

CEC inside your CO-OP

PUBLISHED FOR MEMBERS OF CHOCTAW ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A SUPPLEMENT TO OKLAHOMA LIVING

Take action on Earth Day

CEC offers services that help you save energy

April 22 is Earth Day, a special event that unites millions of people around the globe in an effort to protect our environment. This year Earth Day is inviting individuals and corporations to commit to the "One billion acts of green" campaign. The campaign encourages people to take action by committing to one simple "act of green."

The action you take is up to you, be it recycling plastic water bottles, walking to work one day a week, or switching to energy efficient light bulbs. The important thing is that you do something.

Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) offers services that can help you "go green" by reducing your energy usage. You'll lower your monthly bill and help CEC control its



systemwide demand for electricity. This curbs the need for new power plants, and improves air quality.

Free Energy Audits

Make an appointment for a free energy audit and a CEC energy specialist will perform a careful evaluation of your home

using an infrared camera and other tools. The results will help you pinpoint energy loss areas and find cost effective solutions.

Rebates and Loans.

To make energy upgrades more affordable, Choctaw Electric and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative offer cash rebates of \$600/ton

on ground source heat pumps and \$225/ton on air source heat pumps. CEC also offers low interest loans for the purchase of energy efficient appliances and other upgrades.

Wind energy. Members can help build Oklahoma's wind power industry by signing up for CEC's *WindWorks* program. While wind generated electricity costs more per kilowatt-hour than electricity generated from traditional sources, members who purchase energy credits via *Windworks* feel good knowing they support wholesale generation from a clean, renewable resource.

Make a commitment this Earth Day to turn your words into actions. For details on any of these energy saving programs, please call your co-op at **800-780-6486**.

Closed for Good Friday

Choctaw Electric Cooperative will close on April 22 in observance of Good Friday. To report a service problem during this time, please call **800-780-6486**.

Happy Easter!



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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

www.choctawelectric.coop

facebook

Follow us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/pages/Choctaw-Electric-Cooperative

HUGO OFFICE

PO Box 758
Hwy 93 North
Hugo, Oklahoma 74743
(800) 780-6486 • (580) 326-6486
FAX (580) 326-2492
Monday - Friday 8 am - 5 pm

IDABEL OFFICE

2114 E. Washington
Idabel, Oklahoma 74745
(580) 286-7155
Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

ANTLERS OFFICE

HC 67 Box 62
Antlers, Oklahoma 74523
(One mile east of Antlers)
(580) 298-3201
Monday-Friday, 8 am - 5 pm

24-HOUR
OUTAGE HOTLINE
(800) 780-6486

CEC **inside** LINES

CEC *Inside Lines* is published monthly for members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative.

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PLEASE CALL
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24 HOURS A DAY • SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

INSIDE YOUR CO-OP

Rural living is a blessing

Abundant water, wildlife—and good neighbors

Do you ever think about how blessed we are to live in rural America, and then to top that off, Southeast Oklahoma? Well, I have. Fortunately we live in a place where our closest neighbor may be a mile away. You can hear the sounds of nature, watch for a falling star, and see the headlights coming toward the house and wonder if they might be lost— this far from town.

We really are blessed to live in a place with abundant water, wildlife, running water and electricity.

Seventy years ago Choctaw Electric Cooperative began going where no electric company had gone before, because the others didn't have to and didn't want to. We're glad to be able to provide you with electricity whether it be up in the hills, out on the ranch or maybe even close to one of Southeast Oklahoma's magnificent lakes. Places where you can raise a family without having to be cooped up next to a neighbor, and you know who it is that live in that house down yonder.

We like the life we live. For most of us it is a choice we make, a way of life. It's a trade-off we are willing to make. Back and forth to

school, work, ball games, and church. We spend a little more on gas than our friends in town, but it's worth it. We can raise a garden, a chicken, or just about anything we want. We don't have the city ordinances out here on the farm that dictate whether or not we can have a horse, raise cattle or even a little Cain.



BY TERRY MATLOCK
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The choices we make to live a rural way of life—thank goodness for rural volunteer fire departments; imagine how expensive house insurance would be without them, being out away from town.

We have road graders instead of street sweepers, bar ditches instead of curbs and drains. We choose rural water or well water instead of city water. We have a septic tank system instead of sewer. But it's worth it. It's what we choose.

Living in the country is definitely a good decision, a "right choice". It doesn't have all the amenities of living in town but it sure is worth the trade-off. You know who your neighbor is, you know the folks at your electric cooperative, and we know you. At Choctaw Electric, we stand behind the rural electric cooperative "Good Neighbor" code. You enjoy the splendor of God's creation and we'll continue to keep the lights on in southeast Oklahoma.



Did you know...

QUICK FACTS ABOUT YOUR ELECTRIC CO-OP

► In 1941 it cost Choctaw Electric Cooperative around \$750 to build one mile of line. In 1998, one mile of line cost Choctaw Electric \$26,000. By 2010, costs increased to nearly \$40,000 per mile.

SOURCE: *Turning the Lights On in Southeast Oklahoma, 70th Anniversary book published by Choctaw Electric Cooperative.*

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Newsletter gets color infusion

Take a close look at this month's issue of *Inside Your Co-op* and you'll notice something different. Your newsletter is now

printed in four color on a heavier, glossier sheet of paper. The changes improve the looks of your newsletter, make it easier to read, and help showcase southeast Oklahoma in the best possible light.

We hope you enjoy the new look!

THE INCREDIBLE EGG:

More than just an omelet ingredient

As you try to figure out what to do with all those leftover Easter eggs, check out these interesting facts:

- A hen requires 24 to 26 hours to produce an egg. Thirty minutes later, she starts all over again.
- The egg shell may have as many as 17,000 tiny pores over its surface. Through them, the egg can absorb flavors and odors. Storing them in their cartons helps keep them fresh.
- White shelled eggs are produced by hens with white feathers and ear lobes. Brown-shelled eggs are produced by hens with red feathers and red ear lobes.
- To tell if an egg is raw or hard cooked, spin it. If the egg spins easily, it is hard-cooked; if it wobbles, it's raw.
- Egg yolks are one of the few foods that naturally contain Vitamin D.
- Yolk color depends on the diet of the hen. Natural yellow-orange substances such as marigold petals may be added to light-colored feeds to enhance colors. Artificial color additives are not permitted.
- Occasionally, a hen will produce a double-yoked egg. It is rare, but not impossible, for a young hen to produce an egg with no yolk at all.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Tip of the Month

Check your HVAC system's air filter monthly. If it looks dirty, change it. A dirty filter makes your system work harder.

—US DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Convenient payment locations



Choctaw Electric Cooperative provides several authorized payment locations. Drop your payment by any of the following businesses during regular office hours:

IDABEL

- First Bank & Trust
- McCurtain County National Bank
- Choctaw Electric Cooperative
- Idabel National Bank

ANTLERS

- First Bank
- Ameri State Bank
- Choctaw Electric Cooperative

BROKEN BOW

- First National Bank
- First Bank & Trust

CLAYTON

- Shamrock Bank

HUGO

- Choctaw Electric Cooperative

HOCHATOWN

- First Bank & Trust

VALLIANT

- First State Bank

WRIGHT CITY

- First Bank & Trust

Moms and dads spending more time with their children

Parents are spending more time with their children, and less time on other household and personal tasks. Since 1965, for example, married fathers have spent nearly three times as much time caring for their children: from 2.5 hours a week to 7 hours. Married mothers contribute more time as well, from 10.2 hours to 13.9 hours.

Where is the time coming from? Personal grooming is one area where parents have cut back. Fathers spend 7 hours a week on their grooming, a reduction from 10.1 hours in 1965. And both groups report feeling more rushed, with less time to enjoy themselves and their parents.



CEC community calendar

Help us promote your event by sending event details in advance.
Please send event information to Jennifer Boling/Choctaw Electric Inside Lines/PO Box 758, Hugo, OK 74743; or e-mail info to jboling@choctawelectric.coop. Events and dates are subject to change.

APRIL

- 1-30 Autism Awareness Month
 - 1-30 National Frog Month. Take a moment to learn a little more about our favorite amphibians.
 - 1 April Fools Day
 - 2 Dogwood Days Festival
Idabel, 580-286-3305
 - 4-10 National Public Health Week
 - 9 Talihina Indian Festival Powwow
Talihina Public School Gym
918-567-2539 or 918-567-2106
 - 9 Mountain Gate Poker Run
Talihina, 918-567-3434
 - 10-16 National Library Week
 - 16 Valliant Citywide Trash Off Day
580-933-5050
 - 16-17 Central Oklahoma Geocachers Spring Fling, Beavers Bend, 405-414-3084
 - 22 Good Friday
 - 22 Earth Day
 - 24 Easter
 - 29 Arbor Day
-
- ## MAY
- 6-8 Kiamichi Independent Bikers Spring Rally & Bike Show, Idabel
870-642-6184.
 - 7 City Wide Yard Sale, Valliant
580-933-5050
 - 13-14 Music Maynia & More, Beavers Bend
580-306-0603
 - 28 Alumni Homecoming, Valliant
580-933-5050

Birthday Greetings to CEC Employees

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GOOD THINGS TO KNOW

Get a tax refund of \$5,000

If you make less than \$48K you qualify for EITC

You could be eligible to get more money back from the IRS – as much as \$5,666.

If you earned less than \$48,362 from wages, self-employment or farming last year, you may qualify for a refundable tax credit called the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC. But you must file a federal income tax return claiming the credit to get it.

EITC can be a big financial boost for working people hit by hard economic times. Many individuals who saw their incomes drop in 2010 may qualify for the first time.

The credit has been making the lives of workers a little easier for more than 35 years. Yet it remains little known, possibly because people move into and out of eligibility as their financial, marital and parental statuses change. IRS estimates four of five eligible people claim and get their EITC.

Unlike other tax credits, both EITC eligibility and the amount of the credit is based on several factors such as the source and

amount of your income, or combined incomes if married, whether you have qualifying children and how many. Workers without children also may qualify.

The amount of the credit peaks then phases out at certain income limitations depending on filing status and other factors. You may qualify for EITC even if you had no federal tax withheld or are not otherwise required to file.

The credit is complex, but worth exploring. It's even more valuable if your state has a corresponding tax credit.

The online EITC Assistant at www.irs.gov/eitc can help determine your eligibility and estimate the amount

of your credit. Free help preparing your return and claiming EITC is available at volunteer income tax assistance sites and IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers. To locate a volunteer site, call your community's 211 or 311 number for local services or call the IRS at 1-800-906-9887. Find an IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center in the blue pages of your telephone directory



Cont'd next page ▶

Please see your electric bill for the current Power Cost Adjustment.

APRIL

Meter Reading and Billing Dates

Bill Cycle	Reading Date	Billing Date	Due Date
Cycle 1	April 1	April 7	April 28
Cycle 2	April 8	April 14	May 5
Cycle 3	April 15	April 21	May 12
Cycle 4	April 22	April 28	May 19

Note to members: For your convenience, the billing chart above also includes meter reading dates. Keeping track of the meter reading dates allows you to evaluate your electrical usage over a precise billing period. We hope this will clear up billing questions.

Remember: if you are eligible, you must file a federal income tax return, even if you are not otherwise required to file, and you must specifically claim the credit to get it. Find more information about EITC at www.irs.gov or in your tax software package.

According to the IRS, rural and non-traditional families -- such as grandparents raising grandchildren -- childless workers, and non-English speaking taxpayers are among those who most frequently overlook the credit.

Last chance to claim 2010 credit

It's time for the most dreaded of all annual chores: filing your income tax returns.

As you work on your 2010 return, consider any large home purchases you made last year—new windows or doors, insulation, water heater, heating and air conditioning system, or a new roof. If you bought super-energy efficient versions, you might qualify for a tax credit of up to \$1,500.

Visit the government's Energy Star Web site (www.energystar.gov) or consult with your tax accountant to learn whether your energy-efficient home-improvement purchases qualify.

If you missed your chance in 2010, you can still claim an efficiency tax credit for items purchased this year. They just won't be worth as much. For instance, the total lifetime credit that can be claimed on energy improvements made between 2006 and 2011 has decreased from \$1,500 to \$500.

There are also maximum allowances for different upgrades. For installing efficient windows, the tax credit is limited to \$200, and there's a \$300 cap for any energy efficient item. Credits are available on furnaces, main air circulating fans, central air conditioners, air source heat pumps and biomass fuel stoves.

To claim your credit, be sure to keep your receipts and your Manufacturer's Certification Statement (a statement from the manufacturer certifying the product qualifies for the tax credit). Claim the credit on your taxes using IRS Form 5695.

Lucky Account #6115000. If this number matches the account number on your bill, please call 800-780-6486 for a \$25 bill credit.

MONTHLY REPORT

Rural Electric taxes collected for local schools

(For February 2011 collections)



Choctaw Electric Cooperative gross receipts taxes are collected by the state and distributed to local schools. The amount each school receives is based on the number of miles of CEC line in the school district. Ninety-five percent is distributed to schools. The remaining five percent is retained by the state.

SCHOOL	CURRENT MONTH	YEAR-TO-DATE
Lane	\$11.75	\$87.24
Farris	\$2,489.67	\$19,134.66
Bennington	\$183.07	\$1,359.63
Grant	\$2,966.64	\$22,195.42
Swink	\$506.89	\$3,782.92
Boswell	\$1,822.09	\$13,644.24
Ft. Towson	\$3,963.13	\$29,459.05
Soper	\$2,925.19	\$21,869.09
Hugo	\$4,763.90	\$35,529.94
Rattan	\$6,373.23	\$46,112.70
Whitesboro	\$211.67	\$1,574.76
Forest Grove	\$1,627.49	\$12,167.71
Lukfata	\$1,205.05	\$8,896.56
Glover	\$1,405.19	\$10,378.62
Denison	\$1,025.09	\$7,577.14
Holly Creek	\$1,358.42	\$9,904.54
Idabel	\$2,675.18	\$20,052.30
Haworth	\$5,663.76	\$42,839.36
Valliant	\$3,895.30	\$29,676.11
Eagletown	\$2,062.57	\$15,309.06
Smithville	\$4,128.02	\$30,752.07
Wright City	\$2,161.87	\$16,120.54
Battiest	\$4,184.10	\$31,104.38
Broken Bow	\$5,665.31	\$42,698.51
Nashoba	\$1,557.90	\$11,670.81
Clayton	\$1,191.97	\$8,883.48
Antlers	\$7,628.59	\$56,626.34
Moyers	\$2,488.12	\$18,725.76

TOTALS

95% paid to schools	\$76,141.16	\$568,132.94
5% paid to state	\$4,007.43	\$29,901.74
100% paid by CEC	\$80,148.59	\$598,034.68

SOURCE: OKLAHOMA TAX COMMISSION

RECYCLE

Keep SE Oklahoma clean!



Southeast Oklahoma offers several recycling locations for your convenience.

➔ Choctaw County

A-Z Recycling
Hugo, OK
580-326-4277

Accepts: Metal only

Choctaw Electric Cooperative
Hugo, OK
800-780-6486

Accepts: Broken or used compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs)

➔ Pushmataha County-

Southern Disposal
Located 2.5 miles s. of Antlers
580-298-3729

Accepts: All types of metal, paper, cardboard, batteries and tires. (There is a charge for tires) No glass or plastic recycling, but they will dispose of it for you.

➔ McCurtain County

OK Wood Fiber
Located next to the Chamber of Commerce in Idabel
580-286-5035

Accepts: Cardboard and paper.

McCurtain County Extension
108B-N Central Avenue, Idabel
580-286-7558

Accepts: Broken or used compact fluorescent bulbs

Thank you for recycling!

LET'S SAVE ENERGY TOGETHER

Save energy without investing a dime

Cheap tricks that help you lower your energy costs

BY JOHN DRAKE

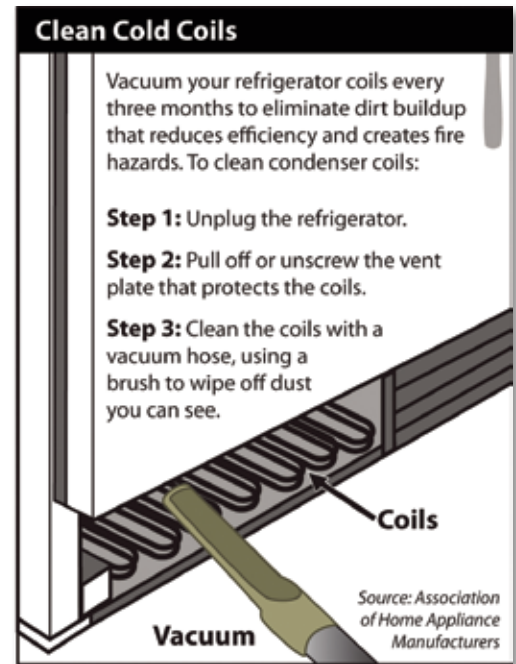
COOPERATIVE ENERGY AUDITOR

Budgets are tight, and here at Choctaw Electric Cooperative, we hear many of you asking about ways to lower your electric bill.

While most people know they can save energy by installing efficient appliances or adding insulation to their home, sometimes there simply isn't money to spare to make these improvements. Does that mean you're powerless to lower your electric bill? Not at all.

There are several free things you can do to cut energy costs without investing a dime. These tips might not pack as big of an efficiency punch as other upgrades but in this economy, every little bit counts! Post these tips on your refrigerator so you'll keep them in mind at all times. It will help lower your costs—and it won't cost you a dime.

- ◆ Heating water takes up 12 percent of your home's energy use. Set your water heater temperature no higher than 120°F. For households with only 1 or 2 members, a 115°F setting works.
- ◆ Drain 1-2 gallons from the bottom of your water heater each year to keep sediment from building up and making your equipment work harder.
- ◆ Since hot water costs more, wash clothes in cold water unless clothing is very dirty, and only do full loads of laundry.
- ◆ Set your thermostats to 78°F in summer, 68°F in winter.
- ◆ Have ceiling paddle fans? Run them on medium to blow air down in the summer, then run them low to blow air up in the winter. Better



air circulation will keep your HVAC system from working overtime.

- ◆ Don't make your fridge work too hard. Clean your refrigerator coils every year! You can also set the temperature between 34°-37°F, and leave the freezer between 0°-5°F. Keep the freezer full—frozen food helps your freezer stay cool.
- ◆ When cooking keep the lids on pots, and let hot food cool off before placing it in the refrigerator.
- ◆ Check your furnace or air conditioner (AC) filter each month and clean or replace it as needed. Dirty filters block air flow through your heating and cooling systems, increasing your energy bill and shortening the equipment's life.
- ◆ During hot months, keep window coverings closed on the south, east, and west windows. In winter, let the sun in.

You can find more ways to save at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

For energy saving advice or to schedule a free energy audit, please call John Drake or Mark Zachry at 800-780-6486, ext. 233.

PLAY IT SAFE



Thanks to a demonstration by their local electric cooperative, the teens in this car crash knew to stay in the car until the power lines that had fallen were de-energized.

When a car hits a power line...

Knowing how to escape could save your life

BY GUY DALE

COORDINATOR OF SAFETY & LOSS CONTROL

Instincts tell us to flee danger. But when car accidents bring down power lines, these natural inclinations can lead to tragic results.

If your car hits a power pole or otherwise brings a power line down, stay in your vehicle and wait until the local electric utility arrives on the scene and makes sure that lines have been de-energized. If you come upon an accident involving toppled power poles and lines, don't leave your vehicle to approach the scene.

Indiana teenagers Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor saw a power line safety demonstration at their high school and never dreamed their new knowledge would be put to the test. Five days later, they were in a car that crashed into a utility pole, bringing live power lines to the ground.

Fortunately, they heeded the safety advice they'd received, and survived because they knew the right actions to take. And they helped others who approached the scene by warning them to stay away. The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration says tens of thousands of auto accidents occur each year involving power lines. In the vast majority of these incidents, the safest place to remain is inside the car. Only in the rare instance of fire should people exit a vehicle.

Then, they must know how to do so *safely*, jumping free and clear, landing with feet together, and hopping away. It's difficult to get out without creating a path for current to flow, which is why you should only get out if you're forced to.

Of course, when people are involved in a car accident, electricity is usually the last thing on anyone's mind. It's easy to forget that by exiting the vehicle, you're risking bodily exposure to thousands of volts of electricity.

Lee and Ashley are grateful to their electric cooperative that sponsored a live line demonstration at their school. Now the girls are encouraging everyone to learn from their experience. You can check out a video of the girl's experience, and also a live line demo by visiting www.safeelectricity.org.

Safe Electricity is the safety outreach program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization with more than 400 electric cooperative members and others who share the mission of educating the public about electrical safety.

You can also contact me at Choctaw Electric to schedule a similar safety demonstration for your classroom or organization. We want to make sure you stay safe at all times.

To visit with Guy Dale about safety issues, please call 800-760-6486, ext. 227.

Electrical Fire Safety

About 28,600 home electrical fires occur during a typical year, leading to \$1.1 billion in property losses. Faulty electrical outlets and old wiring are the main causes of electrical fires, as are damaged cords, plugs, switches, and light fixtures.

The number one priority in a fire is to escape safely.



Only use a fire extinguisher if:

- 🔥 The fire department has been called.
- 🔥 Everyone has exited the building.
- 🔥 The fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing.
- 🔥 The room is not filled with smoke.

Not all fire extinguishers are alike. Only a Class C extinguisher can be used on an electrical fire. Remember the word **PASS**:

Pull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you and release the locking mechanism.

Aim low. Point the nozzle toward the base of the fire.

Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.

Sweep the nozzle from side-to-side.

Remember: Know when to go. Make sure you have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.

Are your kids getting amped? *Enrollment filling up for Kilowatt Kids Camp*



Kilowatt Kids Camp

Enroll by June 1, 2011

June 22.....Idabel
June 28.....Antlers
June 30.....Hugo

Kids learn why energy conservation is important and what they can do to conserve energy around their home. They also take home important life-saving safety lessons.

The theme for camp this year is "Where the little light bulb gets its juice."

Enrollment forms for Kilowatt Kids Camp are available at CEC offices in Hugo, Antlers and Idabel. The deadline to enroll your child is June 1, 2011.

For more details, please call **580-326-6486** or **800-780-6486**, or visit us online at www.choctawelectric.coop.

Slogan contest:

Enter by April 15

In recognition of Electrical Safety Month in May, Choctaw Electric Cooperative is sponsoring a safety slogan contest for 10 to 14 year-old students.

CEC is looking for a catchy slogan that promotes electrical safety and creates awareness of electrical hazards.

Prizes will be awarded first through third place. All winners will be recognized in the CEC newsletter *Inside Your Co-op*.

By entering the contest, each entrant understands that their slogan, if chosen, becomes the property of Choctaw Electric Cooperative to use in any manner they see fit. For instance, the slogan may be used in advertisements, brochures, newsletters and online to promote CEC's electrical safety programs.

Slogans should be delivered to Choctaw Electric office by April 15, 2011 or email entries to Brad Kendrick, bkendrick@choctawelectric.coop or Jia Johnson, jjohnson@choctawelectric.coop.

For more information please call **580-326-6486** or **800-780-6486**.

Have you enrolled your child in Kilowatt Kids Camp? If not, there's still time to do so, but places are filling rapidly.

Choctaw Electric Cooperative's Kilowatt Kids Camp is a half-day camp for 1st through 3rd graders. Camp instructors use games and activities to help kids understand where their electricity comes from.

Choctaw Electric's

Go Green Easter

An eco-friendly egg decorating contest for kids ages K - 8th.

Prizes in each division

• K-2nd • 3rd-5th • 6th-8th

Hurry, entry deadline is April 18!

Prizes will be awarded in each division: K-2nd; 3rd-5th; and 6th-8th.

Contest details

Each entry should include a label with your child's name, address, phone number and age category. Please attach a brief description of materials used to decorate the egg and how they were used to create the design. Decorating materials should be as eco-friendly as possible.

Entries should be delivered to the CEC office in Hugo, Antlers or Idabel. **The entry deadline is Monday April 18, 2011.**

For more information, please contact Jia Johnson or Brad Kendrick at **580-326-6486** or **800-780-6486, ext. 248**

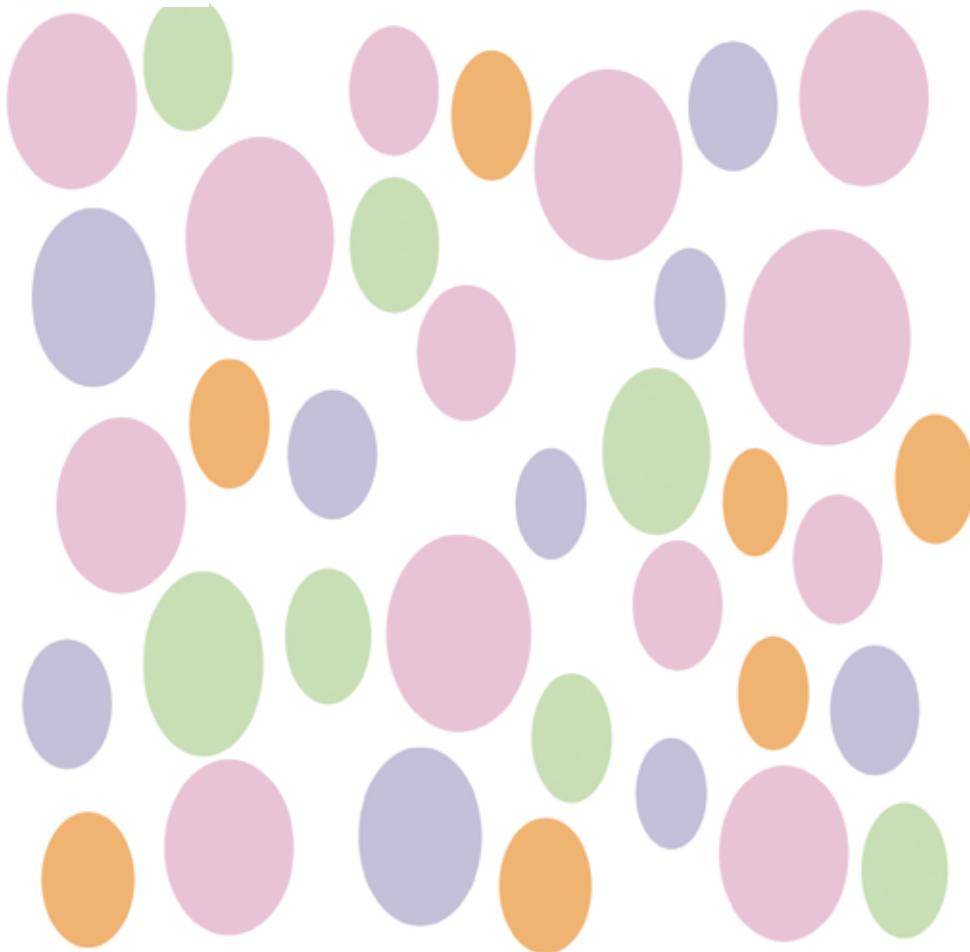




Choctaw Electric Kid's Zone

**Fun stuff
for kids!**

Count The Eggs!



How many
pink?



How many
green?



How many
blue?



How many
orange?

Which country is online most?

Your teenager or your grandmother may seem to be on the Internet 24 hours a day, but overall, Americans aren't the biggest Internet users. According to one study reported by Reuters, 68 percent

of Canadians are regular Web surfers, making Canada the country with the highest proportion of Internet visitors. Canada is trailed by France and Britain (62 percent each), Germany (60 percent), and then



by the United States, where only 36 percent go online on a regular basis.

Our neighbors to the north spend an average of 42 hours a month online, up from 40 hours in 2009. They look at an average of 147 videos a month. Approximately 51 percent of Canadians have Facebook accounts. The study offered no explanation for the preponderance of Canadians inhabiting cyberspace.

Get on the **right** sleep schedule

Are you a night owl? Most of us can pull the occasional all-nighter, but for some people getting to sleep before 2 or 3 a.m. is a real struggle, and getting up at 7 or 8 in the morning is next to impossible. It's not laziness, or simple insomnia, but a condition doctors call Delayed Sleep Phase (DSP) Disorder.

DSP interferes with a person's internal clock, or circadian rhythm. Approximately three in 200 adults, and seven to 16 percent of teenagers, have trouble falling asleep within two hours of what's considered a "normal"

bedtime. The causes of DSP are unknown, and by itself it's not a threat to health as long as one gets sufficient sleep. But people with DSP may have trouble accommodating a standard work or school schedule because of sleep deprivations. Some sufferers may resort to alcohol or sedatives to help them fall asleep, which can lead to other problems.

What's to be done? Some of the most common treatments include:

- **Light/darkness therapy.** Avoid bright lights for up to two hours before going to bed. When you wake up, turn on the lights, or get outside as quickly as possible to trigger more wakefulness in your body.
- **Chronotherapy.** Try resetting your body's schedule by gradually adjusting your bedtime. Go to bed 15-30 minutes earlier every night, and get up earlier by the same amount of time. (You may
- **Medications.** Melatonin is a common, naturally occurring compound that can help people feel drowsy if taken an hour or so before bedtime. Prescription medications are also available; check with your doctor (and remember that you don't need a "sleeping pill" as you're not suffering from insomnia).

need to wait until you have some vacation time to attempt this.) Another strategy: Stay up all night, then go to bed an hour or so earlier than normal on the next night, and maintain that bedtime for a week. Repeat once a week until you're on a regular schedule.



Safe shelter—as close as your own backyard.

An inground storm shelter from Choctaw Electric protects you from the worst kind of Oklahoma weather—tornadoes. With spring storm season upon us, now is the time to visit with CEC about installing an in-ground storm shelter. To help you cover purchase price and installation costs, CEC offers low interest financing and an easy monthly payment plan. Call us today for details.

800-780-6486 • www.choctawelectric.coop



Take a stay-cation.

With gasoline prices on the rise, many folks are opting to spend their summer vacation here at home. Southeast Oklahoma's scenic rivers and lakes, restaurants, shops, and a choice of lovely lodges, cabins and camping sites, make it the perfect choice for a "stay-cation." As you make plans, remember your Co-op Connections card for savings at the following local businesses, or visit www.connections.coop to view thousands of offers from businesses across the U.S. Have fun!

■ ANTLERS

Betsy's Quilts and Fabric Shop
Bryant's Custom Camouflage
Nancy's Liquor & Drive Thru
Village Creations
Oak Ridge RV Park
Candle Cabin
High Street Pizza
RnL Photography
RnL Print Shop
Ronina Designs
Sister's Fashion & Decor
Enlyten Amanda Alford
C & J Tire
Zen Gee Counseling & Psychological Services

■ BOSWELL

La Te Da, LLC

■ BROKEN BOW

Beavers Bend Lodging
Broken Bow Photography
Wilderness Lakefront Resort
The Turning Leaf Inn
Lambert Lumber and Do It Best Hardware
Reuben's Rest Bed & Breakfast
Pier 49 Catfish
Lake Mountain Cabins
Pine Meadow Cabins
Subway
Jordan Construction, Inc.
Beavers Bend Wildlife Museum, Cabin Rental & Taxidermy Studio
B & N Hardware & Poultry Supply
Beavers Bend Getaways
Cabin In the Woods
The Hickory Hut
Limited Space
Lakeway Bait & Tackle
Duncan's Deli
Broken Bow Nursing Home
Lakerat Cabin Rentals
Girls Gone Wine
River Mountain Manufacturing
Charles Wesley Motor Lodge
Camping Sueperb L.L.C.
Chad Tucker's Heat & A/C Service
The Emporium

■ CLAYTON

Clayton Lake State Park

■ FT. TOWSON

Beauty Control
Gawdy Girlz
Raymond Gary State Park
Beauty Control

■ GRANT

High Brass Hunting Reserve

■ HOCHATOWN

The Antler Cabin
Hochatown Country Lodge

■ HUGO

Bonnie's Bows
Coyote Salon
Choctaw Electric Cooperative
Floral Gardens
Merle Norman Cosmetics
Hugo Golf Club
Hugo Plate Glass & Mirror
Special Expressions
It Works
Hughes Variety Store
Granny's Home Remedies
City Medical
Maple Small Engine Repair
Glitz -N- Glam
Jean's Hair Fashion Salon
Lesco Furniture
Lesco Bridal and Gifts
Hugo Lake State Park
JT's Trading Post
Ooh-La-La- Boutique & Salon
Misty's Nail Salon

■ IDABEL

Ace Hardware of Idabel, Inc
Museum of the Red River Store
McCullough Printing
Oasis Massage Therapy
Gary L Dennington DDS.
ABCO Printing and Office Supply
Grice Computer Consulting
Wee Care Pregnancy Resources, Inc.

■ MILLERTON

Choctaw Nations's Wheelock Academy

■ MOYERS

K River Campground
Derby Janitorial
Telephone Systems & Services of S.E. Okla.

■ PARIS

Jackson Hewitt Tax Service
Check 2 Cash

■ RATTAN

The Bent Tree Grill
Hannah's Bent Tree Cabins
Tupperware Rep. Susan Jackson
The Ram's Pen/Simple Simon's Pizza

■ SOPER

Sissy's Stuff

■ TOM

Lu's Hair Studio

■ VALLIANT

Ron's Archery
Red River Air
Scentsy - Scented Sisters
Milligan Wrecker Service

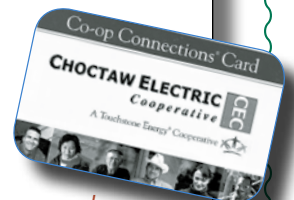
■ WATSON

Dollarstitch

Is your business participating in the Co-op Connections program?

If not, you're missing an opportunity to connect with thousands of rural electric consumers locally and nationwide.

For complete details on the program and how you can take part in it, please contact Lois Ann Beason, 800-780-6486, ext. 244, or sign up online at www.choctawelectric.coop.






We want
your **BEST**
holiday recipes!

- ♦ **THANKSGIVING** ♦ **CHRISTMAS**
- ♦ **EASTER** ♦ **VALENTINE'S DAY**
- ♦ **4TH OF JULY** ♦ **ANY HOLIDAY!**

Submit your classic family favorites for CEC's 2011 Holiday Cookbook



RECIPE COLLECTION SHEET

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK

For office use only

Recipe No.

Category _____

Recipe Title _____

Submitted By _____

INGREDIENTS: Use abbreviations: pt. qt. pkg. env. c. tsp. T. oz. lb. gal. doz. sm. med. lg.

DIRECTIONS: _____

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Instructions

- Type or print clearly in ink, not pencil, and place only one recipe per form.
- If more room is needed, use another sheet of the same size and staple together.
- List all ingredients in order of use in ingredients list and directions.
- Include container sizes, e.g. 16-oz. pkg, 24-oz. can
- Keep directions in paragraph form—not in steps.
- Use names of ingredients in the directions, e.g. “Combine flour and sugar.” Do not use statements such as “Combine first three ingredients.”
- Include temperatures and cooking, chilling, baking, and/or freezing times.
- Anything not part of the recipe (ingredients, directions, contributor name, serving size or recipe title) will not be included unless you select Recipe Notes for an extra charge.
- Be consistent with the spelling of your name for each recipe you contribute.
- Your recipe should fit into one of the following categories:
 - ❖ **Appetizers & Beverages**
 - ❖ **Soups & Salads**
 - ❖ **Vegetables & Side Dishes**
 - ❖ **Main Dishes**
 - ❖ **Breads & Rolls**
 - ❖ **Desserts**
 - ❖ **Cookies & Candy**
 - ❖ **This & That**

Choctaw Electric is publishing a

special cookbook *just for kids!*

Send us your favorites by June 1, 2011.

CEC's "kid friendly" cookbook will include recipes youngsters can prepare on their own, or with Mom and Dad nearby to help.

The cookbook will feature member-contributed recipes for beverages, snacks, main dishes, desserts, cookies and candy. There's even a "this and that" category for recipes that don't fit the typical categories.

Please submit your favorite "kid friendly" recipe using the form below. Please submit your recipe by June 1, 2011.

Coloring Contest

Deadline is May 6

CEC wants colorful artwork for the CEC Kid's Cookbook. Kids are encouraged to submit drawings or paintings that can be used as colorful section dividers. Winners will be recognized in the CEC newsletter and the cookbook.

Deadline is May 6th. For more details, please call **800-780-6486**.



Recipe Submission Form

Submitted By: _____

Age: _____ Choctaw Electric Account # _____

Recipe Title: _____

Circle Category: Beverage Snack Dessert Main Dish

Cookie/Candy

This & That

Ingredients: _____

Directions: _____

Questions?

Please call Choctaw Electric at
800-780-6486, ext. 243.

april

Best days according to Moon phases.



Best planting days

Above ground crops . . .	5-6, 9-10, 16
Root crops	1-2, 17-19, 20, 23-25, 28-29
Seed beds	9-10, 18-20
Kill plant pests	26-27, 30

Best fishing days

👉 Best	9-10, 18-20, 28-29
☺ Good	1-2, 14-15, 26-27
☹ Fair:	6, 16-17, 23-25
☹ Poor	3-5, 7-8, 11-13, 21-22, 30

Best days to do other stuff

Begin diet to gain weight	5,14
Begin diet to lose weight	1, 22-23
Begin logging	22-23
Breed animals	18-19
Make sauerkraut, can, or pickle	1, 27-28
Cut hair to discourage growth	27-28
Cut hair to encourage growth	5-6, 16-17
Cut hay	2-4, 30
Destroy pests and weeds	2-4, 30
End projects	1-2
Entertain	12-13
Go camping	20-21
Go to the dentist	10-11
Graft or pollinate	10-11
Harvest above ground vegetables	5-6
Harvest below ground vegetables	22-23
Plant above ground vegetables	10-11
Plant below ground vegetables	1, 22-28
Potty train children	1, 22-23
Prune to discourage growth	20-21
Prune to encourage growth	3-4, 12-13
Quit smoking	1, 22-23
Set chicken eggs	16-17, 24-25
Set posts or pour concrete	22-23
Start projects	4-5
Wean animals and children	1, 22-23

—from the Old Farmer's Almanac

Folksy Tips, Hints & Wisdom

FOR FARM, HOME AND GARDEN

To market, to market

Selling your homegrown produce

If you have a garden that seems grow bigger every year, you might want to think about selling some of your produce at a local Farmer's Market or roadside stand. With the interest in locally grown food these day, selling your vegetables is a fun way to make a little extra cash. Yes, its labor intensive—and you better enjoy gardening—but if you have spare time, are a good planner, and enjoy interacting with people, growing produce for the public just might suit your fancy.

A few helpful suggestions to get you started:

1. Plant a garden large enough to grow an abundance of vegetables to sell. Keep your garden well-maintained and refrain from using harmful pesticides, if you decide to grow organic vegetables.
2. Contact your local farmer's market, once your garden starts producing. Find out how much it costs to rent a booth, what the set-up times are, and the operating rules.
3. Pick your fully grown vegetables in the morning and thoroughly wash them before taking them to the farmer's market. Make a large, bold sign stating the price of your vegetables and information about how they were grown.
4. Set up your table in the shade at the farmer's market, and arrange the vegetables appealingly on the table or in baskets. Place the signs close to the vegetables and have your cash box always stocked with some bills and change. Price your vegetables a little higher than the grocery stores, to make a decent profit.
5. Keep your booth clean and stocked throughout the day, and be friendly and outgoing to attract repeat customers. This is what will cause you to earn the most money. Occasionally spray your vegetables with water from a misting bottle to prevent them from wilting, and don't sell rotten vegetables.
6. Tell your family, friends and neighbors about how you are selling your vegetables, to get more customers. Market your business by making a website, making signs and placing ads in newspapers.
7. Keep track of the number of every vegetable you sell, every day, to prevent over-picking and waste. Sell your vegetables every day that the farmer's market is open, and keep your garden well-maintained.

Source: How to Make a Living Out of Growing Vegetables for Farmers Markets | eHow.com.

YOUR HEALTH

It's time to get moving!

Make a plan to improve your health

BY HOLLY ISRAEL

NATIONAL RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Walk off health worries? Dance away from disease? According to the Harvard School of Public Health, you can do just that. Exercise not only helps you maintain a healthy weight, it also lowers stress levels, and prevents chronic problems like heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and certain types of cancer.

Despite these benefits, only 30 percent of Americans engage in regular physical activity, while 40 percent almost never exercise. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends healthy adults fit in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days a week.

This includes brisk walking—ideal since it requires no equipment, specific time or place, and can be done at each individual's pace—as well as chopping wood, mowing the lawn with a push mower, or even dancing. In a workplace

setting, use stairs instead of the elevator, park your car further away from the entrance, or take a walk for 20-30 minutes during a lunch hour.

For a more vigorous approach, work out for at least 20 minutes three days per week. A "vigorous" workout should result in a higher heart rate, rapid breathing, and conversation occurring in shorter sentences. Jogging is a good example of a more vigorous activity.

Pump it Up

As you age, strength training helps you maintain the ability to perform everyday tasks such as climbing stairs, carrying your own groceries, etc. It's a good idea to get guidance from an expert in this area.

Flexibility training is the final component to any exercise routine. Stretching for about

five minutes before and after workouts reduces soreness and injury, and also will aid in preserving the range of movement needed to function normally.

If your present lifestyle could be categorized as sedentary, begin exercising slowly, and gradually increase the duration of your workouts. The health benefits will be noticeable. Remember that some movement is better than none, and more is even better!

Editor's Note: Before beginning any exercise regimen, please consult a physician.

Holly Israel writes on general health topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



Spring cleaning?

Keep the environment clean, too

Before you finally dispose of an outdated, energy-hogging refrigerator, freezer or air conditioner, consider the impact it will have on the environment.

Some old appliances contain chemicals that are harmful if leaked into the environment. Refrigerators, air conditioners and freezers made before 1995 contain chlorofluorocarbons (better known as CFCs) and most air conditioners manufactured after 1995 contain hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), and both chemicals can harm the Earth's ozone layer. Many appliances harbor other chemicals like oil, mercury and hydrofluorocarbons that may not deplete the ozone but still require careful disposal.



Properly disposing of appliances keeps these chemicals out of your air and water, and ensures reusable materials in the appliance are recycled. First, check with the service delivering your new appliance—many companies will remove your old one for a small fee. Be sure to ask if the old appliance will go to a recycling center instead of a landfill.

If that's not an option, contact your local recycling center. For a list of southeast Oklahoma recycling centers, please turn to page 6 of this issue.



What's Cookin' IN SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA

Ham with Apple Raisin Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbs. all-purpose flour
- 1 large oven roasting bag
- 4 med tart apples, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups apple juice
- 1 cup raisins
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 boneless fully cooked ham (about 6 pounds)

DIRECTIONS

Shake flour in the oven roasting bag. Place in an ungreased 13 x 9-inch baking pan. Place the apples, apple juice, raisins, brown sugar and cinnamon in the bag; mix well. Place ham in bag. Close bag. Cut ½-inch slits in top of bag.

Bake at 325°F. s for 1¾ to 2 hours or until meat thermometer reads 140°F. Let ham stand for 10 minutes before slicing. Serve with sauce. Yield: 16 servings.

—Source: Taste of Home

There's an easier way.

CEC offers a number of convenient bill payment options including:

- Budget billing
- Automatic draft
- Online payments
- Pay by phone



For more details, please visit www.choctawelectric.coop or call **800-780-6486**.

swap shop

FREE ADS FOR CEC MEMBERS

■ Real Estate

Clayton area, hwy frontage log home built in 2000 w/ 2BR, 2BA, laundry room & pantry. Bonus 1 rm log cabin w/ electric & heat. Kiamichi River at back of property. 5.61 acres. Reduced \$145,000. 918-569-4272 or 918-415-4252.

One lot w/ house (circa 1900-1910). Attic is large, could be living quarters. On Pine Bluff street in NE Paris TX. \$7,500 firm. 580-298-4727.

3BR, 3BA rock & cedar home on 1 acre. 4,800+ sq. ft. with a 20' x 30' insulated shop. Lights, water, plenty of storage. Goodland area. 580-320-5472.

■ Vehicles

2000 Hyundai Elantra, 4 door, automatic, 170,000 mi, some paint & body damage. \$1,200 obo, 580-743-0861.

1993 Chrysler Imperial w/ brown interior, very clean. 118,000 mi., new tires. \$2,000. 580-345-2394 after 5 pm.

2004 Ford Ranger Stepside XLT short bed, 120,000 mi. Runs perfect, clean title, great gas mileage, Rhino bed liner. Bluebook value \$5,000, asking \$4,500. 580-236-1586 after 4 pm.

■ Miscellaneous

White sewing machine w/ 4 drawer cabinet. 580-241-5402

Choctaw Memorial Hospital Cookbook, \$15. All proceeds go to Relay for Life. Contact Stormy Throne at 580-317-9507 or email: s.throne@choctawmemorial.com.

2 love seats gray w/pull out beds \$50 each. King mattress set, \$25. 2 Solo flex exercise equipment, \$200. New Holland sickle mower, \$500. Digistar Single Cattle Scale, \$1,000. Insulated panels, \$3.50 ea. 918-569-4261.

■ Pets

2 male cocker spaniels brown/white/parti. \$150 ea. Also Chi. Pups \$200. All puppies are registered. 580-271-2305.

HAVN Low cost Spaying & Neutering. Sterilizing your pet makes them live longer. Call 580-873-2491 or 580-317-5026.

Spay and neuter your pets! Ark of McCurtain County offers discount spay/neuter services and mobile spay/neuter services. For more information, please call 580-236-2275, or visit www.arkofmccurtaincounty.org.

How to submit a classified ad

Ads must be received by the 10th of the month for publication in the next month's issue. Please print your ad as you would like it to read. Indicate the category: Real Estate, Vehicles, Boats and Recreational Vehicles, Livestock, Pets or Miscellaneous. Make sure the ad includes a contact telephone number or email address. Please indicate if you are buying, selling or trading.

Please include your name, mailing address, telephone number and CEC account number.

CEC reserves the right to edit or reject ads due to inappropriate content or excessive wording. *Commercial or business ads are not accepted.*

Submit your ad online at www.choctawelectric.coop, or mail or e-mail your ad to: Jennifer Boling, CEC Inside Lines, PO Box 758, Hugo, OK 74743. Email: jboling@choctawelectric.coop.