



The official
publication
of the members of
Indian Electric
Cooperative

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Lower Gas Prices

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May is Electrical Safety Month

Focus on Four Seasons of Safety

“May is Electrical Safety Month, but practicing safety should be something you do throughout the year to keep you and your family safe at home, at play and at work, says IEC Safety Coordinator Bill Graham.

Electrical safety hazards can be found everywhere. But what causes them?

“Many are the result of growing use of electrical power, combined with electrical systems that are over 20 years old,” he says.

Wiring hazards are both a major cause of electrocutions and home fires, killing hundreds and injuring thousands each year. Misuse of surge suppressors, power strips and extension cords is also a cause of electrocutions and fires. Contact with power lines and major appliances contribute to hundreds of deaths annually, both at home and in the workplace. Eliminating these electrical hazards will help reduce deaths and injuries.

A focus on electrical safety, both at home and in the workplace, can prevent the hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and billions of dollars in economic losses that occur each year because of electrical hazards.

Reliance on tools and technology can also make our use of electrical power less hazardous. Investing in ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs), circuit testers and where necessary, personal protective equipment (PPE), can significantly reduce risk.

“Warmer weather brings an increase in outdoor work, both on the job and at home. Increasing electrical safety awareness can help ensure those activities do not result in injuries and deaths,” he says, noting the following safety rules can reduce electrical deaths and injuries:

Remember ladders—even those made of wood—that contact a power line can prove fatal.

Unplug outdoor tools and appliances when not in use.

Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed

cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housing and repair or replace damaged items.

“The severe weather we usually experience this time of year, brings its own electrical safety hazards,” Graham says. “Top electrical hazards during the spring and summer are often related to storms. Lightning strikes, power outages and electrical hazards in the aftermath of storms are often the causes of deaths and injuries.”

Hot weather brings increased use of air conditioners. Contact with electric current from air conditioners accounts for a significant number of electrocutions and electrical injuries annually. Remembering to “test before you touch” can avoid deaths and injuries due to electrical hazards.

Test Before You Touch

Whether at home or in the work place, there are a number of safety precautions that can reduce the chance of deaths, injuries and economic losses due to electrical hazards.

✓This is important – Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to help prevent electrocutions.

✓Understand your electrical system—know which fuse or circuit breaker controls each switch, light and outlet.

✓Make sure circuits are turned off before starting work, and take measures to make sure they are not turned back on while working.

✓Use a circuit tester. Make sure it is working by testing it before and after you use it to test the circuit.

✓Always test before you touch.

“Electricity is an integral part of our lives today,” says Graham. “It makes lives easier and more convenient, it powers technology and can save our lives. But it can also injure and maim us or even kill us. That’s why it’s so important to learn how to live safely with electricity and to teach our families and co-workers how to do so.”

The Competition does it Again

by Jack Clinkscale, General Manager

I just picked up the newspaper and saw in a screaming bold print headline where a neighboring investor-owned utility is reducing its rate by nearly 14 percent. Wow, I thought to myself, this doesn't look good in light of the 7 percent overall rate increase that IEC will implement in May. How do they do it? I read the article with interest and as Paul Harvey says, I learned "the rest of the story."

It seems the rate will drop because of the declining natural gas prices. This lower natural gas price will allow the utility to reduce its fuel cost adjustment from 2.5 to 1.5 cents per kiloWatt hour. The fuel cost adjustment is an additional monthly charge per kiloWatt hour that allows the utility to recover or refund money to consumers when the cost of the fuel used to generate the electricity rises or lowers significantly. Despite this reduction in fuel cost, the utility emphasized that electric bills will be higher than previous summers because gas prices are still higher than

normal. This still sounds like good news for the utility's consumers.

Then I continued the article on the second page. In December, when natural gas prices surged to new highs, the utility raised their fuel cost adjustment which led to a 32 percent increase in residential bills. The fuel cost for residential consumers was raised to 6.3 cents per kiloWatt hour! This is in ADDITION to their regular kiloWatt hour rate.

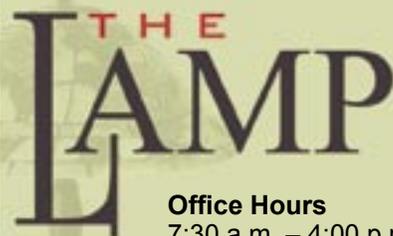
From my point of view it seems like the consumer got a 14 percent reduction following a 32 percent increase. Even though I am sure their consumers are happy with the 14 percent reduction, this still leaves the utility with rates 18 percent higher than they were before the December increase. As I have said before, I don't necessarily think the business practices of this utility are great, but the spin applied by their public relations department is outstanding.

We have no fuel cost adjustment at IEC. Our power costs have been rela-

tively stable which allows us to keep our rates to you stable also. We are seeing many of the same cost increases other utilities are experiencing and this is forcing us to raise our rates. However, the rates will remain stable so the members of IEC do not have "sticker shock" when they receive their monthly bills. No spin here. As Joe Friday says, "Just the facts, ma'am."

REMINDER:

The recent increase in electric bills will appear on the bill you receive in May. If you have questions about your bill or the increase, please call IEC at (918) 358-2514.



INDIAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Office Hours

7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Monday - Friday)
(918) 358-2514
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To Report an Outage

(918) 358-2514 or 1-800-482-2750

24-hour Service Center

(918) 295-9520

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Long-Time Co-op Supporter Bob Breeden Dies

Robert "Bob" Breeden, one of the original supporters of Indian Electric who worked to create IEC, passed away March 25 in Russellville, AR.

In the spring of 1939, Breeden attended the first meeting of Sinclair-Prairie area residents, farmers and oil field camp workers at the Scrappin' Ridge School south of Cleveland to discuss bringing electricity to the rural area. He was asked to chair a committee formed that night to determine the interest in creating an electric cooperative.

He accepted that position and worked for the next few years with the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, and the Rural Electrification Administration in Washington, D. C. to incorporate the co-op and secure financing to build the first power lines.

Breeden remained a friend of IEC for the rest of his life, and was honored during IEC's 50th Anniversary for that continued friendship and the role he played in the co-op's early days.

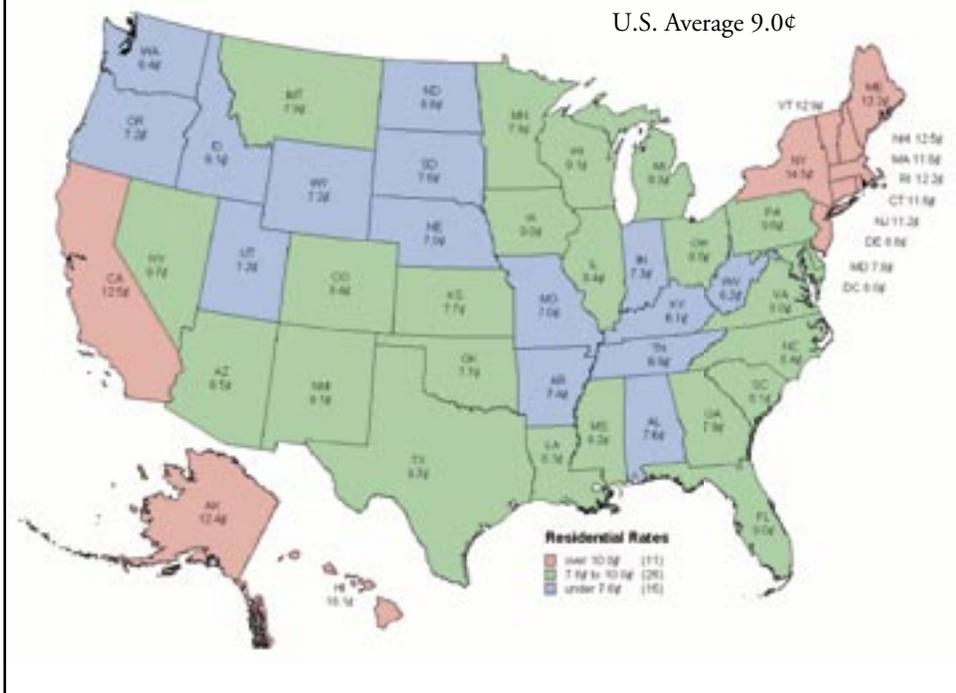
Watch or Warning... What's the Difference?

Oklahoma weather is active this time of year and we frequently hear the weatherman telling us about tornado watches or warnings. Do you know what they mean and what the difference is?

Watch: conditions are favorable to produce a tornado.

Warning: a tornado has been spotted visually or on radar. Seek cover.

2004 Residential Rates for All Utilities



This graphic, released by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), shows the average utility rates for each state. The information is based on 2004 rates – the most recent information available. Oklahoma's rates are 7.7¢, which is toward the bottom of the medium range category.

Follow our Neighbor to Energy Efficiency

The Canadian government has adopted the One-Tonne Challenge, asking all Canadians to take steps in their daily lives to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Following the Canadian tips, Americans can do their part, too, while saving money on their energy bills this summer.

- Use fans before turning down your air conditioning. They use at least \$5 less each month than the cost of compensating with your air conditioning.
- Keep blinds, curtains and windows closed during the day.
- Set your thermostat at 75 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Each degree lower than this will use 3 percent to 5 percent more energy.
- Water your lawn or garden early in the day so the water won't evaporate, and do it sparingly. More than half of the water you use could be lost in runoff or evaporation. Try using a bucket to collect rain water instead of running the hose.
- Turn off the pilot light in your natural gas fireplace or wall heater during the summer.
- Select your dishwasher's no heat or air-drying cycle.

IEC Offices Close for Memorial Day Holiday

IEC offices will be closed Monday, May 29 in recognition of Memorial Day. Dispatchers and service personnel will be on duty throughout the three-day weekend, if you should experience an outage or notice a safety hazard. Please call (918) 358-2514 or 1-800-482-2750 to report any service problem.

Have a fun and safe Memorial Day Holiday.

RECIPE



Strawberry-Chicken Salad

4 skinned & boned chicken breast halves	2 pears, sliced
Raspberry Vinaigrette, divided	2 avocados, peeled & sliced
8 cups mixed salad greens	1/2 small sweet onion, diced
1 qt. strawberries, sliced	1/2 cup pecans, toasted

Combine chicken and 1/2 cup Raspberry Vinaigrette in a large zip-top freezer bag. Seal and chill 1 hour.

Remove chicken from marinade, discarding marinade.

Grill, covered with grill lid, over medium-high heat (350° to 400°) 4 minutes on each side or until done. Let chicken stand 10 minutes; slice.

Place salad green and next 5 ingredients in a large bowl; and gently toss. Divide mixture evenly between 4 serving plates; top with grilled chicken slices. Serve with remaining Raspberry Vinaigrette.

Raspberry Vinaigrette

3/4 cup pear nectar	1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
1/3 cup vegetable oil	1 Tbsp. Sesame oil
1/3 cup raspberry vinegar	1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
3 Tbsp. chopped, fresh basil	1/4 tsp. salt

Place all ingredients in a screw-top jar; cover tightly, and shake vigorously until blended. Store in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks, shaking before serving.

Inspecting Your Attic can Save Energy Dollars

Your attic contains some of the most important energy details in your home. It's worth taking a look up there periodically to be sure everything is in order, and to see if upgrades might help you save energy and money.

Insulation. Your attic insulation provides an important barrier against both the cold of winter and the heat of summer, and improving your attic insulation is still one of the best home efficiency investments. Measure your attic insulation. It should be thick and even: at least 12 inches. Contact an insulation contractor to add more if it's low.

Duct Work. Duct leaks in the attic are among the most expensive energy defects. If your heating or cooling system includes ducts in the attic, inspect them carefully. If you find disconnected ducts or loose joints, seal them with metal duct tape or with duct mastic. Avoid common gray fabric duct tape since it tends to come loose.

Mechanical Ventilation. Your bath and kitchen fans carry moisture out of your home so it can't accumulate and cause damage. But these fans shouldn't just deposit this moisture into your attic. Locate your bath and kitchen fans from inside your home, then find where they penetrate the ceiling up in the attic. Confirm that your fans are attached to ducts that carry the moist air all the way outdoors. If needed, add flexible duct work that connects these fans to a nearby attic vent. Your attic insulation will be drier as a result, helping it perform as well as the day it was installed.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

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The person responsible for coordinating this organization's non-discrimination compliance efforts is Jack Clinkscale, general manager. Any individual or specific class of individuals who feels this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above, and/or file a written complaint with this organization to Indian Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 49, Cleveland, OK 74020 or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C., 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the event possible.