

Agencies Offering Assistance with Electric Bills p.3

Co-op Connections® Card Helps with Holiday Budgets

When VVEC members put gifts in their stockings this holiday season, they can also put something in their wallets if they use their Co-op Connections® Card when shopping.

The savings, discounts, and special deals offered to card members can help them get more for their holiday dollars.

The Co-op Connections Card program is a free membership discount card available to members of participating electric cooperatives across the country. Co-op Connections cards provide VVEC members discounts on products and services at local and national businesses.

"Participating businesses determine their own discounts, and the offers can change throughout the year," says VVEC Member Services Representative Paula Lanni.

She goes on to say co-op members can visit the Co-op Connections Web site at www.connections.coop to learn what discounts are available. Members can also get up-to-the minute infor-

mation on special deals and discounts by following Co-op Connections card on Facebook and Twitter.

Lanni suggests visiting VVEC's Web site – www.vvec.com – to stay up to date on what local businesses are offering. Click on the 'Products and Services' tab.

"About 70 local businesses are participating in the Co-op Connections card program," says Lanni. "Members can enjoy discounts or special deals from a variety of businesses such as restaurants, clothing stores, gift shops, salons, hotels, motels and bed and breakfast inns, automotive, florists, medical services and clinics, and dry cleaners, to mention a few. More businesses are joining the program each week."

Touchstone Energy®, an alliance of more than 600 electric co-ops nationwide, including VVEC, makes this program available and it is being adopted by co-ops across the nation in an effort to promote local companies. 



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

VVEC offices will be closed Thursday, Dec. 23 and Friday, Dec. 24 so employees can spend the Christmas holiday with their families. The offices will also be closed Friday, Dec. 31 for New Year's Eve.

Please call 371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948 to report an outage or safety hazard.

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

VVEC Board of Trustees

- District 1 - **Jim Brackett, 720-4531**
- District 2 - **Jack Bogart, 371-9587**
- District 3 - **Vernon Lewis, 341-5225**
- District 4 - **John Hibdon, 847-2320**
- District 5 - **Jimmy Lambert, 342-4662**
- District 6 - **Dennis Lenox, 396-1574**
- District 7 - **Charles Huerter, 333-3107**
- District 8 - **Ken Howard, 371-4833**
- District 9 - **Buddy McCarty, 272-5134 or 272-5364**

General Manager - Alice Houston

VVEC Headquarters
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Phone number
(918) 371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948

Office hours
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.,
Monday through Friday

Editor - Kay Rabbitt-Brower

District Meetings

District meeting results will be included in the January issue of *Power Circuit*.

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.



Annual Meeting Winner

David McIntosh, (center) of Bartlesville, is the winner of a \$500 bill credit at annual meeting. On hand to present him with the grand prize are John Hibdon, VVEC district 4 trustee, and Alice Houston, VVEC general manager.

Annual meeting was held Saturday, Oct. 23 at the Bartlesville Community Center. Members enjoyed top-notch entertainment from Country and Western star Paul Bogart and his band, and free refreshments, along with getting free energy efficiency information, and being eligible to win numerous free prizes.

Chris Meyers, general manager and CEO of the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, visited with members about copper theft, state elections, and federal energy policy. 

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.



Power Circuit is published monthly by Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative, Collinsville, Oklahoma for its members in Tulsa, Rogers, Washington, Nowata and Osage counties. Periodical postage paid at Tulsa, Oklahoma and other additional mailing offices. Subscription price is \$0.21 per month.

POSTMASTER - send address changes to Power Circuit, P.O. Box 219, Collinsville, OK 74021.

VOLUME 69 • NUMBER 12 • DECEMBER 2010

Paying Bill Promptly Prevents Service Interruptions

Interrupting a member's electric service for nonpayment is probably the worst job we have. It has never been our objective to disconnect service in this manner, but to be fair to those members who pay their bills and to keep down bad debt, we must adhere to established policies for non-payments.

During the winter, we make an extra effort to work with members so disconnection isn't necessary. But many times, members fail to respond to the disconnection notice, and don't contact us to make payment arrangements.

If at any time you have difficulty paying your electric bill, please contact our consumer service representatives. We have a deferred payment plan available and if you agree to and abide by the terms of that agreement, your electric service will not be disconnected.

The plan allows you to make monthly payments on the past due amount, after deducting all available government assistance. You will be expected to pay all future bills in full, in addition to the agreed upon payment amount.

If a life threatening situation exists in your home, you may request a postponement of the disconnection of your service. However, within 30 days you must produce a certificate completed by a licensed medical doctor or osteopathic doctor, indicating the nature of the life threatening situation. The certificate is renewable for one additional 30-day period. The Cooperative is not required to furnish service to a member beyond a total of 60 days for a life-threatening condition, without full payment of the account or acceptable payment arrangements on any unpaid balance.

The only way we know about such situations is if you tell us in advance. Please call or write our Consumer Service

SEAC	Avant, Sperry, Skiatook	396-4108
Community Action	Nowata County	273-2868
DHS	Nowata County	273-2327
DHS	Osage County	287-5800
DHS	Rogers County	283-8300
Community Action	Rogers County	341-5000
DHS	Tulsa County	581-2401, 430-2300, 280-3100
Helping Hand	Tulsa County	584-6923
Salvation Army	Tulsa County	582-7201
Owasso Community Res	Tulsa/Rogers County	272-4969
Community Action	Washington County	333-8115
Concern	Washington County	336-4693
DHS	Washington County	338-5700

Department if you have such a situation. We will then keep the information on file.

We provide a notice of non-payment before service is interrupted. The notice is printed on your next bill, notifying you we have not received your payment. If we haven't heard from you to make payment arrangements within 10 days, the account is subject to collection. This is the only notice we provide. You must make payment arrangements or your service will be disconnected.

If we make a trip to your home to collect an unpaid bill, you will be charged \$50. There is another \$50 charge for the return trip to reconnect your service when the bill is paid. These charges apply if the trips are made Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. Charges

for reconnecting service between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday are \$100, plus an additional \$50 for the initial trip, for a total of \$150.

You can avoid these charges by paying your bill on time, or adhering to payment arrangements you make with us.

Meters disconnected for non-payment will not be reset on weekends, holidays, or weekdays after 7 p.m.

While our lineman is in the process of disconnecting a meter, he will accept payment and leave the meter. You will be charged the \$50 collection trip fee. After a meter has been pulled, our lineman will return and reset the meter only if the entire past due amount plus collection and reset fees are paid. 

Untangle Cords and Wires

Don't Let Decorations Spoil Your Holiday

It's time to haul out the temporary extension cords and the piles of holiday lights. Don't let them make a tangled mess in the middle of a house you're tidying up for the holidays.

Keep your cords and cables from becoming an eyesore, a tripping hazard or a fire-waiting-to-happen by following three simple rules:

1. Extension cords are for temporary use only. Never use one to help the cord on a permanent lamp or appliance reach the outlet. Move the lamp closer to the outlet or call an electrician to add an outlet closer to the lamp. Extension cords are not sturdy enough to leave out all year. Use them during the holiday season if you need

them, and then store them safely away until next year.

2. Tidy your tangle of cords and cables – around the Christmas tree and in areas where you use electronics, like your home office or TV room. Look behind your desk or TV cabinet, and you'll probably find a rat's nest of cords, cables, wires and plugs that attach to your scanner, computer, printer,



telephone, battery charger and external hard drive. Unplug and store away any that aren't in use, and bundle the rest up with a Velcro cord wrap (buy it at a hardware or electronics store).

3. Stop relying on power strips.

If you've got dozens of cords plugged into power strips and surge protectors around your tree or in your home office or TV room, you could be overloading your electrical circuits. Those devices let you plug lots of cords into one wall outlet, but they don't give that outlet any extra juice. That single outlet is connected to a circuit, which most likely is providing power to several other outlets in the room. The solution: Hire

a licensed electrician to upgrade your circuits and add outlets.



RECIPE

Blue Cranberry Sauce

- 1 (12-oz.) package fresh cranberries
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 pint fresh blueberries

Wash and pick over cranberries. Place in a medium saucepan with water, and sugar. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, stir and simmer for 10 minutes or until cranberries burst.

Slightly mash the cranberries with the back of a wooden spoon to insure all skins are broken. Add the cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice. Mix well.

Remove from heat and mix in the blueberries (don't be afraid to break a few, but don't over mash either). The sauce will thicken as it cools. Transfer to a bowl, cool slightly and place plastic wrap directly on top of sauce to cover. Refrigerate until chilled.

NOTE: If you prefer a sweeter, less tart sauce, increase the sugar by 1/2 cup. Also, this is good with blackberries, raspberries, and orange juice substituted for the water.

This is also good poured over a brick of cream cheese.