

■ Scam Alert!

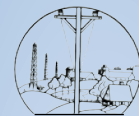
Beware: Utility scams are on the rise. **PAGE 2**

■ Top Energy Users

Find out what's gobbling up the most energy in your home. **PAGE 3**

■ Dark Chocolate Brownies

Melt hearts with these melt-in-your-mouth mocha brownies. **PAGE 4**



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OFFICE HOURS:
Monday-Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm.

POWER OUTAGE HOT LINE
(918) 756-0833

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- Pay online at www.ecoec.com using SmartHub, or download the app.
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- Pay using our drive-through window or lobby, Monday - Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm.
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Country Living is published monthly by East Central Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc., 2001 S. Wood Drive, Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447. Second class postage paid at Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447 and at additional mailing office. Subscription price: 60 cents /year. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to *ECE Country Living*, PO Box 1178, Okmulgee, OK 74447.

country living

FEBRUARY 2016

PUBLISHED FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

KARMA—CO-OP-STYLE

Arriving in bucket trucks and outfitted for a familiar battle, East Central Electric (ECE) crews assisted a fellow co-op in need following the December 27 ice storm. Six ECE employees journeyed to Blackwell, Okla. to help Kay Electric Cooperative restore power to much of its service area.

Co-ops helping co-ops is the foundation of Oklahoma's mutual aid policy. In times of crisis, co-op linemen willingly step up to assist affected co-ops, knowing that one day these co-ops will do the same for them.

Special thanks to ECE Linemen Jacob Shandy, Stacy Bourne, Tyler London, Joe Bales, Jason Childress and Jody Gilroy for assisting in the massive effort.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KAY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.



operation roundup update

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

Figures to date:

Applications reviewed.....	764
Applications granted.....	540
Applications denied.....	213
Applications tabled.....	15
Scholarships awarded.....	\$149,000

Total Disbursements.....\$1,269,923.05

Average member contribution.....44¢





Deadlines Approaching for Youth Programs

Enter by March 1, 2016

Teens interested in applying for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour or YouthPower Energy Camp are reminded that the entry deadline is March 1, 2016.



High school juniors are eligible to apply for Youth Tour, which takes place June 10-16 in Washington DC. ECE will select five local teens to attend the all-expenses-paid trip. Teens are asked to write a letter to an elected official about an issue that concerns them.

YouthPower Energy Camp is a three day camp adventure for eighth graders. Energy Camp teaches kids about leadership and cooperatives through fun, interactive games and activities. Energy Camp will be held on May 31-June 3 at Canyon Camp near Hinton.

Entry forms and applications for Youth Tour and Energy Camp are available online at www.ecoec.com or call your co-op at **918-756-0833**.

College Scholarships

East Central Electric's Operation Round-Up Foundation awards scholarships to students from across the ECE service area. One student from each school in the counties served by ECE is selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

For applications and guidelines, please contact us at **918-756-0833** or visit www.ecoec.com. Click on the Services tab and select the Community and Youth Programs option.



SCAM ALERT

Don't be fooled! Your co-op never makes calls demanding payments or threatens to disconnect service.

East Central Electric is warning members about scams being perpetrated on utility consumers.

Scams on rate payers are increasingly common across the U.S. The scams usually begin with a telephone call that warns you that your account balance is overdue and your service is scheduled for immediate cut off.

The consumer is instructed to provide payment by purchasing a money card from a local store, and then giving that card number to the caller. Some scammers ask for the victim's credit card information.

In more sophisticated scams, callers are able to "spoof" the actual utility number so the call appears on Caller I.D. as the victim's legitimate utility. Some scammers leave messages asking the consumer to call them back. If the consumer calls that number, the automated answering system sounds very much like the consumer's utility, however, any option the consumer chooses delivers them to a real person who tries to get a payment.

Scammers contacted an East Central Electric member recently trying to extract payment for a fictitious amount



Suspect A Scam?

Report it to your electric co-op immediately at **918-756-0833**.

Members are also urged to report suspicious calls and scam attempts to the Oklahoma Attorney General Consumer Protection Division.

File complaints online at <https://www.ok.gov/oag/>, via email to public.protection@oag.ok.gov, or telephone **405-521-2029**.

owed. Fortunately, the suspicious member contacted ECE instead.

Members are reminded that ECE *never* attempts to collect money over the telephone. Delinquent accounts receive notices in the mail.

If you receive a call or message about your ECE account, hang up the phone and refer to your last bill. Do not call any telephone numbers or visit any websites instructed by the caller until you check that information carefully against your ECE billing statement.

Visit us at the

Tulsa Home & Garden Show!

March 10 - 13 • Expo Square

*Free Garden Gloves
Rain Gauges & Candy!*

Pick up your free gifts at the Green Country Area Electric Cooperatives booth located in the River Expo Building. East Central Electric staff will be working the booth on Saturday. *Please stop and say hello!*

What's Burning a Hole in Your Home Energy Budget?

Finding out what uses the most is starting point for savings.

Most co-op members would like to be more energy efficient and save money, but where do you start? To begin, it's useful to know what's consuming the most energy in your home.

Together, home heating and cooling take the biggest bite out of your energy budget. On the bright side, you can achieve at least 10 percent savings by taking a few simple low-cost steps.

- During cold weather, set your thermostat to 68°F. In the summer, leave it at 78°F.
- Clean the filters and coils of your HVAC system.
- Caulk and weather-strip around windows and doors.

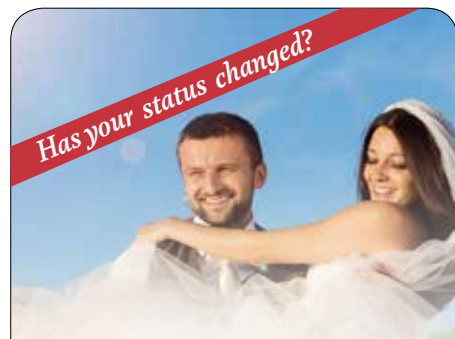
Take a fresh look at the lighting in your home. Replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified LEDs could save you \$75 per year.

It also pays to wrap your hot water heater with an insulating blanket. This is even more important if you have an older unit. For additional savings, insulate exposed hot water lines and drain one to two gallons of water from the bottom of your tank annually to prevent sediment build-up.

If your refrigerator was purchased before 2001, chances are it uses 40 percent more energy than a new Energy Star model. New Energy Star refrigerators use at least 15 percent less energy than non-qualified models and 20 percent less energy than required by current federal standards.

Making even a few of these changes should net you a savings on your monthly bill. Why not give it a try?

East Central Electric offers free energy audits, heat pump rebates and more. To visit with your co-op energy use experts, please call **918-756-0833** or visit www.ecoec.com.



"I Now Pronounce You..."

Have you recently tied the knot, gotten divorced or been widowed? If so, please call your co-op so we can update your account.

East Central Electric needs up-to-date, accurate information in order to properly apply your capital credits. Accurate records also make it easier for you to conduct business with your co-op. Federal legislation enacted after September 11, 2001 prevents us from discussing any account with anyone not listed on it.

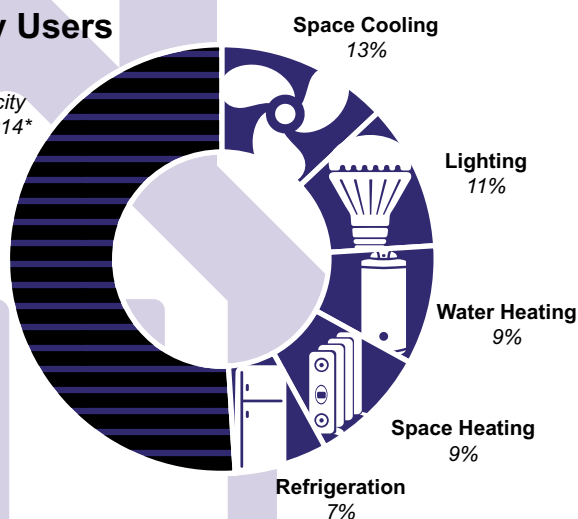
If you are recently widowed, you need to update your membership application so your account can be placed in your name. ECE cannot hold an account in the name of a deceased person. Other members who have lost loved ones who live on co-op lines are asked to contact the co-op so we can make the necessary changes.

We are happy to work with you on updating your account. Just call our service representatives at **918-756-0833**.

Top Five Energy Users in U.S. Homes

Estimated residential electricity consumption by end use, 2014*

Other uses include TV, set-top boxes, home entertainment and gaming systems, monitors and networking equipment, clothes dryer, small electric devices, heating elements and motors.



*Source: EIA



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Save energy and money by lowering your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. This will also slow mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.

Source: Energy.gov

Celebrating With Heart-Shaped Balloons?

Please do it indoors!

If you're lucky enough to be in love this Valentine's Day, shout it from the rooftops; take out a full-page ad in the local newspaper; and post it on Facebook. But whatever you do, don't show your love by releasing a bunch of heart-shaped balloons into the sky.



Runaway balloons—especially those with metallic content—too often come into contact with overhead power lines. When they do, they can cause a temporary power outage. In fact, hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses lose their power every year when helium-filled foil balloons drift into power lines.

The balloon's metallic coating can conduct electricity. So when the balloon touches a wire, it can start a fire or create an electrical surge. Either way, power in your area will go out, home electronics are at risk and East Central Electric's property is damaged.

If you must take balloons outdoors, secure them with weights so they won't get loose. And don't bring them near overhead power lines or deliberately set them free to float through the sky.

If a balloon does get stuck in a power line, do *not* try to retrieve it yourself! Instead, call your electric cooperative and report it at **918-756-0833**.

Recipes

Great tastes for members of East Central Electric Cooperative

Mocha Dark Chocolate Brownies

INGREDIENTS

Cooking spray
1 cup sugar
½ cup unsweetened cocoa
3 T. butter, melted
1½ T. instant coffee granules
2 T. water
1 tsp. vanilla extract
½ tsp. baking powder
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 large egg white, lightly beaten
¾ cup all-purpose flour
½ (3-oz.) bar dark chocolate, chopped (such as Ghirardelli)



DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Coat bottom of an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray.

Combine sugar and next eight ingredients in a bowl.

Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Add flour and dark chocolate to cocoa mixture, stirring just until blended. Spread batter in prepared pan. Bake at 350°F. for 30 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Yield: 16 brownies.

SOURCE:MYRECIPES.COM



Please us.

Check out East Central Electric Cooperative's Facebook page and enjoy a new way to connect with your co-op. You'll find updates on power outages and information on co-op events, member benefits and services, energy saving tips and more.

If you like what you see on our page, please let us know by giving us your "thumbs up." If there is something we can do to improve, we'd appreciate hearing about that, too.

Thank you for your support!

