

You have the power with Prepaid Metering

By Tom Tate

Prepaid metering is as simple as it sounds: consumers pay for electricity before it is used, then use the electricity until the credit expires. A terrific analogy for prepaid metering is putting gas in your car. Say you only have \$30 for the week to pay for gasoline. You drive down to the station, pump in \$30 and drive off. As you drive during the week, what happens? You monitor the gauge and make sure each trip is necessary. If you drive too much, you burn up your \$30 before the week is out. By checking the gauge throughout the week, you became more prudent with your gas use and made informed decisions on when and how much to use.

That's similar to how VVEC's Pay As You Go Prepaid works. The prepaid program is available to new and existing members. As a prepaid member, you pay a \$25 membership fee, a \$25 connect fee, a \$25 deposit and a \$50 credit for electricity, for a minimum of \$125 to activate your service. Prepaid electric service requires your account to have a credit balance at all times. There are several ways to add credit to your account. (See sidebar for details.)

Instead of receiving a paper bill, prepaid users can review account history—such as usage, charges and credit balance—by

signing into SmartHub. As you approach “empty,” you receive low-balance notifications through a smartphone app, email or text message. Add more money to your account and you are set for the next period.

Prepaid metering teaches the value of electricity, what uses watts in your home, and provides absolute control over how much you pay. Industry studies show that consumers who participate in prepaid metering plans use as much as 10 percent less electricity than their counterparts.

For more information about VVEC's Pay As You Go Prepaid program, please contact our Consumer Service Representatives at 918-371-2584.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for NRECA.

Payment Options

- 1) Pay online via SmartHub, free of charge
- 2) Pay by phone through U.S. payments by calling 918-371-2584 or 800-870-5948, select option #4
- 3) Pay at KIOSK locations in the general area:
 - Nowata: Homeland at 813 E Cherokee Ave
 - Bartlesville: Homeland at 811 SE Frank Phillips Blvd or 915 S Madison Blvd
 - Skiatook: Mister Bass at 4000 W Rogers Blvd
 - Owasso: Sunny's Kwik Stop at 11700 E 86th St N
 - Claremore: 5-Eleven at 1699 N Lynn Riggs Blvd or the KIOSK in the VVEC Lobby (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week)
- 4) Pay in the VVEC office
- 5) Send payment via U.S. Mail

The power is in your hands with... Prepaid Metering

By paying for electricity as you go, you can monitor energy use and know when you need to conserve. A few benefits of participating in prepaid metering are:

- Teaches the value of electricity
- Helps consumers understand what uses watts in their home
- Provides absolute control over how much money is spent on electricity
- Helps reduce energy use



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Editor - Laura Araujo

VVEC offices will be closed Monday, July 4, in recognition of Independence Day. Please call 918-371-2584 or 800-870-5948 if you need to report an outage.

Summer Residential Rates

April through September usage,
May through October billing

Customer Charge \$30.00

Energy Charge

1st 2,000 kWh \$.08272/kWh

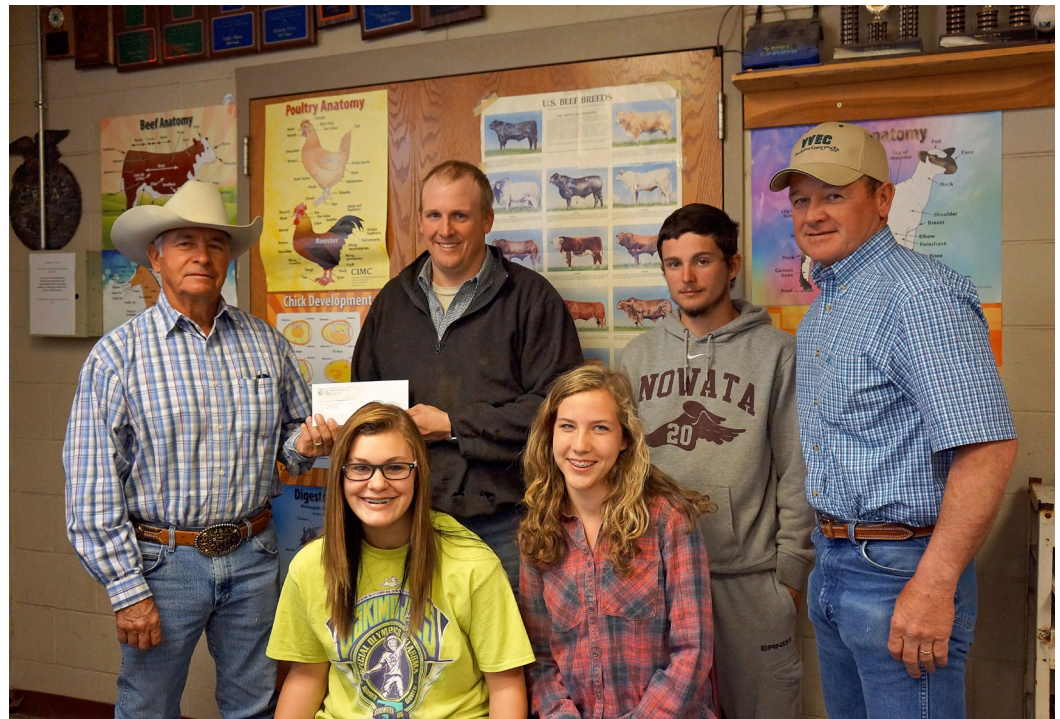
Over 2,000 kWh \$.08782/kWh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 59.87 mills per kWh.

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

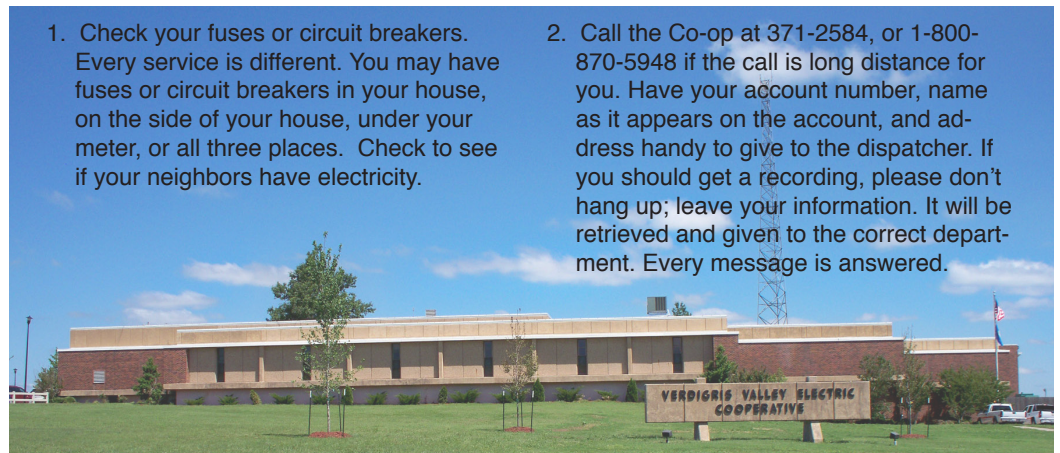
Co-op donation benefits local students



VVEC Trustee Jimmy Brackett presents a check to Nowata Schools Vo-Ag instructor Ryan Harrington. The \$400 contribution will benefit the FFA Vo-Ag Spring Sale. Also pictured: student Dillon Simmons, VVEC Member Services Representative Chub Brewer and students Eralynn Cody and Paige Atkisson. Photo by Misti Frazier

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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Energy Audits help improve your home's energy efficiency

VVEC offers in-home energy audits. A trained auditor will come to your home to conduct one of two types of energy audits to determine the efficiency of your home. The information the auditor gathers will help the auditor determine where you are spending your energy dollars and will help the auditor point out hidden inefficiencies. The auditor will then make practical, useful suggestions to help you use electricity more efficiently and save money on your monthly electric bill.

The Blower Door Audit

- A blower door and infrared camera test to locate places of air leakage and energy loss.
- Inspection of rim joists, windows, doors, recessed lighting, electrical outlets and switches for air leaks.
- Documentation of all air leaks for sealing.
- Check of the heating system filter.
- Visual inspection of the heating and air conditioning duct work for air leaks, if accessible.
- Check of the temperature setting on the water heater.
- Inspection of the attic insulation and determination if any additional insulation is needed.
- Inspection of the crawl space and basement for any energy efficiency opportunities.
- An energy weatherization kit consisting of a water heater wrap, hot water pipe wrap, three CFL bulbs, insulation kits

for electrical outlets and wall switches, a low-flow shower head, a night light, caulk and door sweep/weather seals.

We partner with Associated Electric Cooperative, our wholesale power supplier, to provide energy weatherization kits when we perform this audit. Additionally, a rebate of up to 50 percent of the cost (up to a maximum of \$500) is available to members taking the corrective actions noted by our auditor at the conclusion of the audit. The blower door audit has a value of over \$400, but we charge only \$100 to have the audit performed. The blower door audit is not available if you have natural gas or propane in your home.

The Walk-Thru Audit

- An infrared camera tests locating places of air leakage and energy loss.
- Inspection of rim joists, windows, doors, recessed lighting,

electrical outlets and switches for air leaks.

- Documentation of all air leaks for sealing.
- Check of the heating system filter.
- Visual inspection of the heating and air conditioning duct work for air leaks, if accessible.
- Check of the temperature setting on the water heater.
- Inspection of attic insulation and determination if any additional insulation is needed.
- Inspection of crawl space and basement for any energy efficiency opportunities.

The walk-thru audit is available to all members in lieu of the blower door. This audit does not include a weatherization kit and there are no rebates available. The cost of a walk-thru audit is \$50.

Call our member services department at 918-371-2584 to schedule your energy audit.



Great deals with your Co-op Connections Card

Take advantage of the great deals available by using your Co-op Connections Card. Visit www.vvec.com/content/local-co-op-connections or www.connections.coop for a full list of businesses. Some of the merchants are listed here.

Anytime Fitness in Owasso: 10 percent discount. 918-376-4999.

Dorothy's Flowers in Claremore: 10 percent off all local delivery orders and in-store purchases. (May not be used with other coupons or offers.) 918-341-0692.

Flying Feather Guide Service in Copan: 10 percent off any hunt. 918-440-2331.

Green Country RV Doctor in Collinsville: free RV roof inspection. 918-704-8329.

Jiffy Wash Laundromat in

Bartlesville: 10 percent discount on drop-off service for wash, dry and fold. 918-333-9234.

Main Street Martial Arts in Collinsville: one month free Tae Kwon Do, Aikijutsu or Li'l Dragons. Free uniform with signed monthly contract (for Tae Kwon Do and Li'l Dragons only). 918-688-9465.

Rainproof Roofing Co. in Tulsa: \$100 off new roof installation; \$25 off roof repairs; free roof inspection. 918-439-1942.

Robertson Tire Co. in Owasso: 10 percent off regular prices. 918-274-8022.

The Village

Salon in Claremore: 10 percent off retail or hair care service. 918-341-6645.

Urban Oasis Spa in Skiatook: free brow wax with the purchase of a product or service. 918-396-2052.

Windel's Rock and Jewelry in Bartlesville: 15 percent off regularly priced merchandise (excludes coins and class rings). 918-333-2814.



RECIPE

Bacon-Ranch Pasta Salad

Serves 10

- 12-ounce package rotini or cavatappi pasta
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons powdered ranch dressing mix
- ½ cup milk
- 10 slices bacon, cooked and chopped
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- 1 large tomato, chopped
- 4-ounce can sliced black olives
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Cook the pasta according to package directions until firm-tender; drain. In a medium bowl, combine the mayonnaise, ranch dressing mix and milk. Stir in the pasta, bacon, onion, tomato, olives and cheese.

Chill. If the pasta seems dry, stir in additional milk before serving. To make it an entrée, add

chopped grilled chicken.



Bacon-Ranch Pasta Salad.
Photo by Laura Araujo