whenever they want. You may need to hold additional family meetings in the future, but by laying the initial groundwork, you will have taken a big first step in establishing the legacy you'd like to leave.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Kelsey Avants 1110 N. 10th Street | Duncan, OK 73533 | 580-255-4408

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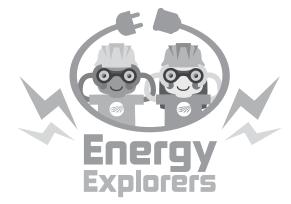


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2 Across: If you have a not burning.	at home, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is						
3 Down: Unplug phone and	d tablet when they're not in use.						
1.	4 Across: Instead of turning up the thermostat, wear additional layers of to stay warm.						
	5 Down: Always turn off when you leave a room.						
50/2	6 Across: Ask an adult to check the for						
	your home's heating system. This should be replaced regularly.						
2.	3.						
4. 5.	36						
	10 6.						
R-X							

1 Down: Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow _____ in to warm your home.

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- 1. Defensive nuclear weapon
- 4. Moved back and forth
- 9. One-time coach of the Cowboys
 - 14. Last letter
- 15. Cause to become less intense
 - 16. Genus of tree bugs
 - 17. Body art 18. Romance novelist
- 20. Be filled with love for
- 22. City
- 23. Make vivid
- 24. Horses
- 28. Mauna ___, Hawaiian volcano
- 29. Atomic #18 30. Shortly
- 31. A type of prejudice the peritoneum
- 33. Whirls 37. Six
- 38. Old world, new 39. __ Hess, oil company
 - 41. Talk
 - 42. Not off
 - 43. Begets
 - 44. Cars need them
 - 46. Computing archi-
- tecture (abbr.) 49. Of I
- 50. Journalist, activist Wells
- 51. Takes apart
- 55. Lists
- 58. Positively charged electrode
- 59. Hard, colorless
- compound 60. Inflammation of

23 28 29 33 37 39 44 45 49 50 55 53 54 57 58 67 69 70

4 Across) clothing 5 Down) lights 6 Across) air tilter

Answer Key: 1 Down) sunlight 2 Across) fireplace 3 Down) chargers

- 64. Trent Reznor's pate arriving band
 - 65. Simply dry fruit
 - 66. "Ivanhoe" author 67. Google certifica-
- tion
 - 68. French commune
- 69. Medieval circuit courts
- 70. Soviet Socialist Republic

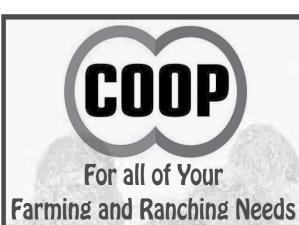
DOWN

- 1. Indigenous people
- 2. Dietary supple- war galley
- 3. Having a particular
- sheen or luster 4. Views
- 5. Academic Bill of Rights 6. Automobile

- 7. When you antici-
- 8. Beef or chicken intestine
- 9. Conspiracy
- 10. Blood disorder
- 11. Long-time NBAer Shawn
- 12. Time zone
- 13. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
- 19. Upton Sinclair
- 21. What a cow does 24. Cavalry-sword
- 25. Ancient Greek
- 26. Stars 27. Rebukes
- 31. Billion year peri- denotes disgust
- 32. Some are in a bot- difficulty

34. Tears down

- 35. Lethal dose
- 36. Humorists
- 40. Midwestern US state (abbr.)
 - 41. Frameworks
 - 45. Rocker Billy
 - 47. More thin
 - 48. Dog
 - 52. Habitual repeti-53. State of fuss
 - 54. Uneasy
- 56. Chemical com-
- pounds 57. More cognizant
- of reality 59. A place to build
- 60. Exclamation that
- 61. Supplement with
- 62. Very slick
- 63. Hill or rocky peak



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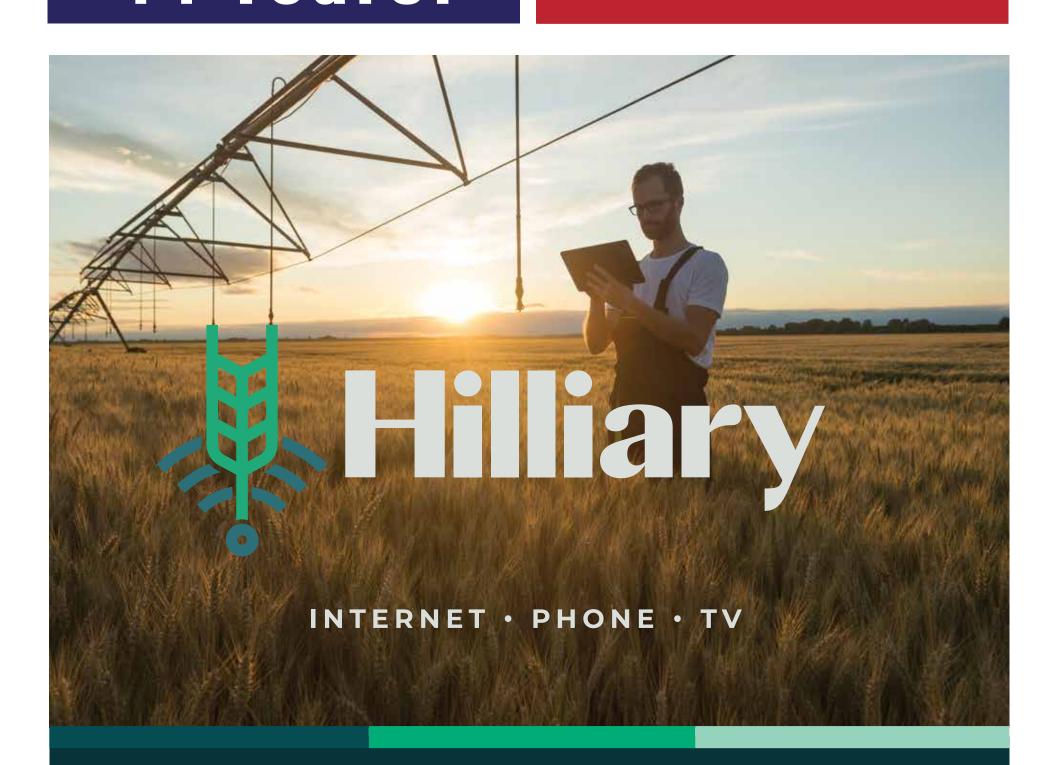








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