

Co-op Comments

January 2016

Outage texting now available

No calling, no hold time, just a fast, direct way to report outages

Now it's faster and easier than ever to report your power outage to REC. Members can now report power outages via text messaging. The service was developed to be another convenient way to communicate with us.

To utilize our new texting service, you will need to complete a short registration process. Your cell phone number must also be on file at REC for the registration process to be completed successfully. If you have not provided your cell phone number to REC, please contact us at 405-756-3104 to update your account.

The sign-up process to text reports of power outages to REC is easy. Note standard text messaging and data rates apply. To sign up, visit www.recok.coop and click on outages at the top right hand corner of the page and then click on "Check here to Sign-up for Outage Texting" and submit the requested information.

Members, who have registered with SmartHub and downloaded the app, can report an outage under service status.

Once the information is submitted, a text will be sent to your cell phone with an account verification code. Enter the verification code in the applicable web page field and click the submit button. To confirm successful completion of the registration process, you will receive a text message thanking you for joining the outage texting service. If REC does not have your cell phone number on file, you will

receive a message to contact us to provide the number.

You will then be directed to a screen listing the account number(s) associated with your cell phone number. On this screen, you'll find the number to which outages should be texted. Make sure to add this number to your cell phone's contacts list so it will be readily available when a power outage occurs. In the instance you may have multiple accounts with REC, you will be provided with instructions on how to set up key word indicators for each account (i.e., home, well, cabin, garage, barn, etc.). This process will increase the likelihood of reporting individual or full outages successfully. After entering/verifying your outage information and clicking the "Submit" button, you'll be ready to text your next power outage to us.

Texting your outage to REC just requires a few simple steps:

- Open a new text message in your cell phone
- Type "Outage" (without quotes, not case sensitive)
- Enter the outage number provided during the sign up process in the "Send To" field, and send the message

For multiple accounts, key word indicators (e.g., home, garage, well, cabin, etc.) can be used in the outage report. For example, in the case of a power outage at your cabin, you would type "Outage Cabin." If all your accounts are without



power, you would type "Outage All".

Once the text is received and verified, you will receive an "Outage Reported Successfully" text message. And, once the outage has been restored, a text confirming the restoration will be sent. If you find you are still without power, it will direct you to call the Cooperative with the contact number provided. As always, you can still call in your outage at 855-399-2683.

Report a power outage by calling REC at 1-800-259-3504 or 1-855-399-2683 after hours. Once your information is registered, text your outage to 55050.

The power of Operation Round-Up



It started as a simple idea 27 years ago at one co-op in South Carolina. Just round up the co-op member's electric bill to the next dollar, and then use it to do good work in your community. Today, hundreds of electric co-ops throughout the country, including Rural Electric, use this idea to help members and organizations close to home.

All co-ops adhere to the seven cooperative principles, including "Concern for Community." The Operation Round-Up program is the perfect embodiment of this core principle. The average co-op member donates \$6 with a maximum possible contribution of \$11.88 per year. This may not seem like a large amount, but when combined with 497 REC accounts, it adds up to make an impact.

Each co-op decides how they want to operate the program, and the vast majority is governed by a board of volunteers that is different from the board of directors for the electric co-op. This ensures that the decisions are made in the best interest of the community.

The program is always voluntary, and at any time, members can change their minds about participating. Once folks see the good work the program does in their community, they almost always keep contributing. Members interesting in joining Operation Round-Up can call our office at 405-756-3104 or return the card with your electric bill. 607500

Over the years, millions of dollars have been collected and distributed for a wide range of activities. This can include helping a family in need after a house fire. Assisting the local food pantry. Providing funds so that the local fire department can get a needed piece of equipment. Or dozens of other humanitarian efforts bringing electric co-ops even closer to the communities we serve.

While each co-op must respond to the needs of its members, one of the great attributes of co-ops across the country – and the world – is their willingness to share information about the programs that have been successful. Operation Roundup is a perfect example of that cooperative spirit and we are pleased to offer Operation Round-Up to our members.

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January 2015

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- Leonard Coffee, *Manager of Safety and Loss Control/Facilities*

Contact Information

Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Mailing Address
P.O. Box 609
Lindsay, OK 73052

Physical Address
13942 Highway 76
Lindsay, OK 73052

405-756-3104 or 1-800-259-3504
To report an outage call
1-800-259-3504 or 1-855-399-2683
Visit REC at www.recok.coop
and like us on facebook



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

If you feel Operation Round-Up is something in which you would like to be involved, please let us know by returning this card. Your voluntary contribution will begin immediately. Please return this card with your electric bill to REC's headquarters.

Name _____ Account No. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Numbers:
Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Using drones at electric co-ops

Drones are in the news – a lot. Apart from military uses, commercial applications are growing. Amazon wants to use drones to deliver your packages. Farmers are testing them for crop management – and so on. So, will drones someday find a home working for your co-op? It's likely.

The first recorded use of drones for warfare occurred on August 22, 1849, when Austria attacked Venice, Italy using unmanned explosive-laden balloons. Since then, military applications have driven most of the advances. Drones are a perfect solution when you need to access information about areas that are either hard to reach or dangerous.

Drones are more properly known as unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs, and are either autonomous or remotely piloted (RPV). Autonomous models follow a preprogrammed flight plan, whereas a licensed pilot flies the RPV from a remote location. This remote location can be half a world away in military applications. For commercial use, significantly shorter distances are involved. Regardless of operation type, modern drones are either fixed-wing or rotary models.

But how can your co-op use a drone? Assessing storm damage springs to mind. A helicopter or airplane can be used instead, but these options suffer from two issues. First, they are likely to be grounded for some time following the storm for pilot and crew safety. Co-op crews are in the field as soon as possible, often in the midst of the storm. Second, these alternative aircraft are very expensive to operate.

So, with ground access frequently blocked by debris or flooding, getting a comprehensive assessment of damage is both time consuming and dangerous. Flying a drone over the area can capture detailed images of the situation and help the co-op dispatch the right crews with the right materials to the right location. This kind of intelligence gets members' lights back on faster.

Drones have significant potential in preventive maintenance. Programmed to fly over far-flung transmission and distribu-

tion lines using the co-op's mapping data, a drone can video the route and return with an assessment of potential tree or vegetation problems. By integrating GPS data, the exact areas needing attention are pinpointed, and crews are then dispatched to correct the issues. This eliminates a lot of time and expense patrolling lengthy rights-of-way.

Anticipating privacy concerns, drones will be programmed to fly specific routes as mentioned above. They won't be looking at meters or the service wires from the pole to homes and businesses. Most video and other photographic data will never be seen by a human operator. It is simply too time consuming, especially when the co-op is restoring an outage. Software will analyze the imagery and identify potential problem areas for additional human interpretation.


Further applications include equipping the drone with an infrared (IR) camera to search for hot spots on power lines or inside substations. Many co-ops use handheld IR devices for just such purposes today. With a drone, they could cover far more area at a much lower cost. Problems could be solved before causing an interruption to your service.

The use of 3-D imaging to assess the condition of poles and towers in hard to

reach areas is a possibility. Likewise, the impact of construction on wildlife could also be monitored if required by government agencies. Once in widespread use, you can be sure many more applications will develop. Delivering light materials to field crews? Pizza?


However, getting a drone in the air is not a trivial matter. Since recreational use of drones has created some issues, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is regulating their use for commercial activities. The co-op needs to get approval from the FAA to operate a drone and the pilot has to be FAA licensed, backed by dedicated and certified ground support. This will keep drones out of regular airspaces and away from sensitive areas. While the FAA has been directed to streamline and expedite approvals for commercial drone use (the latest approval took exactly 90 days), getting ready to apply takes a lot of time and effort. Finally, drones capable of utility tasks can be expensive, ranging from a few thousand to half a million dollars.

As with all technology REC investigates and deploys, drones will be used to reduce operating costs and increase reliability. These amazing craft have significant potential to do both.



HOW ELECTRIC CO-OPS CAN PUT DRONES TO USE

- Ability to assess storm damage when roadways are inaccessible
- Infrared capability can detect hot spots on power lines or in substations
- Ability to assess vegetation management needs near power lines
- GPS data can pinpoint areas in the co-op's service territory that need attention

 America's Electric Cooperatives

Classified Advertisement

AUTOMOTIVE –

FOR SALE: 1988 Ford, 16' flat-bed dump, great condition, clean, gas operated, \$7,600. PH: 405-919-3946.

FOR SALE: 1957 Ford Ranchero pickup, \$400. PH: 405-222-3308.

PETS & LIVESTOCK –

FREE: Three male Border Collie/Blue Heeler cross, 4 months old; Also, will have nine more at Christmas time. PH: 580-476-3943.

FOR SALE: 1994 3/4 ton pickup. PH: 405-756-4409.

FARM EQUIPMENT –

FOR SALE: Heavy duty cattle guard with sides, \$500. PH: 405-351-0878.

FOR SALE: Ford tractor, bush hog, disc and chisel. PH: 405-756-4409.

RECREATIONAL –

FOR SALE: 1991 Dutchmen Classic, 26' 5th wheel travel trailer with hitch, sleeps 6 people, \$7,500. PH: 405-207-0228.

FOR SALE: 2005 Honda Elite scooter, 80cc, 2,300 miles, gentle adult driven miles, 100 mpg, garage kept, \$1,400. PH: 580-223-2988.

FOR SALE: 1993 35' camper with washer and dryer. PH: 405-756-4409.

MISCELLANEOUS –

FOR SALE: Craftsman 42" cut riding mower, automatic transmission w/operator's manual, \$300. PH: 405-351-0878.

FOR SALE: Desk w/maple finish- excellent condition, \$250. PH: 405-351-0878.

FOR SALE: Reliable maid, houses wanted. PH: 405-779-8440.

FOR SALE: Champion juicer, household

model #G5-NG-A53-S. One-owner, mature lady. \$75 (\$265-new). PH: 580-223-2988.

FOR SALE: Set of oxygen/acetylene bottles, half full, torch, gauges, hose, \$500. PH: 405-207-0228.

FOR SALE: Round bales of grass; large square bales of alfalfa. PH: 405-640-1632

or 405-640-6460.

FOR SALE: Hobart small portable welder, \$400. PH: 405-222-3308.

FOR SALE: 4 x 5 foot net wrapped round bales of grass hay, \$35. PH: 405-331-9746.

WANTED: Single box frame and mattress set in good condition and reasonably priced. PH: 405-344-8192

Seal air leaks with caulk to save on your bill

Did you know heating and cooling accounts for roughly half of your home's energy use? Caulking cracks and gaps around windows, doors and spaces around wires (telephone, electrical, cable and gas lines), water spigots and dryer vents can pay off with big energy savings.

Materials You Will Need:

Caulk, caulk gun, knife or tool to cut, rags, water

1. **PREP:** Clean the area where you will be applying the caulk. Remove any dirt, loose paint or old, cracked caulk.

Be sure the area is dry before applying new caulk appropriate for your application.

2. **LOAD:** You will need to pull the plunger all the way back to load the tube of caulk into the barrel of the caulking gun.

Next, squeeze the trigger a few times until the plunger makes contact with the tube. Squeeze once or twice more to fill the

tip with caulk.

3. **APPLY:** To figure out the right amount of caulk needed, experiment with an out-of-the-way section. You may find that you need less caulk than you thought.

Hold the gun at a slight angle. Apply steady pressure on the trigger to create a solid stream from the tip, which should be placed 1/2 inch or less from the intended destination of the material.

Use just enough caulk to do the job. Use your finger to gently press the caulk into the corner, crack or space.

4. **RELEASE:** Once the trigger is fully depressed, allow it to spring back and depress it again. Keep the gun moving while caulk is still coming out of the tip.

5. **CLEAN:** Use a damp cloth or rag to clean off most of the excess caulk. Use a dry cloth to clean off the rest.

Want Ads

are **FREE** to REC members to post noncommercial items. Deadline for ads is the 8th of every month. Call the Member Services Dept. at 405-756-3104 ext. 238.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you only want to heat or supplement inadequate heating in one room, small space heaters can be less expensive to use than your central heating system.

Learn more at www.energy.gov.

Local Co-op Connection Card Deals

Backroads Boutique, Lindsay -

5% off everything excluding special order and sale items

Best Western, Chickasha -

15% Off Regular Room Rate

Blue Moose Outdoor

Portable Rentals, Elmore City -

5% Off Septic Tank Pumping, Tent Rental and Special Event Toilet Rentals

Chickasha Diesel Services, Chickasha -

\$50 off any big diesel oil change

Edwards Canvas, Pauls Valley -

5% Off

Jenny's Pics Photography, Lindsay -

10% Off \$50 or More Purchase of Pictures

Lindsay Tire and Lube, Lindsay -

\$5 Off Any Full Service Oil Change;

M & M Furniture, Chickasha -

10% Off Any Purchase

Maysville Flowers & Gifts, Maysville -

10% Off All Green Plants

Mazzio's Italian Eatery, Purcell -

10% Off Purchase

Photos by Ginger, Pauls Valley -

1 Free 8x10 Print With First Order (\$25 Minimum)

The Leopard Lasso, Wynnewood -

10% Off Purchase

4 Seat Saddles, Boots and Hats -

10% Off \$100 or More, or 5% Off Repairs

Western Fuel Co., Maysville -

2 Cents Off Per Gallon of Propane on a Minimum of 125 Gallons. Cash Sales Only. (No Other Discounts Allowed)

Pharmacy Discounts -

Check out the discounts available using your Co-op Connections Card at participating pharmacies throughout our area. For a complete list of pharmacies, visit REC's website to see if your pharmacy is offering discounts to Co-op Connections Card holders.