

## Spring storms wreak havoc on powerlines

By Randy Riddle

Spring is around the corner and the big concern in Oklahoma is always the severe storms that come with the season. The biggest causes for power outages during these severe storms are the strong straight-line winds and trees, followed by lightning.

We have an aggressive brush control program at VVEC, but large trees out of the right of way can still tear a line down when large limbs blow out of them or when the entire tree blows over. Occasionally the wind alone is strong enough to cause issues with the lines and poles, even snapping the poles in two. Usually when strong wind alone breaks a pole it breaks multiple poles—as was the case last summer when storms crossed our service area from northwest (near Copan) to southeast (near Talala) causing poles to break in several areas, over 100 poles in all.

When storms are forecast for the area we keep all our employees on alert and make contact with contractors to let them know we could be calling if the damage is significant. We try to stay as ready as possible for any event that may occur.

The most important things for our membership to remember are to report your outage—especially if you have powerline damage on your property—and stay away from any downed powerlines or poles. It helps our trouble shooting efforts if you see something that is not right and report it. But you must remember: just because a powerline is on the ground and you are out of electricity doesn't mean that powerline is de-energized.



VVEC crews work to restore power after severe weather. Photo by Randy Riddle

“The **best way** to report your outage is through the **SmartHub app** on your phone or online through our website **[www.vvec.com](http://www.vvec.com)**. It beats a congested phone line when several hundred or even thousand members are trying to **report an outage** during a major event.” - Randy Riddle, VVEC operations manager



Download the free **SmartHub** app on the **App Store** (iOS devices) or **Google Play** (android devices) to report outages from your smartphone.

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**Winter Residential Rates**

October through March usage,  
November through April billing

**Customer Charge** | \$30.00

**Energy Charge** | \$.07772/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.*

# Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

In spring and summer months, set your ceiling fans to turn in the counterclockwise direction. This will create a cool breeze. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off when you leave the room.

*Source: energystar.gov*

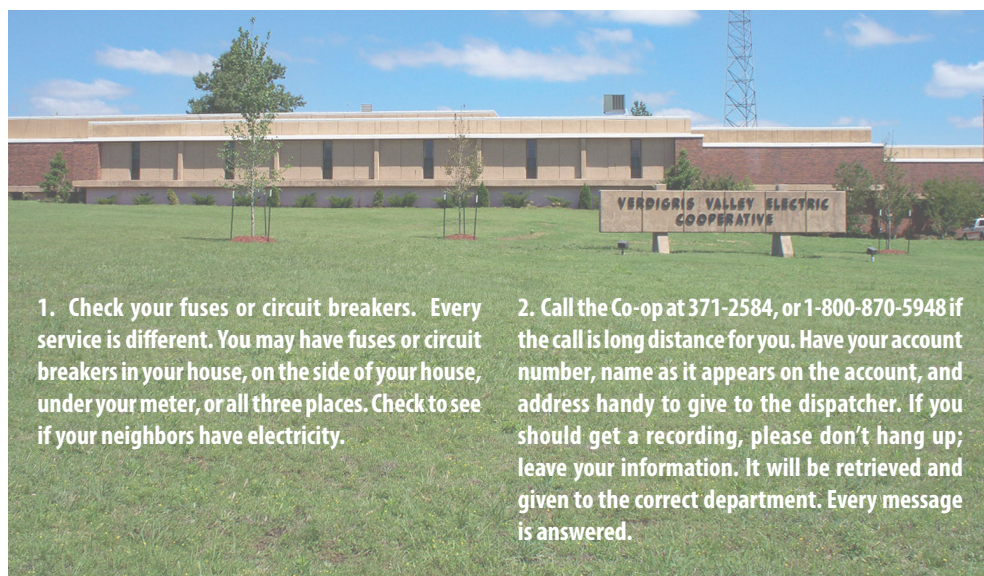


Follow Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative on Facebook for outage updates



Download the SmartHub app to report outages from your smartphone

## 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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# Co-ops provide legislative tool

On Monday, February 5, Oklahoma entered the second session of the 56th state Legislature. The same evening, the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives (OAEC) hosted its annual Out of the Gate Legislative Reception at the OAEC Conference Center in Oklahoma City. Attendance at the reception included a number of state representatives and senators in addition to agency heads, state officers and commissioners. Trustees and management from VVEC were in attendance.

Amidst several issues the Legislature will attempt to address this session, the priorities remain revenue and the budget. The Legislature will also work on energy related bills, some that could potentially impact rural electric cooperatives.

As with every legislative year, your statewide association, the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, will track and work those bills that have the likelihood of impacting electric co-ops to ensure that only fair and balanced energy related bills are passed.

Electric cooperatives like to emphasize the importance of constituents engaging with their elected officials. To help facilitate this interaction, Oklahoma's electric cooperatives offer a free legislative app with helpful information about each member of the Oklahoma Legislature as well as elected federal officials.

Download the free "OAEC 56th Legislative App" and explore its interactive profiles. If you are not



**Find information about your state and federal elected officials by downloading OAEC's free legislative app. Search for "OAEC 56th" on the Apple App Store (iOS devices) or Google Play (android devices).**

sure who your elected officials are, the map function provided in the app will help you to find them. A touch of the finger on your location and you will know your legislative districts, elected officials, and have a direct link from your mobile device or tablet to their office phones and e-mails.

Electric cooperatives have always been politically active. Co-ops primarily serve rural and low-density

areas; thus they have unique issues that are important in maintaining affordable electricity at the forefront. It's through their member-owners that co-ops have been most effective when working with elected officials.

Enjoy the newest version of the legislative app and use it to help support your locally owned, managed, and operated cooperative.

# Reminder!

**Adopt-A-School** and **Rural Fire Department** grant applications are due **Friday, April 27th**. To download an application form visit [www.vvec.com](http://www.vvec.com), and click on the community programs tab. Contact program coordinator **Misti Frazier** at 918-371-2584, ext. 6226 or [mfrazier@vvec.com](mailto:mfrazier@vvec.com), for more information.

## RECIPE

# American Irish Stew

Serves 6

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 1/4 pounds top round beef, cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 2 medium parsnips, cut into large chunks (optional)
- 3 cups reduced-sodium beef broth
- 4 medium russet potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 leek, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

In large pot over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add beef and garlic. Cook, gently stirring until meat is evenly browned. Season with salt and pepper.

Add onion, carrots and parsnips. Cook 3-4 minutes. Stir in broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and



American Irish Stew. Recipe courtesy the American Institute for Cancer Research. Photo courtesy Getty Images

simmer about 75 minutes, or until meat is tender.

Stir in potatoes and simmer another 30 minutes. Add rosemary and leeks. Continue to simmer, uncovered, until

potatoes are tender. To avoid potatoes falling apart, do not overcook.

Serve hot and garnish with parsley, if desired.