



Powerline Press

NEWSLETTER

A Supplement of Oklahoma Living Published by Lake Region Electric Cooperative for its members.

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Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Start the New Year with more energy efficient light bulbs! Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and light-emitting diodes (LEDs) cut lighting energy use by at least 75 percent.

Learn more at energysavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Offices Closed
LREC will be closed January 2nd in observance of the New Year.



Cooperative Membership Matters

By and large, we do not get to choose who provides our electric service. Folks on opposite sides of the road may be served by different electric providers, some by investor-owned utilities and others by a city-owned municipal electric system. You are a member of Lake Region Electric Cooperative, a not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by you and your fellow members.

There is one major difference between these entities. Every home or business that receives power from LREC, owns a portion of the utility. As a result, anyone who receives cooperative electric service becomes a member, not a customer.

Being a member matters. LREC does not exist to make profits for distant investors. We exist to provide you with safe, reliable, and affordable electric service and doing so in a way that raises the quality of life in our communities. Because electric cooperatives operate on a not-for-profit basis, they have no need to increase revenues above what it takes to run the business in a financially sound manner. This structure helps keep your electric bill affordable.

Membership also matters because electric cooperatives care about improving the quality of life in the areas they serve, from sponsoring the scoreboard at the high school football stadium to helping the local food bank.

Membership matters because it entitles you to certain benefits from energy audits that help you find ways to lower your electricity use, or college scholarships for your children. You also receive this newsletter because you are a member of an electric cooperative that wants you to stay informed about important news and



Juanita Keener, LREC employee

events. The Co-op Connections card even gives you discounts from national chain retailers and restaurants and local stores in your community. Check out www.lrecok.coop to find discounts in your neighborhood.

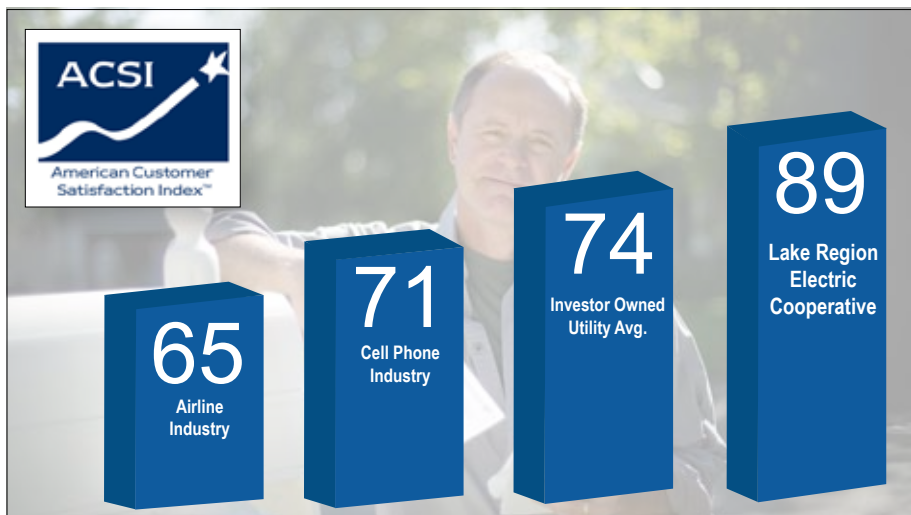
Membership matters because you have a voice and a vote in how your cooperative is governed. Through democratic control, members like you elected others from our cooperative to serve on the board of trustees. Control stays in local hands. Your board of trustees, along with those who work for your cooperative, are your friends and neighbors.

Membership matters because you receive returns on your investment. Electric cooperatives aim to operate at-cost so any excess revenues or margins are retired to members in the form of capital credits, based on their electric use.

Lake Region Electric Cooperative ACSI Survey Results

At Lake Region Electric Cooperative, we know our members are our owners and we are actively engaged in measuring and improving the satisfaction of our members. The cooperative has an independent company conduct phone surveys with a statistically valid sampling of its membership. The survey questions gauge member satisfaction overall and determines the cooperative's American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score. The survey was conducted in November of 2011, during which time interviewers collected telephone survey responses from 300 members selected at random from the cooperatives's residential member files.

The survey results show that Lake Region Electric Cooperative members continue to be very satisfied overall with the co-op. Responses to the ACSI questions are high, however slightly lower than last year. LREC's ACSI satisfaction score is down only slightly – now 89, compared with 90 last year, but still well above aver-



age compared with other cooperatives around the country. Members responding to the Lake Region survey are primarily middle-aged and older. About one in ten respondents are under age 35. The median age was 61.

Questions about customer satisfaction, service expectations, ideal utility attributes, and loyalty make up the ACSI score. By tracking the ACSI score, Lake Region can compare its performance to past quarters and years as well as benchmark its performance against other cooperatives, the utility industry as a whole, and other unrelated industries as well. The chart above illustrates such a comparison of scores.

Heat rises and when it slips past your ceiling, it melts snow on the rooftop. It is an easy way to tell if you need more insulation.

Find out what you can do at TogetherWeSave.com.

GUESS WHICH HOUSE HAS BETTER INSULATION IN THE ATTIC.



Calling LREC to report an outage

Before calling to report an outage, please check your breakers. If you check your breakers and your power remains off, contact your neighbor to see if their power is also out. This can help determine if the outage is widespread or specific to your residence.

Please be patient if the lines are busy. During major outages, our telephone lines are overloaded with members calling to report their situation. You may also report an outage through the automated system. For the automated system to serve you more quickly during an outage, LREC needs the correct primary phone number for your account. We never take the phones off of the hook, and answer calls 24 hours a day. All calls are answered in the order they are received. Once we receive your report, your location

is logged into our computer system and crews are then dispatched for repairs.

If you have special needs that require electricity for your well being, for example life support systems, please notify us of your circumstance by completing a form on our website and submitting it to one of our offices. If you have any question, please call Lake Region Electric Cooperative at 918-772-2526 or 800-364-LREC.



Do not fall for 'energy-saving' scams

You can cut your heating bill without investing a dime in equipment or materials. Lots of companies are advertising expensive heaters that they claim will save you huge sums on your electric bill. But if you read the fine print, you will often learn that one product on its own rarely has such power, and that most of them take years, even decades, to deliver the promised savings.

Save your money. It does not have to cost you much to stay warm indoors this winter and shave a few bucks from your heating costs. **Five examples:**

1 Change your air filter. The filter's job is to collect dust, pet hair and other particles that live in your home's air so they can not get into your furnace and clog it up. But if your filter is covered in particles, air can not get through either, and your furnace needs air to operate properly. If it can not operate properly, it will run too often or too long, and it might leave you feeling cold and tempted to crank up the thermometer. So clean or replace your air filter every few months (more often if you live someplace with dusty or dirty outdoor air). Do the same with your air conditioner's filter in the summer.

2 Turn on your ceiling fans, yes, in the winter! Set it to the "reverse" setting so the blades create a subtle updraft, which pushes the warm air that naturally rises to the ceiling back down into the room. The fan does not actually warm up



the room, but it makes the air feel warmer so you will be more comfortable.

3 Open the blinds. If it is sunny outside, that natural warmth will radiate into the house through your windows, which means your heating system will not have to work so hard to keep the house comfortable. Close them when the sun goes down to keep the cold out.

4 Get out your caulk gun. A hole or a crack in a wall, window or door sends your cozy, conditioned air right outside and invites cold outdoor air indoors. Plug them with caulk or weather-stripping. A tip: Hold a lighted candle or stick of incense near a window or door and notice if it sways. If it does, you have got a draft that needs sealing.



5 Turn your thermostat down at bedtime. If you set it back 10 degrees for eight hours at a time and do it every night (reverse it in the summer), you can slash around 10 percent of your heating and cooling bills, the Department of Energy estimates. A tip: If you have a 1825201 programmable thermostat, set it to do this consistently so you will not forget.



Be Prepared for Ice Storms and Winter Power Outages

A little rain and temperatures hovering around 32 degrees are the right blend for an ice storm that can bring down trees and power lines. While ice-covered branches may be beautiful, heavy ice accumulation will pull down utility wires, disrupting electric and communication services.

A power line does not need to be sparking or arcing to be energized, even if it is sagging close to or on the ground, and other utility lines can also become energized by being in contact with an electrical line. Lines that appear to be “dead” can become energized as crews work to restore power, or sometimes from improper use of emergency generators. It is best to assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous.

Lake Region Electric Cooperative stresses the importance of being prepared for these potentially dangerous storms and the potential power outages that they may cause. Having the right supplies and knowing how to safely stay warm are keys to weathering a winter storm emergency.

Make sure you are ready for the next winter emergency.

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights, and a supply of fresh batteries on hand.
- Make sure you have extra blankets.
- Fill containers with water for washing, and keep a supply of bottled drinking water on hand.

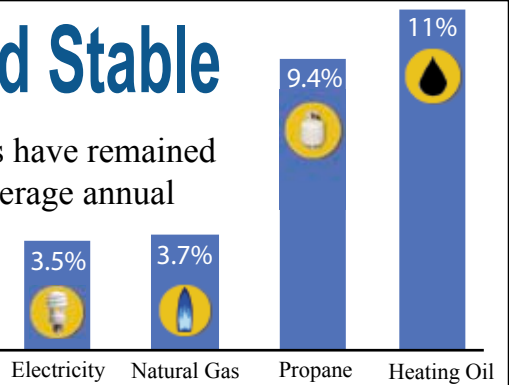


Courtesy Photo

- Keep a supply of non-perishable food items, along with a hand opener for canned food.
- Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas.
- Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternate heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.

Electricity Prices Have Remained Stable

Compared to other types of home heating fuel, electricity prices have remained the most stable over the past ten years. This graph shows the average annual price increase from 2000 to 2010 for each fuel type.



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) September 2011 data.

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Hidden Account Number

Look for your account number hidden in this issue of the *Powerline Press*. If you find your number, Lake Region Electric will credit your next bill.

To claim your credit, notify LREC's Hulbert office by phone or mail during the month of publication.

The amount increases by \$10 with each issue your prize goes unclaimed to a maximum of \$50.

For more information, call **800-364-LREC** or **918-772-2526**

Cooperative bylaws are available upon request at Lake Region Electric Cooperative's office in Hulbert.