

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



NOTICE INSIDE
NEW PROPOSED RATES

**LIFEBLOOD OF OUR
COMMUNITY**

DECEMBER 2024



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

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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Sean Friend - Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Sami Jo Frisby - Administrative Services
Shane Burgess - Engineering
Kristen Sturgess - Human Resources
Ricky Hignite - Information Technology
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

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Maintaining A High Standard

Daniel Webster

General Manager
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

I've yet to encounter an individual, present company included, who enjoyed paying more for anything. Digging

deeper into the pocketbook is never fun. We seem especially reluctant to embrace this notion when it comes to our utility bills. As a bill-paying member here at Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, I get it. I'm no different than anyone else when it comes to paying more out-of-pocket for energy consumption; I'm not a fan.

As general manager here at NOEC, however, I know how hard we work across the organization to keep costs low while maintaining high standards of service and system reliability. And I've witnessed how much we tighten the belt until we reach the last notch and it can be tightened no more.

We have a standing commitment to closely evaluate every penny spent in an effort to insulate our membership from paying more for electricity—despite the rising costs associated with operating a distribution utility in a challenging economy. Trust me when I say a rate increase isn't a decision we take lightly. Even though the Oklahoma Corporation Commission allows regulated utilities to implement an annual revenue increase of up to three percent, we've been able to prevent implementing an increase above three percent since 2011.

Again, it is incumbent upon us here at the Cooperative to be good stewards with what we've been entrusted. That's why it's never easy to request a rate study. After careful consideration, however, our Board of Trustees approved a proposed rate increase during its October 2024 meeting. A decision from the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) will be forthcoming, following a comprehensive analysis of our rate structure.

Continued on page 4.



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EMPLOYEES GIVE



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2025 YOUTH PROGRAMS



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HOLIDAY APPETIZERS

Christmas Tree ELECTRIC SAFETY

- **Inspect** holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken/cracked sockets, and excessive kinking/wear before putting them up.
- Use only lights listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Make sure your tree is at least **3 feet away** from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, and space heaters.
- If using an artificial tree, ensure it is labeled as **fire-resistant**.
- If using a live tree, ensure it is properly **watered**. A dry tree is a fire hazard.

DECEMBER EVENTS

Vinita Christmas Parade of Lights

Dec 5 | Vinita

Downtown

Afton Christmas Parade

Dec 6 | Afton

Downtown

Pryor Christmas Parade

Dec 7 | Pryor

Downtown

Quapaw Christmas Parade

Dec 7 | Quapaw

Downtown

Commerce Christmas Parade

Dec 7 | Commerce

Downtown

Pensacola Dam Christmas Parade

Dec 7 | Langley

Pensacola Dam

Route 66 Christmas Parade

Dec 7 | Miami

Main Street

Ketchum Christmas Parade

Dec 13 | Ketchum

Downtown

Annual Grand Lake Christmas Light Boat Parade

Dec 14 | Afton

Cherokee Yacht Club

Grove Christmas Parade

Dec 14 | Grove

Downtown

Jay Christmas Parade

Dec 14 | Jay

Downtown

Fairland Christmas Parade

Dec 14 | Fairland

Downtown

\$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 January 1, 2025, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

Maintaining A High Standard

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER

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► **If approved**, an increase in retail rates will offset the rising cost of doing business, including wholesale power, equipment/fleet vehicles, and supplies/materials. Our system improvement construction efforts are also as strong as they've ever been as we work to ensure greater system reliability.

While there is never a "good time" for a rate increase, we have pledged to work hard to minimize its impact on our membership by carefully managing costs and searching for ways to operate more efficiently. Stability remains our constant objective as we look to solidify our Cooperative for both current and future members.

A notice regarding the proposed increase is included on the following page for your review.

BEFORE THE CORPORATION COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC., FOR A REVIEW AND
CHANGE OR MODIFICATION IN ITS RATES,
CHARGES, TARIFFS, AND TERMS AND
CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

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CASE NO. PUD 2024-000049

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on August 26, 2024, Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc. ("NOEC" or "Applicant") filed its Application and supporting documentation seeking to increase its rates and charges for retail electric service to its customers and seeking approval of the Commission for the filing of appropriate tariffs reflecting such increases in rates in compliance with the Commission's Minimum Standard Filing Requirements, OAC 165:70.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that in its Application, NOEC proposes to implement a rate increase of approximately \$4.5 million, effective upon a Commission order approving NOEC's Application. Applicant alleges the same to be a fair, just, and reasonable rate. The specifics of NOEC's requests are set forth in the testimony and exhibits filed pursuant to the Commission's Minimum Standard Filing Requirements.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the increase, as proposed by NOEC, would raise an average residential customer's current bill by approximately 5.1%. This equals to about \$7.83 per month on the average residential customer bill.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the Hearing on the Merits is set before an Administrative Law Judge on January 23, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., at the Concourse Theater, Suite C50, Will Rogers Memorial Office Building, 2401 N. Lincoln Blvd., in the Capitol Complex, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105 and public comment will be taken at that time. The Hearing on the Merits will resume on February 27, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., in the Concourse Theater, Suite C50, and shall continue each day until concluded. The Concourse Theater is located in the tunnel between the Will Rogers Memorial Office Building and the Sequoyah Memorial Office Building.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that all interested persons may appear and be heard. For more information concerning this matter, contact Michael T. Torrone for NOEC, P.O. Box 558, Vinita, OK, 74301, at (918) 256-7511, or by email at mtorrone@loganlowry.com, or A. Chase Snodgrass, Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, at (405) 521-3921. In addition, you may provide written public comment by visiting the Commission's website at <https://oklahoma.gov/occ> or send comments addressed as follows: Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc. Rate Case Comments, c/o Office of General Counsel, Oklahoma Corporation Commission, P.O. Box 52000, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73152-2000, or contact Elbert D. Thomas Jr., Deputy General Counsel, Public Utility Division, Oklahoma Corporation Commission, at (405) 522-3054 or by email at EJ.Thomas@occ.ok.gov.

CORPORATION COMMISSION OF OKLAHOMA
KIM DAVID, CHAIRWOMAN
BOB ANTHONY, VICE CHAIRMAN
J. TODD HIETT, COMMISSIONER

Lifeblood OF OUR COMMUNITY



Jayten Campbell, son of NOEC's Jared Campbell

Four times each year, Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative employees have an opportunity to model one of the most important cooperative principles.

Let's face it. All **seven** cooperative principles are important, but principle number seven, **Concern for Community**, ranks right up there at the top for our conscientious employees. Any time they have a chance to make a difference in their respective communities—and especially if that difference means potentially saving a life—well, you can sign them up.

At no time is **Concern for Community** more evident for NOEC employees than during one of our organization's four yearly blood drives.



Once every quarter, NOEC partners with **Our Blood Institute (OBI)** to host a blood drive at the cooperative's Vinita headquarters location. OBI is a local, non-profit blood bank that provides blood products to **90%** of the state's medical facilities.

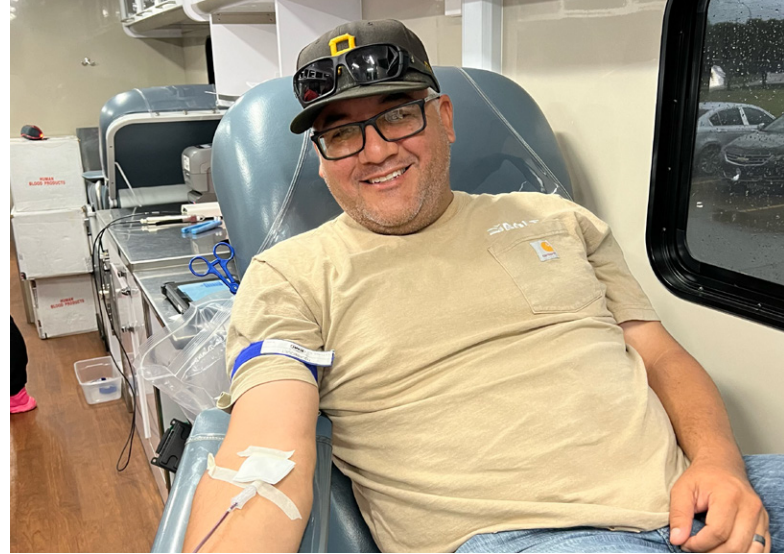
In 2024 alone, NOEC employees donated 67 units during drives held in February, June, August, and November. Since each donation can save up to three lives, that's as many as **201 lives impacted**.

The June blood drive was especially meaningful for NOEC employees. It was on that day that we were able to rally around one of our own linemen and his family.

NOEC was honored to host the first-ever Jayten Campbell Memorial Blood Drive at cooperative headquarters on June 3. The drive netted 21 units, including 17 whole blood, and four double red blood cell donations.



Jared Campbell with his family



Broadband operations technician Jeremiah Garcia

► **Jayten** was the young son of NOEC Journeyman Lineman/Service **Jared Campbell**. Jayten was born with a rare liver disease known as biliary atresia. He was diagnosed two months after he was born and battled the disease for several months before his passing on November 1, 2015. As a way to honor Jayten's memory, the Campbell family wanted to plan an event centered around blood donation, which was crucial to Jayten's battle.

"We are thankful that your family, the community, and your family's work colleagues chose to remember Jayten by donating blood in his honor," OBI Account Consultant Jade Brown told the Cambell family following the drive.

Another blood drive held in Jayten's honor was held two days earlier, on June 1, at the Grove Regional Airport. That drive drew nine donors.

"Overall, between both blood drives, there were a net total of thirty blood donors which means up to ninety lives were saved," Brown said.

NOEC employees are proud to support community blood banks as they strive to put all seven cooperative principles into practice.

"We are very thankful for the employees at NOEC and all that they do," said Brown. "Every three seconds there is patient in need of blood. Locally, we depend on 1,200 units daily to keep up with the supply. We are only able to do that because of dedicated donors like yourselves."

Why donate?

- **Only 10% of eligible individuals actually donate.**
- **One donation can save up to 3 lives.**
- **Every 2 seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.**
- **More than 1.2K donations are needed every day for local hospitals.**

How do I Donate?

Visit: ourbloodinstitute.org/how/ or scan the code below to learn more and schedule your donation.



SCAN ME!

Member services
representative
Meredith
Richardson





..... 2025 Youth Programs

524105

Youth Tour Community Service Project or Essay For High School Juniors

Area high school juniors can complete a 6-8 hour community service project for a chance to win an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 13-19, as part of the 2025 Youth Tour contest. Winning students will also receive \$500 in spending cash. As an alternative form of entry, students can submit a 300-500 word essay on the topic *"Making a Difference Where I Live."* Students who are in the eleventh grade and attend school within the cooperative service area are eligible to participate in this contest. Cooperative membership is not a requirement. Entry deadline: March 24, 2025.

College/Trade School Scholarship For High School Seniors

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are NOEC members and who live in a household served by NOEC electric can apply for a \$2,000 scholarship to a college, university, or trade school. Four winners will be selected. Entry deadline: April 21, 2025.

Classroom Incentive

NOEC is encouraging area schools to get involved. If a teacher administers the Youth Tour program as part of a classroom assignment and produces a contest finalist, he or she could be rewarded with \$100 toward the purchase of classroom materials or equipment.

Community Service Award For FFA, FCCLA, 4-H

Local FFA, FCCLA, and 4-H organizations can apply for \$200 to assist with program expenses.

Visit **www.noec.coop** and click on the *Community Services* tab for youth programs entry forms or use the forms on the following pages of this edition.

Community Service Project Ideas

Pick up trash around your school campus and/or athletic field(s), your church, a park, or your town sports complex. Volunteer time at a local animal shelter, food pantry, or thrift store. Offer to mow, pull weeds, or rake leaves for an elderly neighbor. Collect non-perishable items to donate to a local food bank. Assemble goodie bags and deliver them to a local day center or assisted living facility.

Need more help? Contact the NOEC Public Relations department at publicrelations@noec.coop for a project idea in your area!



SCAN ME!



**NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

Youth Tour Contest

For Area High School Juniors

Tour Date: June 13-19, 2025 | Contest Deadline: March 24, 2025

6-8 Hour Community Service Project or 300-500 Word Essay

Two winners will be selected. Each will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., on June 13-19, 2025, as part of the 2025 Oklahoma Youth Tour. Each will also receive \$500 spending cash.

Students who are in the eleventh grade and attend public, private, charter, or home school within cooperative service area are eligible to participate in this contest. Cooperative membership is not a contest requirement.

Project must be 6-8 hours, documented with photos, and validated by a community representative for whom work is being performed. As an alternative form of entry, students can submit a 300-500 word essay on the topic *"Making a Difference Where I Live."*

Submit entry form and project photos or essay to: **publicrelations@noec.coop**, or mail this form and supporting documentation to **NOEC, PO Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301**.

Describe project _____

Why is this project important to you? _____

Community representative signature _____ **Phone** _____

Student name _____ **Age** _____ **Date of birth** _____

Guardian name _____ **Guardian signature** _____

I give permission for my child to attend Youth Tour if selected.

If you win, are you willing to attend Youth Tour? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

School _____

Teacher name _____

If you were informed about this opportunity at school, please provide the name of the teacher so we can thank them.



\$2,000 Scholarship For Area High School Seniors

Deadline: Monday, April 21, 2025

Applicants may attend public, private, charter, or home school but must reside in a household served by NOEC, be in the top one-third of his/her graduating class, **submit two letters of recommendation (one school source & one character reference), and an official copy of their high school transcript.** Return this application with the supporting documentation listed above to: **publicrelations@noec.coop** or mail to **NOEC Community Service Award, PO Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301.**

I. Personal Information

Full name _____ Date of birth _____
Home address _____ County _____
Parents or guardians (*name and address if not the same*) _____
Household account # with Northeast Electric _____
Home phone number _____ Email address _____
Name of high school _____ Year graduating _____
What college/trade school do you plan to attend? _____
What will be your major field of study? _____

II. Financial Information

Annual household income ☐ \$39,999 or less ☐ \$40,000-\$69,999 ☐ \$70,000-\$99,999 ☐ \$100,000 or more
Number in family _____ Number currently in household _____
Factors or circumstances that affect your financial need _____

Other scholarships, grants, or financial awards you have received _____

III. Academic Performance & Potential: *Please Attach High School Transcript*

High school grade point average _____
Most recent ACT and/or SAT score, plus others ACT _____ SAT _____ Other _____
Honors & recognition received _____

Other academic achievements (*advanced placement, vo-tech education, concurrent college courses, etc.*) _____

IV. Other Activities: *List Includes During High School Only*

Participation in extra-curricular activities _____

Participation in school-affiliated organizations _____

Offices held in organizations _____

Work experience _____ Are you currently employed? _____
What type of work? _____ Other types of work? _____



**NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

\$300 Community Service Award

Claim Yours!

A \$300 award is available to each FFA, FCCLA, and 4-H program within our service territory. This money may be used by these organizations to award an individual (or individuals) for an outstanding accomplishment or may be used to offset program expenses. One submission is allowed per program per school year.

Applying for the NOEC Community Service Award is easy. Simply complete the form below and return it to us via mail or email. After hearing from you, we will mail your check to the address you provide. We are proud to support the students in our service territory in this way and appreciate the positive influence that your organization has on our youth. Submit entry form to: **publicrelations@noec.coop** or mail this form to **NOEC Community Service Award, PO Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301.**

☐ I would like to request NOEC Community Service Award for my organization. ☐ FFA ☐ FCCLA ☐ 4-H

Organization name _____

Representative name _____

What county does your organization represent? _____

How will the money be used? _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Please provide an address where check can be mailed.

SCHEDULE TODAY!

Kid-Friendly Safety Presentations

Area students can receive an introduction to electrical safety this school year, thanks to NOEC's "kid-friendly" safety presentations. Traveling presentations are available upon request to elementary school classrooms and local youth organizations. Presentations utilize visual aids and are geared toward a younger audience. **If you would like to schedule an electrical safety demonstration, please call the cooperative at 918.256.9340 or email publicrelations@noec.coop.**



Featured Recipes

HOLIDAY APPETIZERS



TUNA PARTY LOG | WANDA WOOD OF COLCORD



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cans tuna
- 1 package cream cheese
- 1 TBS lemon juice
- 2 tsp grated or minced onion
- 1 tsp horseradish
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp liquid smoke
- 1 or 2 cups chopped pecans
- 2 TBS chopped parsley

Step 1: Drain tuna then combine with cream cheese, lemon juice, onion, horseradish, salt, and liquid smoke; mix thoroughly and then chill for several hours.

Step 2: Combine pecans and parsley and set aside.

Step 3: Shape tuna mixture into a 8x2 inch log then roll in pecan and parsley mixture and chill well.

Step 4: Pass the crackers and enjoy!



FRITO CORN SALAD | MELVINA SHOTPOUCH OF JAY



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cans corn, drained
- 1/2 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 purple onion, chopped
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 5 oz of chili
- Fritos corn chips, chili cheese flavor

Step 1: Mix all ingredients together, excluding the Fritos chips.

Step 2: To keep chips from getting soggy, stir them into the mixture just before serving.

Have a recipe to share? Send it to publicrelations@noec.coop for a chance to be featured in an upcoming edition of *Northeast Connection*.