



# 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

Smart home landscaping can lower your electric bills. Trees on the east and west sides of your home provide shade, and reduce your cooling costs during hot summer months. Shade for your air conditioner can save 10 percent of your cooling costs. And by adding vegetation to the north side of your home, you can reduce winter winds that trigger higher heating costs.

Source: Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

### Annual Meeting

Look for our Annual Meeting election results, prize winners, and photos in our June issue of the Powerline Press.

## High School Juniors Win a Trip to Washington, D.C.

On March 28, 2012 Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC) held their Annual Youth Tour Banquet. Three students were chosen out of thirteen to receive an all expense paid trip to Washington, D. C., June 15 – 21, 2012.

The Youth Tour competition is available to all students in LREC’s service territory, who are completing their junior year in high school. Glen Clark, Youth Tour Coordinator, visits local schools in the service territory and gives a presentation about electric cooperative history and the annual Youth Tour trip.

The contest consisted of an essay written on a topic chosen by the cooperative. From the essays entered, the schools chose their finalists to compete in the final question and answer session held at the LREC office in Hulbert. A panel of three judges interviewed the students based on their subject knowledge, personality, speaking ability, and presentation. All of the participating students who made it to the interviews received a \$50 cash prize for making it to the final judging.

LREC is pleased to have these top three students representing the cooperative for the 2012 Youth Tour: Alexandra Eakes of Tahlequah High School, daughter of Kent and Lisa Eakes; K.C. Barnes of Porter High School, son of Kent and Diana Barnes; and Silvia Macareno of Ft. Gibson High School, daughter of Urbano and Maricela Macareno.

The trip will begin when they join other winners from across Oklahoma for a “Get Acquainted Banquet” in Oklahoma City. The delegates will board a plane the following morning and fly to Washington, D.C.

Six eventful days at the nation’s capitol will include a tour of the capitol, riverboat trip on the Potomac River and a tour of Mount Vernon. Students will also meet with Oklahoma’s Congressional Delegation and visit many other points of interest.



Left to right: Alexandra Eakes, K.C. Barnes, and Silvia Macareno

Photo by: Larry Mattes



Courtesy Photo: NRECA

**811**  
Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

**ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG**

# A Business Customer-Owners Can Trust...

The electric utility environment is changing continuously. Deregulation and competition are no longer on the front burner in the minds of the lawmakers. The buzz word in the last few years has been global warming and greenhouse gases. Placing a cap on carbon production or taxing it would have a direct impact on the price of electricity that we provide you. There has to be a balanced approach so that we can be good stewards of the environment and at the same time provide affordable electricity to our members. It is our responsibility, as your electric cooperative, to be among the leading team when it comes to shaping the future of our industry. We have to make sure that the needs of our member/owners are protected in this new changing environment. Our priority is working through National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to preserve the cooperative environment and provide electric power to our members at the lowest possible cost.

The crash of the stock market and the news of the bankruptcies and the bail-outs in the past few years have brought forward a mistrust of the business world by the public. It is important to note that an electric cooperative, due to its unique structure, is immune from such happenings. An electric cooperative's customers are also its owners and stockholders. This is different from an investor-owned utility whose customers and stockholders are two different groups of people. The primary objective of an investor owned utility is maximizing the profits and improving its stock values and dividends. There is nothing wrong with that. This is the basis of our market economy. A for profit corporation is setup to provide a product or service to its customers and in return make a profit for its owners or stockholders.

Of course, this shows that the objectives of stockholders and customers are usually not the same. In fact, they are opposites of each other. Customers benefit from lower prices where the benefits of stockholders are higher revenues. That is where the difference in an electric cooperative shines. Our

customers and owners are the same. Our mission is to provide the service at the lowest possible cost. There is no incentive or benefit for an electric cooperative to misrepresent its financial statements to gain stock prices. In fact, the new law requires that the chief executive and financial officers of a publicly traded organization personally sign and verify the accuracy of the financial statements. We, at the cooperatives across the nation, have been doing this for over fifty years.

We are pleased to report that Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC) has had a successful year in 2011. Our rates have remained steady since February of 2009 despite the upwards pressure on the material, supplies, labor, and healthcare costs. LREC remains to be financially strong with an equity ratio of 55.45% and continuously improving the quality of service we provide to our members. While our rates have ranked lower than average in the nation and within Oklahoma, we have ranked among the highest in the American Customer Satisfaction Index. We have scored an ACSI score of 89 as compared to the nationwide co-op average of 83 and the investor owned utilities average of 74.

We cannot predict the future, but one thing is certain. The need to communicate and transmit data is becoming more important every year, whether it is the need for the smart grid for cooperatives or access to the internet by our members. Cooperatives brought electricity to the rural areas in the 1930s, they may have to step up and bring broadband access to members in this age of technology. In the future, we will continue to be vigilant in exploring other needs and opportunities that would make LREC stronger and our members happier.

Excellent customer service, a strong financial condition, and rate stability have been among the top drivers directing Lake Region Electric Cooperative's long-range planning and day-to-day operations. We are pleased to announce that we have met or exceeded those goals for 2011.

Chief Executive Officer  
*Hamid Vahdatipour*  
Board President  
*Gary Cooper*



## Where your electric dollar went in 2011



## Last Chance to Receive an Energy Star Clothes Washer and Dishwasher Rebate

Lake Region Electric Cooperative offers rebates and services through our Take Control & Save Energy Efficiency Program. These rebates come from Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. (AECI), our electricity generation cooperative. AECI has updated the criteria for certain rebates and the clothes washer and dishwasher rebates will end June 1, 2012. Rebates will be honored through Sept. 1, 2012 for those appliances purchased prior to June 1, 2012.



## Has your phone number changed? Don't keep us in the dark!

### Update your LREC account information today

The Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC) Outage Reporting System makes it easy to report an interruption in service. By calling our automatic reporting system, you are able to report an outage without worrying about busy signals or being placed on hold.

In order for the system to work, LREC needs your correct contact information. Without your current phone number, we have no way of contacting you if there is a problem with your account. When we send a broadcast phone message with important service information for a particular neighborhood, you will not receive the message. Most importantly, our automated Outage Reporting System will not be able to link your account with your phone number when you call to report an outage. We will be unable to track your outage call by your phone number, which could make response time slower.

With your home and cell phone number on file, our Out-

age Reporting System will use Caller ID information to immediately identify your account when you call to report an outage. You do not have to remember your account number when calling in an outage. Your phone number will be sufficient for us to find your account if we have the correct phone number on file. With the press of a few keys, you will be able to verify the information and complete your report in a minute or less with our automated system. Our 1609805 system will then use the information from you and others affected to efficiently track and respond to the outage. See the simple instructions below to update your account information today.



## Updating your LREC account information is easy:

**1**

**918-772-2526**  
**800-364-LREC**

**By Phone:**  
Call our Customer Service employees or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

**2**

**Online:**  
Use the convenient update form on our website at [www.lrecok.coop](http://www.lrecok.coop)

## Automatic Bank-Draft March Sign-up Winners

Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC) held a prize drawing during the month of March to give away four Wal-Mart gift cards to members who agreed to sign-up for Automatic Bank-Draft. Four LREC members were chosen at random; Mary Jones, Old Mission Holiness Church, Janel-da Gower and Carla Gritts. Congratulations to these members.

The LREC Automatic Bank Draft service is designed for members who would prefer to spend their time on something other than writing checks each month. When you sign up to pay your monthly electric bill automatically from your bank account, it saves you time, plus it means one less check to write and keep track of each month. You will see your electric bill payment debited on your bank account statement each month.

### “ Never Forget Another Payment ”

To receive an Automatic Bank Draft sign up application, you can call our office at 918-772-2526 or toll-free at 800-364-LREC. You may also sign up online at [www.lrecok.coop](http://www.lrecok.coop)



# Tornado Safety Tips

## Practice and Prepare

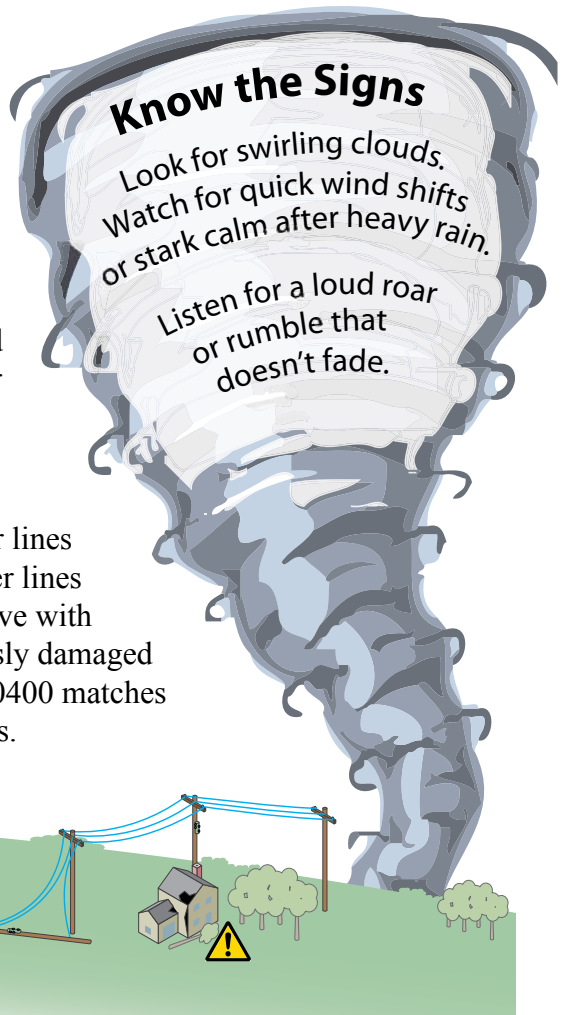
Know where you will meet your family during the tornado (and after). Practice a tornado drill annually. Keep a weather radio in your storm shelter, along with safety supplies.

## Seek Shelter

Go to your basement or storm cellar, a small interior room, or under stairs on the lowest floor of the house. If you live in a mobile home, get out and look for a stable building. If outside, find low ground with your arms protecting your head.

## After the Storm

Stay away from downed power lines and avoid flooded areas - power lines could be submerged and still live with electricity. Do not enter seriously damaged buildings and avoid using 2430400 matches and lighters in case of gas leaks.



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### Office Hours

Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Telephone

800-364-LREC or  
918-772-2526

### Website:

[www.lrecok.coop](http://www.lrecok.coop)

### Locations

Hulbert, Wagoner &  
Tahlequah, OK.

### Main Office Address

P.O. Box 127  
Hulbert, OK 74441

### 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](tel:800-364-LREC) or [918-772-2526](tel:918-772-2526)

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