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country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Savings and Safety for the Snowy Season



42%
of your annual electric cost goes to heating your home and water.



20 feet
away from your home, in an open, outdoor space, is best place to operate generators.

Car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks all increase when winter storms roll in.

So do house fires and electric bills.

As co-op members, you have access to information and resources others don't, to save money and stay safe.

Weatherization

East Central members can have a free home energy assessment done to start building your strategy for weatherizing your home.

Weatherization rebates are available to those members who take advantage of the free energy assessment. Call for more information.

65,000
home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year.



Heating Systems

Heating your home uses more energy and costs more money than any other system in your home. No matter what kind of heating system you have, you can save money and increase your comfort by properly maintaining your equipment. By combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing, and thermostat settings, you can save about 30% on your energy bill.

Savings, Continued on Page 3

Always
inspect cords for damage prior to use to prevent shock and fire hazards.



At **30°F**
hypothermia can occur in less than 15 minutes. Preparation saves lives.

To learn more about your elected trustees, or to view a district map, please visit ecoec.com. To contact your trustee, please call 918-756-0833.

notes from the chair



by Lowell Hobbs, President, East Central Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees

Life-changing Events

If you are not hooked up to ecoLink yet, I urge you to call the East Central Electric office at 918-756-0833 and advise them of your desire to be on ecoLink. We don't know you are interested in the service unless you call and advise us so. Don't hesitate to call and re-affirm. Broadband internet is more important as people work from home, students complete their school work, and overall communication.

As I have mentioned before, the East Central Electric Board has voted to reach out to non-members in the communities and cities in our area that are not served or are underserved by high speed internet. This is a life-changing event, and we are proud to offer that service. Several towns and communities have already advised us of their interest, and plans are underway to provide broadband as we complete the buildout to our members.

Talk about a life-changing event! We have learned that western Tennessee has been chosen by Ford Motor Company as a new site for their \$5.6 billion investment on a 36-acre mega campus to build next generation electric F-Series pickups and advanced batteries providing 27,000 new jobs and contribute \$3.5 billion each year to Tennessee's gross state product. It will also provide 32,000 jobs to support construction. This will change the face of that part of western Tennessee forever.

Back home we hear rumors of interest in our service territory of a Bitcoin or Cryptocurrency and Amazon location, but nothing definite. At our recent OAC

meeting in Oklahoma City a speaker gave us a lot of information on Bitcoin and Cryptocurrency. I am not the only one that confessed we did not understand all that was provided to us. I remarked "I'm still confused, but at a much higher level!" Our service territory is located in a prime area for these kinds of enterprises-- I-40 and highways 75 and 69, the Arkansas navigation system, and other good things.

Donna and I celebrated Christmas with our family, and what a blessing it was.

Jesus's birth was the focal point and how comforting it is to know the family knows Jesus and the true meaning of Christmas.

We also have many genuine friends that are also believers. When we visit with them we always come away feeling better for having been with

them. God has certainly blessed us with genuine, loyal friends and family.

Many years ago my childhood friend, Johnny and his family, moved to our ranch. His youngest son Robbie and a neighbor's son Tommy started to Twin Hills School half day kindergarten. I accompanied Johnny to pick the two boys up at noon from school. They were standing in the seat of the one seated pickup. I asked Tommy if he had learned anything at school that day. "No sir, Lowell, they ain't never learnt me nothin, no not nary a thing!"

Lowell Hobbs represents ECE District #2. To reach him, please call his cellphone at 918-695-5289.

"The East Central Electric Board has voted to reach out to non-members in communities and cities in our area that are not served or are underserved by high speed internet."

- LOWELL HOBBS

New Application Deadlines for Operation Roundup

Beginning in 2022, application deadlines for Operation Roundup grants have changed.

Applications and supporting documents must be submitted to the co-op by the 1st day of February, May, August, and November at 4 p.m. to be considered.

Each month, co-op members make a voluntary contribution by rounding up the change at the end of their electric bill. That change funds Operation Roundup, a program to support local charitable organizations, civic groups, youth programs, community services, and needy families.

Operation Roundup has been used to help individual members and families with unexpected medical bills, storm damage repairs after a disaster, homes with a need for handicap accessible improvements, and expenses for necessities like food, clothing, and shelter after a fire.

Our members have also contributed funds to support local communities by: ensuring emergency response teams have life-saving equipment, helping homeless shelters afford resources to get people off the streets, and supporting programs that help struggling kids access the care they need to live fulfilling and productive lives.

A board of co-op members appointed by the member elected Board of Trustees meets quarterly to review applications and disburse funds.

Applications and additional information can be found at www.ecoec.com/content/operation-roundup.

Show your Sweet Shine: Lightbulb Decorating Contest

Recycle used lightbulbs and win prizes.

1. Decorate a used lightbulb in any family friendly manner you wish.
2. Send a photo of your creation to kharrison@ecoec.com or via Facebook Messenger to East Central Electric Cooperative.
3. The deadline to participate is Monday, February 21.
4. Visit Facebook, Twitter or Instagram on Feb. 22 to vote for your favorite lightbulb decoration.
5. Voting lasts until midnight Feb. 24. Winner announced via social media Feb. 25.

Winner will receive a pack of energy efficient lightbulbs, an East Central cap, and a \$25 gift card.



Savings and Safety for the Snowy Season, Continued

Heating equipment is also the second leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year, resulting in hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries, and millions of dollars in property damage.

You can make your home a little safer by keeping anything that can burn at least 3 feet from heat sources, never leaving a space heater unattended, never plugging a space heater into an extension cord, and having a qualified service professional inspect your heating systems annually.

Generators

Portable generators are commonly used in the winter as a result of storm-induced power outages. When used properly, portable and standby generators are a great option to provide backup power. However, safety is a huge concern.

East Central Members can purchase GenerLink meter collar devices to safely

and simply connect their generator to the main circuit panel in their home.

For additional safety, members using generators should also remember some critical safety guidelines.

Always keep generators at least 20 feet away from your home. Never operate a generator in an enclosed space. Make sure the generator has 3-4 feet of clear space on all sides for proper ventilation. Always use grounded cords and inspect cords for damage before plugging in. Always use GFCI protection. And make sure to start/stop generators when no electrical loads are connected.

Preparedness

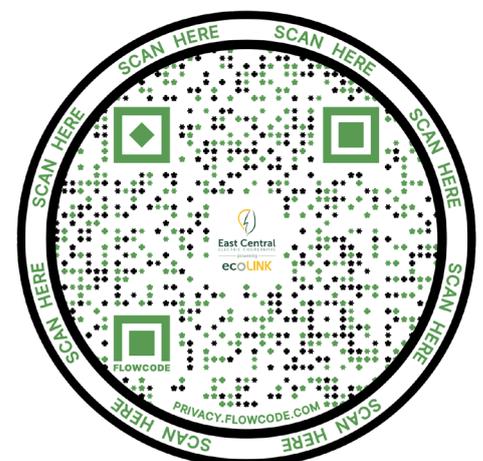
A winter storm can last a few hours or several days. It can cut off heat, power, and communication services. Winter storms put older adults, children, sick individuals, and pets at greater risk.

Know your risk for winter storms by paying attention to weather reports and listening for emergency information and alerts.

Know your winter weather terms, like how a “Watch” differs from a “Warning,” and what that means for your family.

Know the signs and symptoms of Hypothermia and Frostbite and what actions you should take to protect yourself and the people you love.

For more Winter Weather Preparedness tips as well as electrical safety activities for kids, visit www.ecoec.com or use the QR Code below.





Operation Roundup funds support local charitable organizations, civic groups, youth programs, community services, and needy families. For more information on this voluntary bill roundup program, please visit us online at www.ecoec.com.

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS
\$2,081,606.43

APPLICATIONS REVIEWED
1,261

APPLICATIONS GRANTED
865

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED
\$284,500

AVERAGE MEMBER CONTRIBUTION
48¢



Fern's Lasagna

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 3 lb. ground beef | 1 medium can tomato sauce |
| 4 pkg. dry spaghetti sauce mix | 1 large can V-8 juice |
| 1 large can chopped tomatoes | 1 lb. box lasagna noodles |
| | 2 lb. Monterey Jack and mozzarella cheese, grated |

DIRECTIONS

Brown meat, drain and add spaghetti sauce mixes and canned goods. Simmer 5 minutes. Layer uncooked noodles, sauce, and cheese into a broiler pan. Bake at 350° for one hour, tightly covered with foil. Remove from oven, let stand 10 minutes before serving.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you're using extension cords or adapters to add receptacles, consider having a qualified electrician add more outlets to your home. Upgrading your outlets with GFCI protection can save your electronic devices from faults.

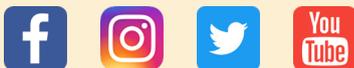
SOURCE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

SOURCE: ECE 80TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



East Central ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Power Outage Hot line
(918) 756-0833

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PAYMENT OPTIONS

Pay online using SmartHub.

Pay by phone using VISA, Mastercard or Discover at 866-999-4584. Available 24/7. Convenience fee associated with payments.

Pay with cash or credit/debit card at participating Moneygram or Pay Site locations. Convenience fee associated with payments.

Pay using our drive-thru window Monday - Friday from 8 am to 4:45 pm.

Pay via automatic draft of your checking or savings account. Sign up online or download the ebill form at www.ecoec.com, or set up online payments through your bank. No convenience fee.