

# Powerline Press

## NEWSLETTER



A Supplement of Oklahoma Living Published by Lake Region Electric Cooperative for its members. **December 2023**

# LREC Rate Adjustment

LREC published an article in the November newsletter informing members of a slight rate increase in our service availability fee from \$42.50 to \$43.50. **This is only \$12 per year. This will go into effect on January 1, 2024.**

When we look at all the costs of making electricity available to every member at the flip of a switch, we come up with the service availability charge. The service availability charge is a fixed fee that LREC charges to cover the costs of making electricity available to all our members. These costs include the construction and maintenance of power lines, transformers, and other equipment, as well as maintaining all the right-of-way, tree trimming, to keep all meters working. The service availability charge is designed to ensure that everyone pays a share of the basic costs of LREC's grid, regardless of how much electricity they use. It also helps to ensure that the co-op is able to maintain their infrastructure and provide reliable service.

The second part of the LREC bill is the energy charge. A charge billed at a fixed rate per kilowatt-hour (kWh) based on the amount of electricity through the meter (usage) within your billing period. The rate per kWh is determined by your service class. Roughly 85% of our meters are residential homes and farms. Our residential rate is \$0.0792 per kWh. This is charged to cover LREC energy costs from our wholesale power provider, as well as any electric distribution cost that is not captured in the service availability charge. 1382105

The average residential LREC member uses roughly 1,180 kWh per month of electricity. The

chart on this page shows the difference between the current 2023 rates and the new rates starting in 2024. This is a less than 1% increase.

Current - 2023 Breakdown of Charges	
Service Availability	\$42.50
Energy Charge 1,180 kWh @ 0.0792	\$93.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$135.96</b>
New Rates - 2024 Breakdown of Charges	
Service Availability	\$43.50
Energy Charge 1,180 kWh @ 0.0792	\$93.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$136.96</b>

Over the last few years, we've witnessed a notable surge in the prices of various common goods, far outpacing the moderate increase in the cost of electricity. It is important to recognize that electric rates have remained relatively stable in the face of economic fluctuations. In contrast, everyday items such as food, housing, fuel, vehicles, and medical care have experienced substantial cost hikes over the past year. This underscores the remarkable value electricity offers as an essential utility, providing the necessary power for our homes and businesses while sustaining lower cost increases than many other household expenses that can fluctuate a lot.

For example, in 2023, frozen vegetables have increased by 11.6% and white bread by 7.8% When you compare, increasing the price of electricity by only one dollar on our service availability fee is pretty

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# Rate Adjustment

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remarkable. The cost of powering your home or business has risen slowly when compared to other common expenses. When you consider how reliable electricity is, the value goes up even more. Ask yourself: When did I last experience a major

outage that wasn't caused by a natural disaster? For most of us, those times are the only occasions when we stop to think about what an affordable value electricity brings to our lives.

LREC takes our rates very seriously. Your calls and questions are welcome at any time. If there is anything we can do as your local trusted cooperative, please give us a call.

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# LREC Retires \$1.4 Million in Member Capital Credits

*Over 41,000 current and former members will receive a refund*

Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC) will retire **\$1.4 Million** in capital credits this December to more than **41,024** current and former cooperative members. LREC's Board of Trustees approved the retirement in October after evaluating the co-op's financial condition.

"Capital credits are a benefit unique to co-op members, current and former, and it's our responsibility to ensure LREC operates in a way where we continue to fulfill our cooperative principles. I'm proud to report LREC members who purchased electricity in 1993, 1994, and 2022 will receive a capital credit refund on your December bills," said John Lee, CEO.

The Board of Trustees voted for 100% of the margins from 1993 to be refunded, 40% of the margins from 1994 to be refunded and 25% of the margins from 2022 to be refunded. The amount you receive is based on how much electricity you purchased during the years listed.

Current cooperative members receiving a capital credit can expect to see their credit applied to their LREC bill this month and checks to arrive for members who have moved off our lines, if the amount is larger than \$5. LREC also reminds members who move outside of the co-op's service territory to provide updated forwarding addresses to ensure they receive future capital credit retirements.

## How does the capital credit process work?

- 1 It starts when you pay your bill.** LREC keeps track of how much electricity members buy and how much they pay for it throughout the year.
- 2 Recording and Reporting.** At the end of the year, LREC completes a financial analysis and determines whether there are excess revenues, called operating margins.
- 3 Where is the money?** The money, called capital credits, is invested in equipment and workforce needed to meet the current and growing demand for electricity. It is your equity in the cooperative.
- 4 Do I ever receive this money?** When LREC's financial condition permits, the Board of Trustees elects to retire (pay) those capital credits back to members.

*Read more about capital credits here: <https://www.lrecok.coop/capital-credits>*

# Lake Region Linemen Graduate

LREC apprentice linemen recently graduated from the Northwest Lineman College. They were honored at the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives (OAEC) Apprentice Lineman Graduation and awards ceremony in November.

“Our graduates are very motivated to progress to the journeyman level, and it shows in their pride of a job well done. I cannot say enough about the quality of our group of journeyman graduates. They are leaders waiting for the opportunity to lead,” said Jon Enkey, LREC’s Operations Manager.

An LREC apprenticeship takes formal training through correspondence courses. This is provided by Northwest Lineman College in coordination with our statewide association (OAEC). The course is a 4-year program with 10 modules to complete throughout the year.

This takes dedication since the young apprentices are usually busy with family activities after work. The apprentices are tested 10 times throughout the year at the end of each module. Although Northwest Lineman College only requires a 72, LREC requires an 88 to pass. We value the quality of our journeymen linemen as they are the face of our cooperative. By the time the apprentice has reached the qualifications needed to graduate, that person has had over 8,000 hours of on-the-job hands-on experience. These hours include different supervisors and training styles to include both construction and maintenance styles of work. The training involves hours of troubleshooting outages after hours and on weekends, holidays, and storm restoration both locally and distant mutual aid help for our sister cooperatives.

These men work very diligently in dealing with hazardous situations everyday. Linework is inherently dangerous, and these journeymen make the work as safe as possible. Working safely as an individual and incorporating that into a team effort makes the LREC’s team of linemen stand out above all others.

Join us in extending our congratulations to these remarkable linemen: Trent Elliot, David Collins, Markie Carman, Kregg Talburt, Levi Carson, and Landon Unger.

A special shoutout goes to Jason Steeley, LREC Journeymen foreman, who earned the prestigious 2023 Shining Star Award. This award is a testament to his unwavering commitment to the cooperative’s principles and his extraordinary efforts in making a significant impact at LREC. Jason’s dedication extends to providing invaluable guidance and support to our new linemen and interns, exemplifying his dedication to LREC’s success.



Left to right: Trent Elliot, Jason Youngblood, Jason Steeley, David Collins, Markie Carman, Kregg Talburt, Levi Carson and Landon Unger.

## Successful 2023 Co-opreneur Day!



Hayden Cox, Samantha Spencer, Chloe Freniere, Jayci Wright, and Trenton Lang of Porter School Gifted and Talented Program.

The Co-opreneur Day competition was amazing and a great learning experience for several local students! 7th and 8th

grade students from Porter Public School designed a cooperative business to solve a community need, then developed a business plan to present to a panel of judges in Oklahoma City.

The kiddos did awesome and proved to be community builders and the best future entrepreneurs Oklahoma could hope for! LREC is thankful for our partnership with Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, (OAEC) which hosted this event!

These types of student events originate from one of our seven cooperative principles: Education, Training, and Information. LREC works to inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation and cooperatives. Local teachers who attended this event were also able to receive Professional Development focusing on STEM, economics, energy, and entrepreneurship...what an incredible day! If your 7th or 8th grade school would be interest in attending Co-opreneur Day next year please contact **Juanita Keener at 918-772-6940.**

# INTRODUCING THE NEW MESH ROUTERS



Powered by Plume Home Pass

Get wall-to-wall Wi-Fi coverage, no dead spots, plus extra security, parental controls, and safety features all at the touch of a button. The LRTC Mesh is an all-inclusive home Wi-Fi system that lets you see what devices are connected - and kick off those that shouldn't be - monitor your speeds, set up guest access, security settings, and much more.

## WHAT BETTER HOME WI-FI LOOKS LIKE



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Parental controls keep your kids safe. Restrict the content, including specific sites, your children can access online. Set schedules for certain devices and even freeze the internet on your teen's phone at night in hopes they'll finally go to bed.



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### Office Hours

Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Telephone

800-364-LREC or  
918-772-2526

### Website:

[www.lrecok.coop](http://www.lrecok.coop)  
[www.lakeregionfiber.com](http://www.lakeregionfiber.com)

### Locations

Hulbert, Wagoner &  
Tahlequah, OK.

### Main Office Address

P.O. Box 127  
Hulbert, OK 74441

### Hidden Account Number

Look for your account number hidden in this issue of the *Powerline Press*. If you find your number, Lake Region Electric will credit your next bill. To claim your credit, notify LREC's Hulbert office by phone during the month of publication.

The amount increases by \$10 with each issue your prize goes unclaimed to a maximum of \$50.

**Cooperative bylaws** are available upon request at Lake Region Electric Cooperative's office in Hulbert.

Larry Mattes .....Editor/Communications