

Northwestern Electric News

Vol. 66 Number 4

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

February 2015

Inside

Patterson retires	2
No-cost tips	3
Recipe	3
District meetings	4
Important dates	4

Frigid temperatures heat up electric bills

There's no doubt about it. Old man winter made his presence known at the end of 2014 and he decided to stick around well into the new year. The colder temps are making some members a little hot under the collar when they open their electric bill.

Oklahoma weather can change in just a few short hours. Remember back on Nov. 10 when the high was 76 degrees and the next day it dropped to a low of 30 degrees? With a temperature swing of 46 degrees, some of us ran the air conditioner one day and switched to the heater the next. Even though we kept the thermostat on the same setting, we used more electricity on the cold day than on the hot day.

This doesn't always make sense to some people, but simple math can make it a little easier to understand.

If the thermostat was set at 72 on both days, the HVAC system had to compensate for a 4-degree outdoor temperature difference on the warm

day. However, on the cold day, the system had to make up a difference of 42 degrees between the indoor and outdoor temperatures.

It takes a lot more electricity to heat a house by 42 degrees than it does to cool it down by 4 degrees.

Now take a look at the billing cycle between Nov. 20-Dec. 20. There were seven days the low temperature was close to or below freezing. A lot more heat was generated during that time frame and a lot of power bills went up. So it was a bit of a surprise and shock to some members when the bill arrived in January. Needless to say, the sticker shock prompted several calls from members questioning why their bill was so high.

With the frigid temperatures we had to start off the new year, it's possible the February bills could be even higher than last month's.

The bill that arrives in February reflects the power use between Dec. 20-Jan. 20. Beginning on Dec. 27, the low remained close to or below

freezing for almost 20 days in a row. The average high during that 20-day period was 28 degrees. Simply put, lower temps mean higher bills.

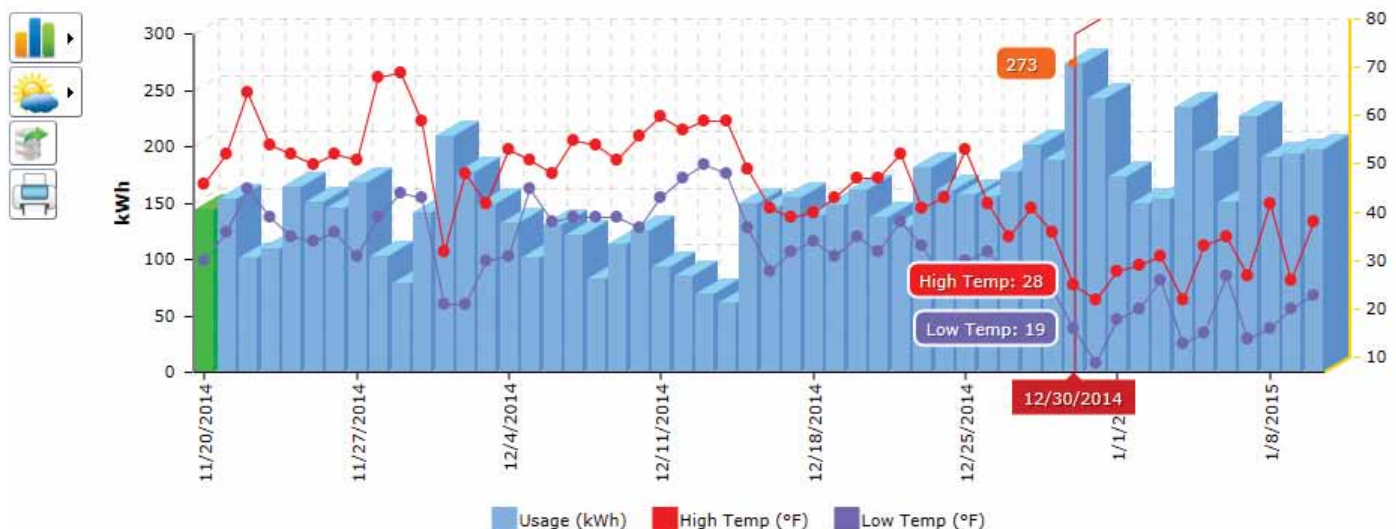
While we can't control the weather, Northwestern Electric can provide members with an easy way to help monitor their daily electric use.

NWEC's customer services portal lets members view their account details online at nwecok.coop or on a smart phone app. One of the most useful tools in the portal is the usage history located under the My Usage tab. To view a specific time period, members can enter a start and end date to reflect the days they would like to compare.

The screenshot below shows the daily energy consumption at one member's house and compares it to the high and low outdoor temperature. Notice on Dec. 30, the high temp was 28 degrees and the low was 19. The electric use for that day was 273 kilowatt-hours (kWh). The member

Continued on page 4.

Daily Electricity Usage



**NORTHWESTERN
ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Woodward, Oklahoma
Operating In
Beaver, Dewey, Ellis, Harper,
Major, Woods and Woodward
Counties in Oklahoma

**TYSON LITTAU
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kenny Knowles, Pres. Arnett
Ray Smith, Vice-Pres. Taloga
John Bruce, Jr., Sec.-Treas. Sharon
Marvin Wilkinson Buffalo
Clair Craighead Woodward
Wayne Hall Mooreland
Duane Henderson Mooreland
Lee Huckaby Selman
Gilbert Perkins Gate

Jonna Hensley Editor
Michael W. Mitchel Attorney

**IN CASE OF TROUBLE CALL:
24 HOUR EMERGENCY
1-877-9NOPOWER
877.966.7693**

If no answer call:
John Kirkwood 580.866.3245
Bob Appell 580.273.4088

NOTICE

A copy of NWECC Bylaws will be made available for any member upon request.

**Web page: www.nwecok.coop
E-mail: nwec@nwecok.coop**

NWEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call 866.632.9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax 202.690.7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Patterson retires after 30 years with NWECC

Karen Patterson started working for Northwestern Electric in the billing department on Jan. 21, 1985. During her career, she worked her way from Consumer Rep I to Consumer Rep III.

Karen has seen a lot of changes over the years. The most tedious job she remembers was processing the meter reading cards by hand. With today's technology, just about everything is done on the computer. She says the new automated meters, SelectPay billing and being able to take all kinds of payments over the phone are the changes that impacted her job the most.

One of the most interesting duties she encountered on the job was participating in a system-wide meter read. Karen was worried about possibly being bitten by a dog and some of the places she went to collect reads made her feel a little uncomfortable.

Karen retired on Jan. 2, 2015. Her plans for the future are to get caught up on some projects, travel, and spend time with her family and especially with her granddaughter whenever she wants. (9056001)

"I have enjoyed interacting with the consumers and getting to know a lot of them personally," she said. "It's rewarding to feel like I helped them with problems they had on their bills. I also worked with a great bunch of co-workers."

When asked what she will miss the most after retiring, Karen said, "I love



Karen Patterson proudly displays the retirement clock she received from NWECC. She retired on Jan. 2 after 30 years of dedicated service to the Co-op.

being around people, so I will miss seeing some of my favorite members that come in every month, and I'll miss the co-workers who are like family."

Northwestern Electric held a luncheon in Karen's honor during the December safety meeting. CEO Tyson Littau presented her with a clock as part of her retirement gift from NWECC.

Karen and her husband, Frank, have three children—Bryan; Brant and his wife, Della; Ryan and his wife, Maggie; and a granddaughter, Parker.

November 2014 Operating Report

	2013	2014
Revenue - Billing	2,497,160	2,884,806
Cost of Power	1,576,693	1,927,861
Miles of Lines	4,949	4,967
Members Connected	11,755	11,879
Density per Mile	2.38	2.39
Average Member KWH	2,201	2,336
Average Bill	212.43	242.85
KWH Purchased	27,960,712	30,176,491
KWH Sold	25,873,476	27,743,540
Income per Mile	507	583
Expense per Mile	512	589

No-cost tips to lower your energy bill

Now that you've read the article on page one and have a better understanding of how the colder weather affects your energy use, what steps can you take to lower your bill? Here are some no-cost tips and tricks you can start using today:

- **Drape Delivery:** Are you using your curtains to capture heat? Make sure drapes and shades are open to catch free solar heat during the day. Close them at night to keep the heat inside.
- **Thermostat:** Set your thermostat to 68°F (or lower if comfortable).
- **Got tape?** Though not as durable as foam, rubber, or vinyl, you can use non-porous tape (first aid cloth tape, for example) to keep cold air from squeezing into your home. Tape is good for blocking corners and irregular cracks, and can be used at the top and bottom of a window sash; door frames; attic hatches; and inoperable windows. Reinforce with staples if needed.
- **Fan it up:** Run ceiling paddle fans on low and reverse the rotation to blow

air up in winter. This keeps warm air circulating without cooling you.

- **Free vents:** Your HVAC system will have to work twice as hard if your air registers and vents are blocked by rugs, furniture, or drapes. Keep them clear to allow air to flow freely.
- **Garage Drain:** Leave your garage door down. A warmer garage in winter will save energy.
- **Rug Relief:** Have a spare rug? Use it to cover bare floors for added insulation.
- **Cool Food:** Don't make your fridge work too hard. Clean coils every year, and set the temperature between 34°-37° F; leave the freezer between 0°-5° F. Keep the freezer full—frozen food helps your freezer stay cool. When cooking keep lids on pots, and let hot food cool off before placing it in the refrigerator.
- **Hot Savings:** Heating water accounts for 12 percent of your home's energy use. Set your water heater temperature no higher than 120°F. For households with only one or two members, 115°F works.



In winter, set the thermostat to 68 degrees during the day (lower at night when you're snug in bed). Each time you raise the temperature by one degree it raises your heating bill approximately one percent.

- Set up your account on our customer services portal or download our smartphone app. It's free and a great way to keep track of your energy use!

There are other ways to conserve energy, too. Remember, you don't pay for what you don't use. When you're not watching TV or using lights, computers, and other electronics, turn them off. Lower your room temperatures a bit and wear a sweater to stay warm, or place an extra blanket on the bed at night. Find more ways to save at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

Hidden account number contest

Last month's number went unclaimed. They belonged to Steve Wheaton and Robert Fowler.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the contest, this is how it works. We have hidden two account numbers somewhere in the articles in this newsletter. The numbers will always be enclosed in parentheses and will look similar to this example (XXXXXX).

If you recognize your account number, all you have to do is give us a call on or before the 8th of the current month and we'll give you a credit on your bill for the amount stated.

This month's numbers are worth \$75 each. Happy hunting!

Country cooking

Sweet & Saucy Chicken Drumettes

- 12 chicken drumettes (1-1/2 lb.)**
- 1/2 cup Kraft original barbecue sauce**
- 1/4 cup Kraft classic Catalina dressing**
- 1/4 cup apricot jam**



Heat oven to 400°F.

Place chicken on foil-covered rimmed baking sheet sprayed with cooking spray. Bake 30 min. Meanwhile, mix remaining ingredients in medium bowl until blended.

Add chicken, a few drumettes at a time, to barbecue sauce mixture; toss to evenly coat. Return to prepared baking sheet.

Bake 15 min. or until chicken is done (165°F).

Yield: 4 servings

Frigid temperatures heat up electric bills

Continued from page one

used \$26.51 worth of electricity on Dec. 30 compared to \$12.62 (130 kWh) on Dec. 22.

The chart can also be customized to show the average temperature, heating degree days and cooling degree days. It can also switch from showing daily usage to daily energy cost.

The summary page shows the daily averages for the time period selected. It also shows the highest cost date and the lowest cost date plus the costliest average day of the week.



All of this daily use information can help members manage their monthly bill. When they see their

energy use rising, it can remind them to be more energy efficient by putting on a sweater rather than turning the thermostat up.

Information about daily energy use is just one of the valuable tools found on the customer services portal. Members can make changes to their account profile, pay their bill, view billing history and sign up for alerts and reminders.

The portal is available online at www.nwecok.coop and as a smart phone app compatible with Apple and Android devices. To download the app, go to your app store and type “NWEC” in the search bar. And best of all, it’s free!

Members will need their account number to get started. Call us at 580.256.7425 or come by our office in Woodward or Buffalo if you need help setting up.



Why you should attend your district meeting

It’s that time of year again—district meeting time! On behalf of Northwestern Electric, we’d like to personally invite the members residing in districts one, three and five to join us at their district meetings. We look forward to gathering with you to catch up, hear what you have to say and enjoy some good food and fellowship.

The meetings are not only a chance to visit with members of our co-op community—it’s also a great opportunity to learn about programs offered by Northwestern Electric and get to know your co-op staff. Our district meetings makes it possible for us to gather feedback from you by providing a forum where you can let us know how we can better serve you and your family.

At the meetings, you will learn more about the issues affecting our local communities. It’s also an opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being a member of

an electric co-op, by voting for your board of directors representative.

Northwestern Electric is not owned by far away investors, and it is not run by an appointed board of directors. We are run by a democratically elected board of directors—a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote.

Our directors are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them too. (5592001)

Having a voice in who makes the major decisions that directly affect your life and your family is a right we all share as Americans. We all vote for our state and federal Congressional representatives, but not every American has the right to vote for those who will represent community interests within their electric utility. You have that right, so why not exercise it?

Rest assured, no matter what happens, we remain dedicated to provid-

ing you with safe, reliable and affordable electric service, but we encourage you to take part in helping us improve how we deliver that service. So make it a point to join us at your district meeting. We promise we will make it worth your while!

Important dates

District 1 Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
First Baptist Church, Arnett

District 3 Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 19, 2015
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Mooreland Community Center

District 5 Meeting

Monday, Feb. 16, 2015
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Lenora Methodist Church