

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



**YOUR FUTURE IS WAITING**  
TRADE SKILLS TAUGHT AT NT CAMPUSES

MAY 2024

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Northeast Connection is published monthly to communicate with the members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

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- John L. Myers** - District 4, Vice-President
- Jimmy Caudill** - District 9, Secretary-Treasurer
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- Sean Friend** - Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Sami Jo Frisby** - Administrative Services
- Shane Burgess** - Engineering
- Ricky Hignite** - Information Technology
- Darryll Lindsey** - Member Services
- Nick Sutton** - Operations

## VINITA HEADQUARTERS

27039 South 4440 Road, Vinita, OK 74301

## GROVE OFFICE

600 South Main, Grove, OK 74344

## BUSINESS HOURS

**Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Offices are closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

## DISPATCHING AVAILABLE 24 HOURS AT

1.800.256.6405

### If you experience an outage:

1. Check your switch or circuit breaker in the house and on the meter pole to be sure the trouble is not on your side of the service.
2. When contacting the cooperative to report an outage, use the name as it appears on your bill, and have both your pole number and account number ready.

Please direct all editorial inquiries to Public Relations at 800.256.6405 or email [publicrelations@noec.coop](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop)

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## A PEAK AT ENERGY DEMAND

**Sean Friend**  
**Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), the biggest drivers of U.S. electricity demand are

temperature, time of day, and day of week. Electricity demand is highest in the summer, which has a distinct single-peak load shape, and winter demand typically has separate morning and evening peaks. Spring and fall demand can be particularly volatile when temperatures swing significantly from week to week. Weekend U.S. electricity demand tends to be lower than weekday demand because schools and many businesses are closed, although this pattern is often reversed when changes in weather coincide with certain days of the week.

Relatively new contributors to the energy demand discussion include artificial intelligence, bitcoin mining, and the Internet of Things (IoT). As these prevailing realities gain momentum, the electric grid must keep pace to support power-hungry data centers required to accommodate this trending move in a digital direction.

It is no surprise that the electric grid is receiving increasing attention, considering this technological development and expansion. Specifically, there's concern about the potential impact on the grid's *peak demand*. *Peak demand* refers to the maximum energy consumption within a system at any given time. This system could be an entire electric grid, a city, a neighborhood, a business, or even an individual household.

*Continued on page 4.*





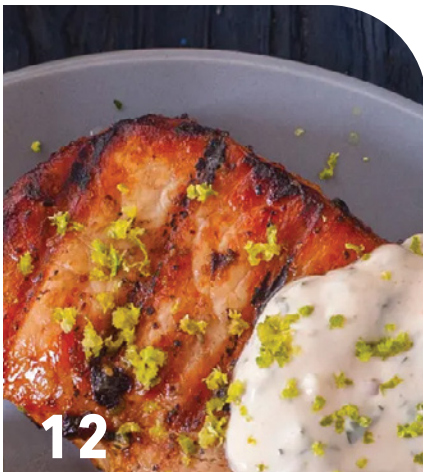
**ORU GIFT CARD WINNERS**



**2024 DISTRICT MEETINGS**



**YOUR FUTURE IS WAITING**



**DELAWARE CO. RECIPES**

**\$100 IS HIDING!**

Search the pages of *Northeast Connection* for a 6-digit account number with an asterisk on each side. For example: \*XXXXXX\*. Compare it to your account number, which appears on your monthly electric bill. If they match, contact the cooperative at 918.256.6405, by June 1, 2024, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

**MAY EVENTS**

**Arts Festival & Food Truck Friday**

**May 3 | Grove**  
Grove City Hall Lawn

**energyKIDS Day**

**May 4 | Vinita**  
Craig County Fairgrounds

**Celtic Day**

**May 4 | Grove**  
Har-Ber Village Museum

**Citywide Garage Sale**

**May 4 | Vinita**  
Vinita

**Art in The Garden**

**May 4 | Grove**  
Lendonwood Gardens

**Har-Ber Village Midwest Mystery Tour**

**May 11-12 | Grove**  
Har-Ber Village Museum

**National Ladies Homestead Gathering**

**May 16-18 | Grove**  
Har-ber Village Museum

**Spring Scramble Golf Tournament**

**May 17 | Grove**  
Quail Ridge Golf Course

**Morning Brew**

**May 24 | Fairland**  
Hope Ranch

**Memorial Day Mayhem**

**May 24-27 | Jay**  
MidAmerica Outdoors

**Memorial Day Weekend Summer Kick-off**

**May 25-27 | Bernice**  
Bernice Nature Center



# A PEAK AT ENERGY DEMAND

## CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER

- ▶ **At the start of this year, we introduced a new feature on your electric bill: a section in the top right corner called *Billed KW Demand*. This number represents the peak hour demand for your household. While we don't bill residential members based on this metric, it plays a crucial role in our system planning. This data helps us decide the appropriate size for transformers, wires, and other equipment needed to support your home. For neighborhoods, it guides us in determining the necessary equipment type and size, infrastructure layout, and substation feeder connections.**

In the face of inflation, an increasing electrical load, aging infrastructure, and rising consumer stress, our goal is to keep our rates affordable. To achieve this, we need your cooperation in managing *peak demand*. Major appliances like clothes dryers, heating and air conditioning units, and water heaters contribute significantly to *peak demand*. Making small changes, such as not running these appliances simultaneously, can substantially reduce your home's *peak demand*.

If it's time to replace any of these systems, we offer rebates for energy-efficient solutions like dual-fuel heat pumps, programmable thermostats, mini-split heat pumps, and water heaters. Additionally, the IRS provides several energy efficiency tax credits for installing energy-efficient windows and doors, insulation, and heating, cooling, and water heating systems.



## GIFT CARD WINNERS CONGRATULATIONS & THANK YOU FOR GIVING!

During the month of April we drew from among our newest Operation Round Up participants to win a \$200 Walmart gift card. Those already participating were placed in a separate \$200 Walmart gift card drawing. Congratulations to our two winners!

It's easy to sign up for ORU! Visit [noec.coop/iilo](https://noec.coop/iilo) to sign up today!



New ORU participants, Debra and Charles of Big Cabin



Long-time ORU participant, Pearlene of Fairland

# DID YOU KNOW?

## MAY IS ELECTRIC SAFETY MONTH

Prioritize a safer home for you and your loved ones!

### HOW TO KEEP A SAFER HOME

Each year, electrical malfunctions account for 35,000 home fires causing over 1,130 injuries, 500 deaths, and \$1.4 billion in property damage.

The average American home was built in 1977. Many older homes simply cannot handle the demands of today's electrical devices.

Learn the warning signs of an overloaded electrical system:



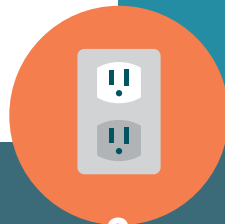
1

Frequent tripping of circuit breakers or blowing of fuses



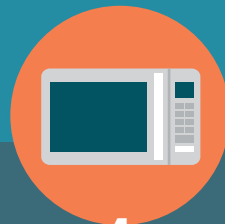
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Buzzing sound from switches or outlets



3

Discolored outlets



4

Appliances that seem underpowered



5

Dimming of lights when other devices are turned on

### HOW TO AVOID OVERLOADING YOUR ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Label your circuit breakers to understand the different circuits in your home

Have your home inspected by a qualified electrician if it's older than 40 years

Have a qualified electrician install new circuits for high energy use devices

Reduce your electrical load by using energy-efficient appliances and lighting

# 2024 DISTRICT MEETINGS .....

## DISTRICTS 4, 6, AND 8 TO SELECT BOARD TRUSTEE CANDIDATES

### MEETING DATES

#### JULY 8: DISTRICT 4

John Myers, Incumbent Trustee

#### JULY 9: DISTRICT 8

Nancy Kimbrell, Incumbent Trustee

#### JULY 11: DISTRICT 6

Sharron Gay, Incumbent Trustee

*Note: Meeting locations and driving directions will be announced in the June Northeast Connection.*

The Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees is extending invitations to Cooperative members in Districts 4, 6, and 8 to attend their respective 2024 District Meetings this summer. The invitation includes freebies like a \$10 electric credit, meal for registered member and one guest, along with the chance to win a \$250, \$100, and \$50 electric credit.

### OFFICIAL TRUSTEE CANDIDATE FILING PERIOD: JUNE 17-21, 2024

Section 3.06 of the Cooperative Bylaws requires any member desiring to be a Trustee candidate from the District of their primary residence to file with the Cooperative their Notice of Candidacy for Trustee during the official Candidate Filing Period:

- **Monday-Thursday, June 17-20, 2024:**  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Friday, June 21, 2024:**  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Notice of Candidacy for Trustee MUST be filed at the Headquarters Office of the Cooperative: 27039 S 4440 Rd, Vinita, OK 74301, during the Candidate Filing Period. **Only pre-qualified Candidates can be nominated at District Meetings.**

### REQUIREMENT TO REGISTER

#### At District Meetings

Only eligible members may register and cast a vote at any member meeting. To register and vote you MUST be one of the following:

- **Primary on an individual account**
- **Primary or secondary on a joint account (only one joint member may vote)**
- **Named representative of a business or organization (present a letter from the governing body of the entity stating you are the representative for that entity per bylaw SECTION 2.06.)**

If you are not listed on the account, as primary on a single account or primary or secondary on a joint member account, you will not be able to register to vote. We strongly encourage you to check your account. Call member services at 800.256.6405.

Members may register to vote/participate at their District Meetings from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. District meeting starts at 7 p.m., but those in line prior to 7 p.m. will be given a card ensuring their opportunity to register. All district meetings start at 7 p.m., or as soon as is practical thereafter.

### MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENTS

NOEC District Meetings now double as member appreciation events. This format change took effect in 2023. Registered members in Districts 4, 6, and 8 will have an opportunity to gather this summer at locations to be determined and enjoy a meal and prize drawings. Each registered member in attendance will also receive a \$10 electric credit.

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## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TRUSTEE?

**Have you ever considered running for the Cooperative Board of Trustees? The Board meets regularly to review the performance of the Cooperative, establish goals and operating policies, and ensure the financial health of the Cooperative.**

Trustee elections for Districts 4, 6, and 8 will take place at the 2024 Annual Membership Meeting to be held later this year. Eligible members residing in Districts 4, 6, and 8, and nominated at their respective District Meetings, may serve as a Cooperative Trustee for a term of 3 years if elected at the Annual Membership Meeting. Trustee eligibility requirements are as follows:

### TRUSTEE QUALIFICATIONS

#### SECTION 3.02. Qualifications

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a Trustee of the Cooperative who:

- (a)** while serving on the Board or during the five (5) years preceding nomination thereto shall have been finally adjudged to be guilty of a felony;
- (b)** is, becomes, or within the last five (5) years has been employed by the Cooperative, a Cooperative subsidiary, or a labor union which represents, or has represented, or has endeavored to represent any Cooperative employees;
- (c)** is, and if elected and seated as a Trustee will continue to be, a Close Relative of an incumbent Trustee or Cooperative employee;
- (d)** has not continuously been, for at least one (1) year prior to nomination, or who ceases after election to be, a Member in good standing of the Cooperative, receiving Electric Service at a permanent and year-round residence which is the Member's primary residential abode in the Trustee District from which the Member is elected; or
- (e)** is not at least eighteen (18) years old; or

- (f)** while a Trustee, and during the one (1) year immediately before becoming a Trustee, is or was employed by, controlled, owned more than ten percent (10%) of, served as a trustee, director, or officer of, or received more than ten percent (10%) of annual gross income from an Entity that advances the Entity's financial interest by: (1) competing with the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary; or (2) providing electric energy or a good or service related to providing electric energy; PROVIDED, however, that a Trustee shall be permitted to serve as a director or Trustee of such an Entity on the Cooperative's behalf.

Notwithstanding the Close Relative restrictions prohibitions in Section 3.02(c), no incumbent Trustee shall lose eligibility to remain a Trustee or to be re-elected a Trustee if, during incumbency, the Trustee becomes a Close Relative of another incumbent Trustee or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which the Trustee was not a party.

*After decades of pushing bachelor's degrees, U.S. needs more tradespeople.*

*Career-focused, practical training can help trade school students pursue in-demand jobs.*

*Career-focused, practical training can help trade school students pursue in-demand jobs.*

*Career education boosters also say job-focused courses can provide students with the skills they need to enter the workforce immediately.*

*Nontraditional pathways can lead workers to find great jobs.*

*Trade schools provide students with an alternative to four-year college programs.*

# YOUR FUTURE IS WAITING

## Trade skills taught at local NT campuses in demand

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It wasn't long ago that pursuing a bachelor's degree seemed to be the only option presented to high school students mapping out life after graduation.

In fact, so much effort was put into encouraging students to pursue purely academic degrees—as opposed to trade training—that many U.S. employers eventually began struggling with recruitment.

**\*911971\***

Along with leaving the nation's manufacturers with a scarcity of skilled workers, the push for high school graduates to obtain bachelor's degrees was also creating an unintended image problem for vocational programs.

That narrow perspective spanned multiple decades until the worker shortage forced the education sector to rethink its approach. What resulted was nothing short of a cultural rebuild.





*Lineman training program*

The State of California responded by spending \$6 million on a campaign to revive the reputation of vocational education and another \$200 million to improve the delivery of it. Research by the state's 114-campus community college system showed that many simply didn't grasp the value of vocational programs and the certifications they confer.

Florida Senator Marco Rubio fueled the vocational vs. academic debate by contending that "welders make more money than philosophers."

Thankfully, the narrative has been changing, and for more reasons than one. Not only do trade schools help students land jobs faster, they also cost significantly less than traditional college. Plus, jobs in the trades are booming, whereas many other industries are oversaturated with new graduates looking for work. Have you tried to hire a contractor lately? If you have, you probably already know these jobs are in high demand.

### **Trade school advantages**

Trade schools can be very worthwhile for students in pursuit of a skilled trade and career. These schools typically feature less expensive programs, smaller class sizes, and direct pathways to careers. They are a solid investment for many learners.

In some fields, students can gain the entry-level skills necessary for employment and then complete the rest of their training on the job with a paid apprenticeship. According to statistics from the U.S. government, 92% of apprentices who complete their program retain employment and go on to earn an average annual salary of \$72,000.

And let's be honest: Not every learner thrives in a college or university setting. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 38% of students who begin pursuing a bachelor's degree at a four-year college or university do not graduate within six years.

Skilled trades continue to demonstrate the highest potential among all job categories. The United States has 30 million jobs that pay an average of \$55,000 per year and don't require a bachelor's degree, according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. What's more, the U.S. Department of Education says individuals with career and technical educations are more likely to be employed than their counterparts with academic credentials and are significantly more likely to be working in their fields of study.

Adult cosmetology program



Heavy equipment operator program



### A great value

While degree costs vary by school and program, trade schools cost significantly less than four-year institutions, on average.

### ► Preparing Oklahomans for success

Vocational education is alive and well here in northeast Oklahoma thanks to Northeast Tech (NT), which serves students across eight counties with campuses in Afton, Claremore, Kansas, and Pryor. NT trains more than 1,200 students yearly in its full-time, daytime programs. Through NT's Business & Industry Services, along with short-term night and weekend classes, nearly 20,000 additional students are trained.

### New opportunities at Northeast Tech

NT is expanding its facilities and creating opportunities to accommodate even more career pathways. A new facility is under construction at NT's Pryor Campus that will house the school's lineman training program, which began in 2020. NT is also adding a full-time HVAC program at the Claremore Campus this fall.

The Pryor NT campus recently introduced a new full-time cosmetology program for adults in the evenings, and two campuses are adding full-time heavy equipment operator programs. Beginning this fall, Afton is upgrading its program from Fundamentals of Construction/Heavy Equipment/Construction to Heavy Equipment Operator. The Pryor Campus will begin offering its Heavy Equipment Operator programs in the fall of 2025.

### A new facility for NT linemen

The lineman training program at Northeast Tech equips students with the knowledge and technical skills required to successfully install, maintain, and operate systems that supply electrical energy to residential, commercial, and industrial customers. This program provides the training students need to construct, operate, and maintain power line equipment—all of which they will need to succeed in the electrical distribution industry.

“When the program began, Northeast Tech was the only CareerTech in Oklahoma that offered lineman certification,” said NT Public Relations Coordinator Kristal Adkinson. “Tech centers across the state have since used it to model their own line training programs.”

NT line program students will soon have a brand new, dedicated training facility to call home.

“The new lineman training building will help meet the needs of this program and the growing Pryor campus,” Adkinson said. “The building is scheduled to be finished in April, if all goes according to plan.”

**“The closer the new building gets to completion, the more excited I get. Every aspect of the program revolves around our pole yard and many things have been temporary up to this point while we worked out the construction details and location of the new building. Currently, our classroom location is about a quarter-mile from our pole yard. This new, permanent home will be much closer and more convenient and will serve as the cornerstone for our pole yard and program facilities.” - Jeff Floyd**

### **Adult Cosmetology**

The cosmetology program at NT prepares adult students to become licensed, professional cosmetologists who provide nail, skin, scalp, and hair care composition to help enhance the personal appearance of customers. Through hands-on learning and creative exploration, students will acquire the necessary expertise in various aspects of cosmetology, including hairstyling, skincare, and nail care. With a focus on practical application and industry-relevant knowledge, upon completion of the course, individuals will be well-equipped to excel in this dynamic field.

The new adult cosmetology program runs evenings, Monday through Thursday, at the Pryor NT campus.

### **HVAC**

To accommodate the growing workforce demand for HVAC technicians, Northeast Tech will be adding a full-time HVAC program at its Claremore campus this fall for high school students. Certified by the State of Oklahoma’s Construction Industries Board, the HVAC program will prepare students to test for their journeyman’s license after six months of on-the-job experience. Students will also attend classes at NT’s brand new state-of-the-art training lab where they will receive hands-on instruction, projects, and real-world application.

Program perks:

- *One-year program*
- *Earn hours towards the State of Oklahoma Construction Industries Board Residential Installer Journeyman License*
- *Prepare for the Limited Residential Installer test*
- *Average starting pay is \$20-\$30 per hour*
- *Opportunities to work in new construction, repair and/or own your own business*

### **Heavy Equipment Operator**

Starting this fall, Northeast Tech’s Afton campus will be home to a new *Heavy Equipment Operator* program (known formerly as *Fundamentals of Heavy Equipment/Construction*). The Pryor campus, meanwhile, will add the same program in the fall of 2025.

This comprehensive program is geared towards individuals seeking a rewarding career in the construction and heavy equipment industry as it provides the hands-on training and theoretical knowledge essential for success in the field. Students will learn to operate various types of heavy machinery, including bulldozers, excavators, and loaders under the careful guidance of experienced instructors. With a focus on safety protocols, equipment maintenance, and practical skills development, graduates will be well-prepared to enter the workforce as competent and skilled heavy equipment operators.





# FEATURED RECIPES

FROM DELAWARE COUNTY

## SPINACH ARTICHOKE DIP | ZANE & BREANNA MCCOMBS-COPPER



### INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz room temp cream cheese
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup mayo
- 1 minced garlic clove
- 2/3 cup shredded parmesan
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella
- Pepper to taste
- 14 oz artichoke hearts
- 6 oz frozen spinach

**Step 1:** Preheat oven to 350°F.

**Step 2:** Whip cream cheese, sour cream, and mayo together. Then add parmesan, mozzarella, pepper, and garlic. Finely chop the artichoke hearts and add them along with the spinach into the mixture.

**Step 3:** Transfer mixture to a 2 quart baking dish. Bake covered for 20 minutes or until the center is hot. Then remove cover and bake an additional 10 minutes to brown the top.

**Step 4:** Garnish as desired and serve warm with pita bread, corn chips, or sliced baguettes.

**30 minute total bake time**



## GRILLED PORK CHOPS | DONNA & TRACY ROY

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup Hellman's mayo
- 2 TBS lime juice
- 2 cloves finely chopped garlic
- 2 TBS chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tsp chipotle chili powder
- 8 pork chops

**Step 1:** Blend first five ingredients to make the sauce. Reserve half and set aside.

**Step 2:** Grill or broil pork, brushing with remaining sauce mixture until done.

**Step 3:** Serve with a dollop of sauce on top.

**Serve with your favorite sides!**