



BLUESTEM

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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August 2007

Bluestem NEWS

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School Resumes

For some 22 million students nationwide, the school day begins and ends with a trip on a school bus. Unfortunately, each year many children are injured and several are killed in school bus incidents.

Over the past six years, about 70 percent of the deaths in fatal school bus related crashes were occupants of vehicles other than the school bus, and 20 percent were pedestrians.

Although drivers of all vehicles are required to stop for a school bus when it is stopped to load or unload passengers, do not rely on them to do so.

Bluestem Electric encourages members to drive carefully and watch for school buses stopped for children on the roadway.

Bluestem Office Closed

Labor Day

Our offices will be closed Monday, September 3, in observance of Labor Day. In case of an outage problem, call Bluestem East at 800-558-1580 or Bluestem West at 800-297-8725

Electric Cooperatives Lead the Industry in Automated Metering

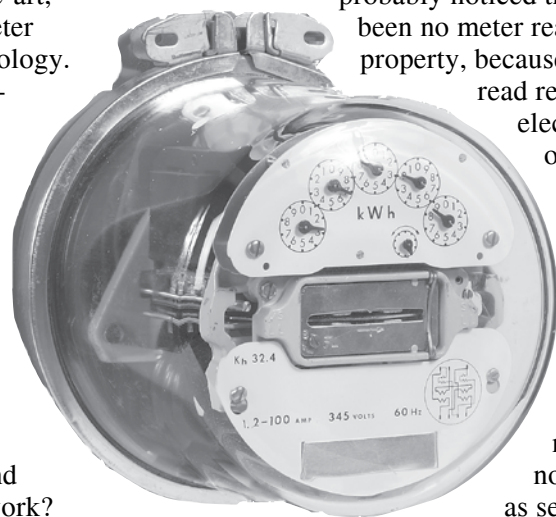
Based on an assessment by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), electric cooperatives lead the industry in the installation of state-of-the-art, automated meter reading technology.

At 13 percent, rural electric cooperatives have the highest market penetration for automated metering. But what is automated meter reading technology and how does it work?

This technology is based on the installation of digital meters that transmit electricity usage to meter readers over a secure radio frequency. Automated meter readers (AMR) are more accurate, convenient, and more member-friendly

than previous meters.

Bluestem's new meters have improved accuracy and reduced time in meter reading. You have probably noticed that there have been no meter readers on your property, because AMRs can be



read remotely using electronic technology. This saves time and aids in safety.

Electric cooperatives are dedicated to making advancements in technology and innovation, as well as serving co-op members with integrity and accountability. Because demand response is a critical cost and risk management tool for electric cooperatives, it is an important part of the cooperative strategy to provide safe and affordable electricity.

Watch for Signs of Electrical System Overload

Increased electrical usage during hot summer weather increases the risk of fires in homes with older or damaged wiring systems. Summertime necessities, such as air conditioning, can strain and overload an electrical system, creating a serious shock and fire hazard.

"Nationwide, an estimated 50 million older homes and buildings with outdated electrical wiring and systems are at greater risk of dangerous deterioration and becoming overloaded," said Ron Dickey, Director of Member Services at Bluestem East.

The wiring of many homes is not equipped to properly handle and support today's increased electrical demands. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), more than half of all homes in the U.S. are at least 30 years old. The wiring in many of these older homes was designed to handle only about half of the electrical demands of today's residents.

Watch for these warning signs. If you have any of these present, you should have your home inspected by a professional:

- Lights often flicker, blink or dim momentarily.
- Circuit breakers trip or fuses blow often.
- Cords or wall plates are warm to the touch or discolored.
- Crackling, sizzling or buzzing is heard from outlets.

A home electrical inspection to find and correct hidden hazards could prevent many tragedies. The time and investment in having a qualified electrician check your residence, and perform a few home repairs and

upgrades are small compared with the protection and safety they provide to your family and home.

No matter the season or age of homes, residents should be vigilant and check for electrical hazards such

as cracked or fraying electrical cords, overloaded outlets and circuits, and improper wattage light bulbs in lamps and light fixtures. Also, make sure smoke alarms are placed and functioning properly.

New Rebate Program

Most electric cooperatives have entered a period of long-term, increased demand for electricity and rising costs of power supply.

Bluestem wants to communicate to its members about the rising costs and changes in the electric industry. Today this continues to be an important priority. This is one of the reasons that the qualifying standards for the rebate program have changed to reflect renewable energy and conservation and also recognizing that changes in environmental policy that are impacting the way we do business.

All Bluestem members must understand that the new qualifying standards for rebates must be met in order to receive a rebate from Bluestem.

Water Heaters

Less than 60 gallons must have a minimum Energy Factor (EF) of 0.93.

60 gallons or greater must have a minimum EF of 0.91.

Rebate Amounts:

- \$75 for standard electric-to-electric upgrade
- \$125 for standard electric to lifetime electric upgrade
- \$125 for a non-lifetime water

heater in new construction or replacing gas with electric

- \$175 for a lifetime water heater

Air Source Heat Pump

- Minimum unit size of two tons
- Must have a minimum Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) of 14.
- Must have a minimum Heating Seasonal Performance Factor (HSPF) of 8.2

Rebate Amounts:

- \$100 per ton for a 14 SEER
- \$150 per ton for a 15 SEER
- \$200 per ton for 16 SEER and above

Ground Source Heat Pump

- Minimum unit size of two tons
- Open loop – Must have a minimum Coefficient of Performance (COP) of 3.6 and a minimum Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) of 16.2
- Closed loop – Must have a minimum Coefficient of Performance (COP) of 3.3 and a minimum Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) of 14.1

Electric Heat

Electric resistance heat will no longer qualify for a rebate.

Trustee Nomination and Election Process

This is an excerpt from the Bluestem Electric Cooperative bylaws.

Section 4.05, Nomination of Trustees:

The board shall appoint a nominating committee, on or before the first of October of each year, consisting of not less than one, nor more than five members from each district for whom a Trustee is to be elected. Board members may not serve on the nominating committee.

Only committee members from each district will nominate their own candidate. Committee members from districts one and

two will meet together at Clay Center and committee members from districts three and four will meet together at Wamego. Nominating committees shall meet during the month of October. On or before the first day of November, the nominating committee shall prepare and post a list of nominations for Trustee at the Wamego office if a Trustee is to be elected from districts three or four and at the Clay Center office if a Trustee is to be elected from districts one or two. The committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each position.

Nominations may be made by petition, filed on or before the close of business, December 1, at the Wamego office for Trustees to be elected from districts three and four, and at the Clay Center office for Trustees to be elected from districts one or two. The petition must be signed by no less than 5% of the membership of the district for whom the Trustee is to be elected. The secretary shall immediately post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations by the committee is posted. Nominations made by the petition shall appear

on the ballot in the order received

Section 4.06, Election of Trustees: The election of Trustees shall be by mail ballot. Only those nominees selected by the nominating committee or nominated by petition shall appear on the ballot. There may be write-in votes for a qualified member not named on the ballot. The ballot shall first list the name(s) nominated by the committee, then the name(s) nominated by petition in the order received and, at the end, a place to write in a name. Failure of strict compliance with provisions of

this section shall not affect the validity of any election of Trustees.

The secretary shall mail the ballots to the respective members on or before the 10th day of December of each year. On or before the first day of January of each year, ballots must be postmarked or received at the Wamego office or the Clay Center office.

Those members who have been appointed to serve on each district's respective nominating committee will be listed here in next month's *Kansas Country Living Magazine*.