

# “Hotlines”

Published Monthly  
for the Members of  
Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Cherokee, OK  
www.aec.coop



**POWER OUTAGE?**  
**(580) 596-3333 OR**  
**1-888-736-3837**

**January 2018**

**Number 1, Volume 73**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## AREA NEWS BRIEFS

**January 1 New Year's Day  
Good-bye 2017. Hello  
2018! Safely welcome in  
the new year.**

**January 15 Martin L. King,  
Jr. Day Celebrate the  
life and achievements of  
Martin Luther King, Jr.**

**February 1-10 AEC Filing  
Period Members  
wishing to fill the  
positions of trustees  
in districts 2, 4, and 6  
must file during this  
time frame.**

**COLD WEATHER IS  
HERE TO STAY. TIME  
TO GET YOUR HEATING  
SYSTEM CHECKED. CALL  
AEC SERVICES, INC.  
(580) 596-3333 or  
1-800-853-4969**



## Technology changing co-op life

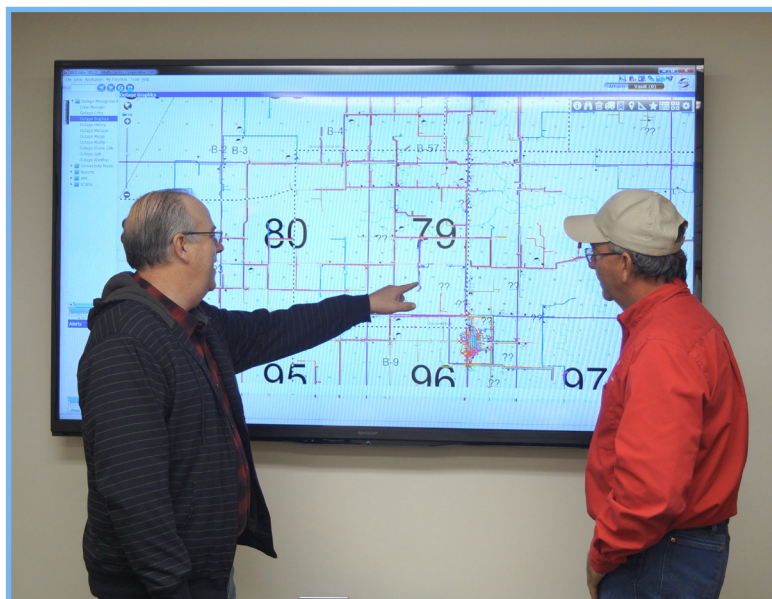
By Greg Goetz

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative has been serving its members for over 80 years in both Oklahoma and Kansas. During this time, there have been many changes that have affected what we do and how we do it.

Some of the biggest changes come with advances in technology that allow for more efficiency, accuracy, and overall better service. The electric grid in the United States is more reliable than ever because of automated controls, tie-lines or back feeds, and a transmission grid that is interconnected. When there is

a problem causing a circuit to open, many times we can isolate the area by opening switches at key locations. We are also able to remotely close breakers at substations. An electric system or grid is a complex system and we know we will have interruptions and outages caused by mother nature, human error and equipment failure.

Over the years as a system grows so does the amount of exposure. In the 1940's we had a few hundred miles of powerlines and today we have a few thousand. *(continued on page 2)*



Technology like the Outage Management System is used daily by Jim Daub, Manager of Engineering & Operations, and Scott Cudmore, Director of Operations.

## ALTERNATING CURRENTS...

### Kevin Perryman Area Serviceman



Boring life? Not Kevin Perryman! He was born in Fort Worth, TX but hit the ground running. He met his wife Shawna at age 16 and married her after high school. During his high school years, Kevin started a hay hauling business. After high school, he joined the Navy and was stationed in Everett, WA. He served aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln CVN-72.

While living in Wiggins, MS, Kevin's dad introduced him to contract line-work, and then Kevin encouraged his two younger brothers to join them in the business. Kevin worked through hurricanes, tornados, ice storms, and even a snow storm in the Appalachian Mountains.

After 3 years working as a journeyman lineman, Kevin was promoted to AEC's south area serviceman. He and Shawna live in Ringwood with their children, Wyatt and Riley. They are enjoying their country living with their 2 dogs and 3 chickens. Kevin uses his leisure time by working on his truck and fishing for catfish. He is also a volunteer for the Ringwood Fire Department. Kevin has traveled to more than a dozen states in the USA, but he would like to vacation in Australia someday.

Kevin loves his job. He likes the challenge of tracking down the problem and resolving the dilemma. This is just one of the things that makes Kevin such a great hand for AEC. His Gran once told him, "You can do anything as long as you put your mind to it." Kevin was certainly inspired by her, and AEC hit the jackpot when they hired him four years ago.

(continued from page 1) When an electric line blinks or goes off, it is because there is a fault somewhere on the circuit. The sectionalizing equipment such as fuses or breakers is doing its job and opening up to protect the system.

Other advances include automated meter reading (AMR) systems. Meters are now read remotely by the coop and more information can be gathered, including the ability to see if there is power to the meter. If there is a question about a location being on or off, a meter can be check by pinging it to see if it is energized. This saves a lineman from making a trip to check it out, thus allowing better use of his time. Mapping is another area that has seen major changes. With computers come digitized maps that show greater detail and have the ability to be used with outage management systems to show and track real time outages on digital maps. Linemen now carry laptops or iPads which have the system maps and are used to communicate with dispatchers to

send and receive service orders. This allows for better response time for outage restoration.

Staking engineers now use a GPS (Global Positioning System) Total Station to stake new power lines. One person can stake miles of line without any help and with extreme accuracy, no matter what the terrain is like. This system will calculate elevations and angles with ease. After a job is staked, the data can then be brought back to the office and downloaded to a staking program. This program will show all of the points to set poles and anchors as well as the material needed to build the job. The information can then be transferred to the mapping system after the job is built. It will then show the new facilities that have been added and all of the relevant information.

Sometimes we can get a little frustrated with change but most of the time it is for the best. Technology will continue to evolve and seems to change even faster as time goes by – maybe because I'm getting a little older.

## Time to get SmartHub

The 2017 weather was fairly kind to Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, and your co-op hopes it continues. However, if bad weather hits or equipment fails, AEC wants its members to be ready. Today's members look for flexibility, control, and convenience. SmartHub offers all three of these.

SmartHub provides users the convenience of both a website and a mobile app. With SmartHub, AEC members can make payments, view billing and payment history, monitor usage, and report service issues. Nobody likes it when the power goes out – not you and definitely not AEC. SmartHub makes it easy to check your service status and

report service issues so everything is back up and running as quickly as possible. With the use of SmartHub, AEC members are not waiting on phone lines to report outages. The outage can be reported quickly by SmartHub, and the member will receive a notice when the power is restored. This is a win-win for both the members and AEC employees who are working to restore power.

SmartHub is one of the best technologies available. Call AEC if you have any questions or need any assistance in getting started with SmartHub. Information is also available on our website [www.aec.coop](http://www.aec.coop).

# POST-HOLIDAY PRECAUTIONS

## Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore, now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension

cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use—like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- \* Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even more risky.
- \* Like any cord or electrical device, keep them away from water.

They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.

- \* A cord hidden under a rug or otherwise covered will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- \* Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- \* Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them. If you're relying on extension cords past the holiday season, that's a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

## Remove outdoor holiday lights safely

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

\* First, suit up. Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home.

\* Unplug. If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock.

\* Be gentle. Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.

\* Look up. If power lines hang

close to your roof, note if they are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire.

\* Inspect. Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples—which you should never use to hang lights—and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off of the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.

\* Consider that the weather was

probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.

\* Think about hiring a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. They have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees, and to handle electrical wires.

## Carbon monoxide

Heating season is a good time to make sure the carbon monoxide detectors in your house are working properly. Or, if you don't have any, it's time to install them.

Carbon monoxide is a potential byproduct of burning fossil fuels like gas and oil. It's colorless and odorless, but it's potentially toxic, and can cause everything from dizziness to death.

Stay safe this winter by taking a few precautions:

- Install a carbon monoxide alarm outside of every bedroom.
- Replace batteries in the alarm at least twice a year. While you're at it, change the batteries in your smoke alarms, too.
- If you notice any warning signs that carbon monoxide is at harmful

levels in your home—the air is stuffy and stale; condensation appears on windows; burner flames turn yellow; pilot lights flutter or extinguish—turn the appliance off and open the windows. Call a natural gas contractor to inspect the equipment.

- Properly maintain your furnace, boiler vents and chimneys.

**AEC Offices  
will be  
closed Monday,  
January 1, for  
New Year's Day.  
Have a  
blessed 2018.**

## Three districts hold election

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative members in districts 2, 4, and 6 should note that the filing period for potential candidates running for the position of Trustee will open soon. Members in these districts who wish to file for this position must obtain a filing document from the AEC office. Information containing the qualifications needed to be elected to this position is also available at the offices of AEC.

Office hours are 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. **Potential Candidates must return the document to the AEC office during the filing period of February 1-10, 2018.**

Alfalfa Electric will hold the election for these Trustees' positions at the Annual Meeting scheduled for Friday, April 13, 2018.



The **Hotlines** is published monthly by Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
PO Box 39, 121 E. Main,  
Cherokee, OK 73728  
[www.aec.coop](http://www.aec.coop)

### Staff

**Greg Goetz**  
Chief Executive Officer  
and General Manager

**Jim Daub**  
Manager of Engineering  
and Operations

**Gail Ridgway**  
Chief Financial  
Officer

**Brandon Wright**  
Director of Engineering

**Christy Schanbacher**  
Director of Accounting

**Terry Ryel**  
Manager of Marketing  
and Public Relations

**Scott Cudmore**  
Director of Operations

**Kyle Hadwiger**  
Attorney

**Robyn Turney**  
Communications Specialist  
Hotlines Editor

### Board of Trustees

**Doug McMurtrey**  
President - Cherokee, OK  
District 2

**John Regier**  
Vice President - Ringwood, OK  
District 4

**Steve Eck**  
Sec. Treas. - Sharon, KS  
District 6

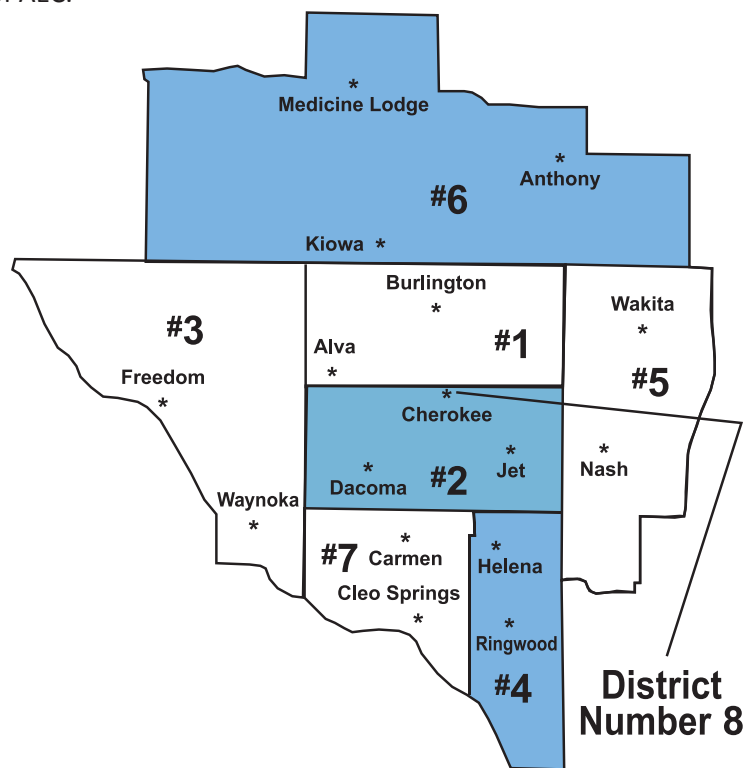
**Mark Angle**  
Byron, OK  
District 1

**Julie Russell**  
Freedom, OK  
District 3

**Joe Waggoner**  
Nash, OK  
District 5

**Joe Hise**  
Cleo Springs, OK  
District 7

**Joe Woods**  
Cherokee, OK  
District 8



**District 2** That portion of Oklahoma in Alfalfa and Woods Counties served by Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc. within the following townships:  
**Township 25**, Ranges 9-14;  
**Township 26**, Ranges 9-14.

**District 4** That portion of Oklahoma in Alfalfa and Major Counties served by Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.

within the following townships:  
**Township 20**, Ranges 9-10;  
**Township 21**, Ranges 9-10;  
**Township 22**, Ranges 9-10;  
**Township 23**, Ranges 9-10;  
**Township 24**, Ranges 9-10.

**District 6** That portion of Kansas in Harper and Barber Counties served by Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.