VERDIGRIS VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

POWER CIRCUIT

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A Supplement to Oklahoma Living.

Ready, Set, Grow! Landscaping Improves Your Home's Energy Efficiency. ***p. 3***

TWACS: The Next Progression in Meter Technology

The name may sound funny, but the technology is state-of-the-art.

Beginning in mid-April VVEC will install 600 Two-Way Automated Communication System (TWACS) meters in the *Owasso* area.

TWACS meters operate by sending a signal over existing power lines from the meter directly to the co-op, providing low-cost, highly-reliable, two-way communication.

"This is the next step in the progression of meter technology," explains Randy Riddle, VVEC's manager of operations & technical services. "Years ago meters were read by co-op personnel, then members read their meters and sent in the readings, next we implemented Turtle meters – which are our current meters – and those send in readings electronically every 24 to 36 hours.

"The TWACS meters send in readings electronically too, but on hourly intervals," he says.

He goes on to point out Turtle meters could only be installed on residential accounts, but TWACS meters will be installed on every VVEC account.

"This means oil field accounts won't have to send in their meter readings anymore."

Riddle goes on to explain there are several advantages to the TWACS system, both now and in the future. In addition to the real-time meter readings, the system will allow:

- VVEC personnel to detect and verify outages, map outage locations, and poll meters to make sure service has been restored following an outage;
- using crews and other resources more efficiently;
- monitoring voltage and blinking lights, and plot trouble areas;
- detecting meter tampering;
- detailed information on an account's electric consumption;
- the ability to connect and disconnect meters from the office;
- and pre-paying for electricity.

Riddle says once the meters have been installed and tested in Owasso, the program will expand to the Verdigris and Sequoyah substations, and then to Collinsville and Skiatook.

"We will send out letters to members as we move into each area. In addition to letters, there will be articles in the VVEC Power Circuit, and automated courtesy calls.

Riddle goes on to say the change out will take only a few seconds, but could result in members finding blinking lights on appliances and electronics when they get home.

"We will attempt to let members know what we're doing if they are at home," he says. "We will leave a notice on their door if they aren't home."

Although VVEC's metering department will be heavily involved in this program, contractors will be used for the change-outs.

"This program offers so many advantages to our members – both now and in the future," says VVEC General Manager Alice Houston. "We are truly excited to implement it. This state-of-the-art technology gives us the ability to maintain a high quality of service to our members."

Anyone with questions about the TWACS meters is encouraged to call Riddle at (918) 371-2584, between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Dates to Remember

April 1 -- **Youth Tour** and **Energy Camp** essays due to VVEC.

April 13 -- **Adopt-A-School** grant applications due.

April 13 - **Rural Fire Department** grant applications due.

All essays and grant applications need to be submitted to:
Paula Lanni
VVEC
P.O. Box 219
Collinsville, OK 74021

VVEC offices will be closed April 6 in recognition of Good Friday.

Winter Residential Rates

October through March usage,
November through April billing

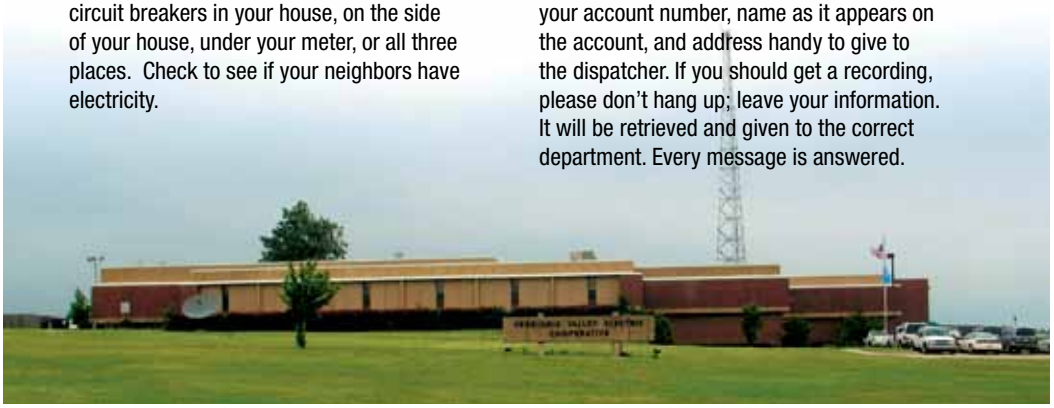
Customer Charge	$20.00
Energy Charge	
1st 1,000 kWh	$0.0731/kWh
Over 1,000 kWh	$0.0671/kWh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 55.993 mills per kWh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2% of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes if applicable.

What to do if Your Power Goes Off

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
2. Call the Co-op at 371-2584, or 1-800-870-5948 if the call is long distance for you. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, please don't hang up; leave your information. It will be retrieved and given to the correct department. Every message is answered.



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Ready, Set, Grow!

Landscaping can Improve Your Home's Energy Efficiency

You've upgraded your appliances, insulation, and lighting to help lower your monthly electric bill. What else can you do? Plenty, if you have a yard with landscaping options. The right combination of plants and trees can unearth hidden energy savings.

The U.S. Department of Energy claims landscaping with energy efficiency in mind, on average, could save enough energy to recoup your investment in less than eight years.

Simple Shading

You might be protected from the hot summer sun in your home, but your electric bill isn't. Solar heat absorbed through windows and your roof causes your air conditioner to work harder.

Shading a home with trees could drop the surrounding air temperature by as much as 9 degrees. It gets better closer to the ground — since cool air sinks down, the air under trees may be up to 25 degrees cooler than the air over the driveway.

Different trees serve unique purposes. To block summer solar heat but let the winter sun through, use deciduous trees. Evergreens trees and shrubs are ideal to provide continuous shade and block heavy winds.

Don't forget about shrubs and ground cover plants. These short but study shade-givers reduce heat radiation, cooling air before it reaches your home's walls and windows. If you have an air conditioner, shading the unit can increase its efficiency by as much as 10 percent.

Shading takes time. For example, a 6-foot to 8-foot deciduous tree planted near a home will begin shading windows in a year. Depending on the species and the home, the tree will shade the roof in five to 10 years.

Windbreaks

Shrubs and trees create windbreaks — essentially walls to keep the wind chill away from a home. Why is that important? Wind speed lowers outside air temperatures. A windbreak reduces wind speed nearby, saving your home from higher heating costs.

It's best to block wind with a combination of trees and shrubs with low crowns —foliage which grows close to the ground. Evergreens are ideal, and when combined with a wall or fence these windbreaks can deflect or even lift wind over a home.

For the best protection, plan on leaving between two to five times the mature height of the trees or shrubs between the windbreak and the protected home.

Ready, Set, GROW!

Remember, your landscaping plan depends on your climate and how your home is situated. Find out more about your climate, micro-climates, shading dos and don'ts, and windbreaks at www.energysavers.gov. To learn more ways to save energy around your home, visit www.TogetherWeSave.com.

New Co-op Connections Card Partners

Hines Bookkeeping & Tax Service, Inc., Collinsville

New clients filing 1040-series returns - $50 (includes E-filing or paper filing of Federal & Oklahoma State Returns with or without direct deposit(s), schedule(s) A, B, C & D.
Call 918-371-3824 for an appointment.

Main Street Martial Arts, Collinsville

Two weeks free – Tae Kwon Do, Aiki Jutsu, and Lil Dragons – ages 3 to 7.
Call 918-688-9465.

Fluorescent Fridays

More than 2,800 energy efficient CFL light bulbs had been given to VVEC members at the time this issue of Power Circuit went to press. Each Friday in February was Fluorescent Friday, and members who visited the co-op office received four CFL light bulbs; each one equivalent to 75 Watts. Each package is valued at over $7.

RECIPE

Broccoli Cheddar Quiche

1 bunch of broccoli
4 eggs
1-1/4 cups milk
2 cups grated white cheddar cheese (or preferred cheddar)
3 Tbsp. All-purpose flour
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
1 tsp. chopped fresh chives
1/4 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. white pepper
1/8 tsp. nutmeg
1 unbaked pie shell

Preheat oven to 500°. Trim bottom of broccoli. Cut stems into slices and microwave in covered dish until soft, but still bright green, about 4 minutes. Chop in food processor. Repeat with florets, but microwave about 3 minutes.

Whisk eggs in large bowl; add milk. In another large bowl, toss cheese, flour, herbs and spices. Pour egg-milk mixture over cheese and stir. Add broccoli. Pour filling into unbaked pie shell.

Place on bottom rack of oven and bake 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°, and bake 40 minutes longer. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. YIELD: 8 servings.