

Northwestern Electric News

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



February 2018

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Ice storm recovery one year later Where are we now?

It's been a little over a year since the devastating ice storm crippled NWECC's system. The 2017 storm began on Jan. 14 when rain fell early in the day and ice began to form as the temperatures dropped below freezing. By the end of the day on Jan. 15, over 80% of our meters had lost power. One year later, we are still dealing with the aftermath.

Last February, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved federal funding to assist with the costs of infrastructure repairs, debris removal and other costs associated with responding to the storm. NWECC incurred over \$21 million in damages that qualified for FEMA assistance.

Once the funds were approved, NWECC personnel began working with FEMA officials to complete the necessary paper work and adhere to their guidelines and requirements in order to receive the funding. The process is slow and tedious.

In May of 2017, NWECC completed the proper steps to begin storm debris removal. JCL Power completed the debris removal in July.

On Jan 2, 2018, R&R Construction began repairs to the lines that didn't have enough damage to qualify for reconstruction. The contract crews are straightening poles, resagging spans and retiring inactive services.

The storm mitigation project is still pending. NWECC had over 1,200 miles of line that qualified for re-conductoring (replacing the wire) and the installation of iron poles to help strengthen our system. The project has been submitted to the Oklahoma Historical Society and Archaeological Society of



The January 2017 ice storm destroyed trees and brought down power lines causing widespread damage across NWECC's territory. One year later, NWECC is still in the process of rebuilding parts of our system. Photo: Gary Bayless

Oklahoma for review. They have 30 days to review the proposal to make sure the sites don't fall into the historical or archeological dig categories.

As soon as the sites are approved, NWECC can move forward with mitigation. The project is estimated to cost around \$68.5 million. If everything goes well, construction will begin in late summer and the work must be completed within three years from the time we declared power had been restored.

FEMA's reimbursement will equal 75 percent of the qualifying costs. The exact amount will be determined by audits performed by Oklahoma Emergency Management, Office of the Inspector General and an independent auditor.

If you have any questions about the FEMA process and where we stand, or if you see any storm debris we may have missed, please give us a call at 580.256.7425.

NORTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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

TYSON LITTAU
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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

OFFICE HOURS
8 AM TO 4:30 PM
MONDAY-FRIDAY

ADDRESS
P.O. BOX 2707
WOODWARD, OK 73802

2925 WILLIAMS AVENUE
WOODWARD, OK 73801

NOTICE

A copy of NWEC 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.”



What does five dollars get you?

Five 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 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. (14548002)

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.

3 Quick Tips to Avoid High Winter Bills
Looking for easy ways to lower your energy bills this winter? Here's a few tips from the Department of Energy:

		
Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep cold, drafty air out.	Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible.	Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75 percent less energy.

November 2017 Operating Report

	2016	2017
Revenue - Billing	2,535,551	2,663,368
Cost of Power.....	1,491,054	1,496,229
Miles of Lines	4,997	5,005
Members Connected	11,859	11,857
Density per Mile	2.37	2.37
Average Member KWH	2,164	2,248
Average Bill	214	225
KWH Purchased.....	26,335,000	27,641,000
KWH Sold.....	25,663,000	26,650,000
Income per Mile.....	509	534
Expense per Mile	505	576

Why you should attend your district meeting

It's that time of year again—district meeting time! On behalf of NWECC, 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 NWECC 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.

NWECC 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 1 Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Arnett First Baptist Church

District 3 Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 15, 2018
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Mooreland Assembly of God Church

District 5 Meeting

Monday, Feb. 12, 2018
Meal at 6 p.m. - Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Lenora Methodist Church

Hidden account number contest

Congratulations to Ross King for recognizing his account numbers in last month's newsletter. The other number belonged to Larry Norman.

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 \$25 each. Happy hunting!

Country cooking

Heart Healthy Hamburger Soup

- 1 lb. extra lean ground hamburger**
- 1 cup chopped onion**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added or low-sodium tomato sauce**
- 1 14 1/2 oz. canned, chopped, no-salt-added or low-sodium tomatoes**
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth**
- 1 16 oz. packaged, frozen mixed vegetables**
- 1/3 cup brown rice (uncooked)**



In a large pot, cook the meat, onion, and garlic over medium heat until the meat is done. Drain excess liquid. Add the tomato sauce, tomatoes, broth, mixed vegetables, and rice. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce heat, cover and cook 35 minutes or until rice is done.

Yield: 4 servings

Look out for scams

By Meghaan Evans

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

- If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). NWECC will never ask you to offer up personal finance information over the phone. If you have any doubts about your electric

bill, contact our member payment center either in person, or over the phone at 580.256.7425.

- If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of NWECC that needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

- Government agencies like the IRS will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately. (366606001)

- If you receive an email from an unknown sender; an email riddled with spelling errors and typos; or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email, and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder.



- If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer.

NWECC wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy.

Meghaan Evans writes for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Use Space Heaters Safely

DON'T: Leave your space heater unattended. Always unplug it before you leave the house or go to bed.



DON'T: Use an extension cord to plug in your space heater. It can cause the heater to overheat, and can be a tripping hazard.



DON'T: Place your space heater near curtains, clothing, furniture or bedding.

