

# Northwestern Electric News

Vol. 67 Number 4

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



February 2016

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## Cooperation Among Cooperatives

### *Helping our sister cooperatives in their time of need*

You've probably heard the saying, "There's power in numbers." And we couldn't agree more. Cooperation is a key word for electric cooperatives, and a concept vital to our form of business.

Member owned co-ops like Northwestern Electric operate under seven key guidelines, including the Sixth Cooperative Principle, "Cooperation Among Cooperatives." In short, electric cooperatives serve their members best while strengthening the overall co-op movement by working together.

At the most basic level, electric cooperatives support one another in times of crisis. If a storm or other disaster hits one of our sister cooperatives, we offer whatever help we can to ensure that service gets restored as quickly as possible. If we need help, our electric co-op family will be there for us.

For example, the ice and snow storm that rolled through the state after Christmas caused considerable damage to some of our sister cooperatives across the state. NWECC lost 30 poles in the eastern part of our system, but the damage was worse to the east and south of our territory. Over 82,000 cooperative members were left without power and some Oklahoma cooperatives were now faced with the monumental task of rebuilding miles and miles of lines. Several thousand cooperative members were going to be without power for an extended period of at least two weeks if not more.

Thanks to the power of cooperation among cooperatives, hundreds of linemen from Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas and scores of contractors converged on the hardest



**NWEC sent crews to Cimarron Electric Cooperative in Kingfisher to help restore power following the powerful winter storm in late December. Cooperative and contract crews converged on this muddy stretch of road south of Loyal, Okla., to replace the broken poles as quickly and safely as possible.** *Photo courtesy of Cimarron Electric Cooperative.*

hit areas and worked tirelessly to bring power to co-op members across the state. Northwestern Electric sent crews to help with Cimarron Electric's restoration efforts. The linemen encountered tough conditions from ice, snow, rain and wind to muddy terrain.

We appreciate our crews and all the linemen and cooperative employees who worked long hours away from home to restore power. They are committed to those they serve and we thank them for their dedication and determination.

If you would like to stay updated on outage restoration efforts when the power goes out, follow us on Facebook. You can also follow our statewide association, the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, to see what is happening at other co-ops throughout the state and across the nation.

Working with other cooperatives in their time of need and sharing information are just two of the many ways we exemplify the Sixth Cooperative Principle, "Cooperation Among Cooperatives."

**NORTHWESTERN  
ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

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

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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

If no answer call:  
John Kirkwood ..... 580.866.3245

**NOTICE**  
A copy of NWEC Bylaws will be made  
available for any member upon request.

**Web page: [www.nwecok.coop](http://www.nwecok.coop)  
E-mail: [nwec@nwecok.coop](mailto: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](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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



**The new office facility in Buffalo is starting to take shape. Once the new building is completed, the old office will be torn down. NWEC is also expanding the existing warehouse to allow the large trucks easier access and to gain more storage capacity. Joe D. Hall Construction is overseeing the project.**

## What does five dollars get you?

**F**ive dollars doesn't seem to buy much anymore. But when you become a member of Northwest-ern Electric Cooperative, five dollars allows you access to several benefits.

When you first established electric service with NWEC, you filled out the membership application and paid a \$5.00 membership fee. This fee means you are provided low cost, reliable, and safe power from a company that is dedicated to member service.

You also have the opportunity to elect your board representative at your district meeting every 3 years. You get a say on policy issues NWEC sup-ports or opposes. And you are always welcome to attend NWEC's annual meeting each April where you can let your voice be heard.

The best part about being a member of NWEC—you are actually an owner, and that is the power of a \$5.00 co-op membership.

## November 2015 Operating Report

	2014	2015
Revenue - Billing .....	2,884,806	2,295,810
Cost of Power .....	1,927,861	1,386,370
Miles of Lines .....	4,967	4,982
Members Connected .....	11,879	11,926
Density per Mile .....	2.39	2.39
Average Member KWH .....	2,336	1,915
Average Bill .....	243	193
KWH Purchased.....	30,176,491	24,841,702
KWH Sold.....	27,743,540	22,840,299
Income per Mile.....	583	463
Expense per Mile .....	589	502

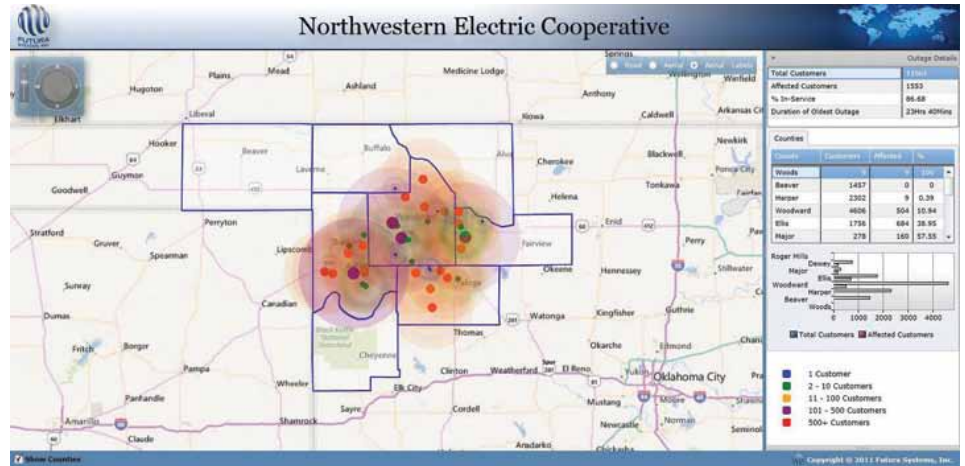


## Outage map helps keep you informed when the power goes off

During outages, NWECC uses a powerful tool to aid in power restoration and to help keep you informed on where the power is out. Our outage map is a graphical representation of our service territory and will show where the outages are occurring. It also shows the number of members without power.

When an outage occurs, we start receiving calls from our members letting us know they are out of power. The person answering the call will enter the account information into our OMS (Outage Management System). From the data entered, the OMS will look at the nearest piece of equipment where the flow of power has stopped and will “predict” the number of members without power.

For example, a tree branch falls on a line creating a fault. The OMS looks at the data and searches for the closest OCR (oil circuit recloser) that may have opened up and interrupted the power flow. The OMS predicts 100 meters are without power. Once the OMS program completes its predic-



This is a screenshot of the outage map reflecting the number of members without power on Nov. 30, 2015. The map is available on NWECC's mobile app, website or at <http://outages.nwecok.org/omswebmap/Map/OMSWebMap.htm>. Members can view the map to see the extent of the outage and the areas affected.

tion, it generates a map showing the extent of the outage. Color-coded dots appear on the map showing how many members are off and the location.

As more members call in to report the outage, the data updates and provides a more accurate count. What

started as 100 meters may actually be 95 instead. (855601001)

NWECC provides the outage information as part of our ongoing efforts to provide safe, reliable power at the lowest possible cost. This is just one more benefit of being a co-op member.

### Hidden account number contest

Last month's number went unclaimed. They belonged to Brian Ramirez and Tim Wheeler.

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 \$50 each. Happy hunting!

### Country cooking

#### Slow Cooker Baked Potato Soup



- 1 (32 oz) bag frozen hash browns
- 1 (32 oz) box chicken broth
- 1 (10 oz) can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1 (8 oz) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 1/2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, grated, plus extra for garnish
- 3/4 cup crumbled bacon, plus extra for garnish
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh rosemary, minced
- kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Combine hash browns, cheddar cheese, chicken broth, cream of chicken soup, bacon bits and cream cheese in slow cooker.

Season with salt and pepper, then use a spoon to break up cream cheese and mix ingredients together.

Place lid on slow cooker and cook on HIGH for 3 hours, stirring occasionally, or until potatoes are tender.

Garnish with rosemary and/or more cheddar cheese and bacon bits.

*Yield: 6 servings*

## Staying safe in a car accident involving a power pole

Northwestern Electric strives to educate our members and the public about the dangers of downed power lines and what you should do if you encounter a downed line. But have you ever thought about what you should do if you slide off the road and hit a power pole?

Winter wonderlands are beautiful, but they can be a driving nightmare. Snow, slush, ice, and wind make it stressful and difficult to drive. These driving conditions also make it more likely that your car will skid off the road. Losing control of your car may seem like the worst case scenario, but if you don't know what you are doing, the moments following an accident could potentially be more dangerous than the accident itself.

Cars that slide off the road may slide straight into a power pole. The pole may fall down, lines may fall on your car or nearby, and the area around your car may become charged with electric energy. If you stepped out of the car in this scenario, your

body would become the path to ground for the electricity, and you could be electrocuted.

While downed lines can sometimes show they are live by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Power lines do not always show signs that they are live but are just as lethal.

Stay in the car if you are in a car accident with a power pole. Warn those who try to come near your car to help that they must stay far away. Call 911 for help, and wait until a professional from the electric utility tells you it is safe to leave the car. (8069001)

The exception to this rule is if your car is on fire. In that case, jump clear of the vehicle without touching it and the ground at the same time. Then hop away with feet together. This way there will not be a voltage difference between your two feet, which would



Photo courtesy of SafeElectricity.org

give electricity the chance to flow through your body.

If you witness a car collision with a power pole, do not approach the accident. By trying to help, you will put your own life at risk. The best thing to do is contact emergency responders and stay far away from the accident.

Power lines may be difficult to see if they are covered in snow or ice, so be cautious if you must be out driving after a winter storm. For more information visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## 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 two, four and six 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.

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 2 Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2016  
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.  
NWEC's Medallion Room

#### District 4 Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 11, 2016  
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.  
Sharon United Methodist Church

#### District 6 Meeting

Monday, Feb. 22, 2016  
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.  
Quinlan Methodist Church