



March 2015

RURAL  
MISSOURI

**Sac Osage Electric Cooperative**

**News**

P.O. Box 111, 4815 E HWY 54  
El Dorado Springs, MO 64744  
Telephone: 800-876-2701

Visit us on the Web - [www.sacosage.com](http://www.sacosage.com)

## Take Control of Your Energy Costs With the Prepaid Energy Option

*No Deposits! No Late Fees! Choose When to Pay Your Bill!*

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative's new Prepaid Energy Option allows you to pay for energy when you choose, the same way you buy groceries and gasoline. This easy pay-as-you-go plan allows greater control over your budget because you decide when to pay. Members who enroll in this option maintain a pre-paid balance in their account from which their daily usage is subtracted. When your account runs low, you will get an alert by email, text, and/or phone call to let you know it's time to add money. We even let you choose the balance at which you'll begin to receive alerts. Never worry about security deposits and late fees again!



### Is Prepaid Energy Right for Me?

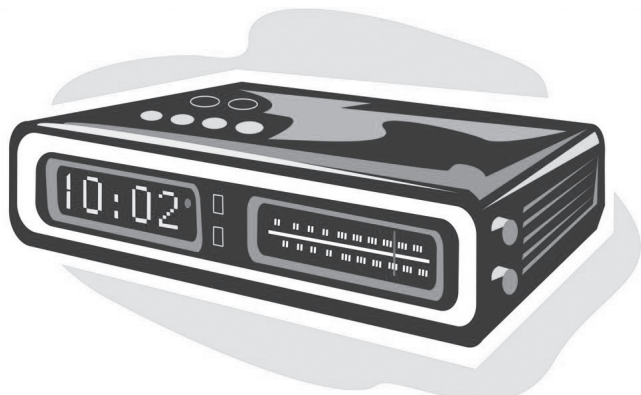
If it would be easier for you to make weekly or biweekly payments for your energy usage rather than one large payment each month, then this option will work for you. Instead of getting a traditional bill each month, you will receive a monthly statement showing your usage, which is calculated and paid for daily.

You can pay how much you want - \$10 a day, \$50 a week, or \$1,000 every few months - and when you want. It might be when you get your next paycheck, when your Social Security check arrives, or whenever you can afford to add to your balance. To learn more about this Prepaid Energy Option, visit our office, or call (417) 876-2721 or (800) 876-2701.

### Adding Money to Your Account

There are several ways to add money to your prepaid balance:

- Make cash, check, VISA or MasterCard payments at our office between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.
- Put a check in the office drop box after-hours and your account will be credited on the next business day.
- Pay online by electronic check, VISA or MasterCard at [www.sacosage.com](http://www.sacosage.com).
- Call (866) 999-4573 toll-free anytime to make a VISA, MasterCard or electronic check payment.
- Set up payments through your current online banking system, or
- Mail a check to Sac Osage Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 111, El Dorado Springs, MO 64744.



**Daylight Saving begins, so  
don't forget to spring forward  
an hour on Sunday, March 8th.**

March 2015

## Town meeting day

This year, March 3 marks Town Meeting Day in Vermont, among other places. In rural communities across New England, Town Meeting Day is a chance to get out and about in the name of democracy and shed a bit of winter cabin fever. Local scuttlebutt is



considered, sides are taken and the not-so-silent majority has an opportunity to sound off. Mud season seems a suitable time for this foray into the community, although snow jobs are still possible, and there's a danger of icy glares.

## Love in springtime

The vernal equinox occurs on March 20. In honor of spring, we offer some folklore tips on how to attract and keep the attentions of your beloved. Eat tomatoes, potatoes, hot spices, oysters and octopus. Or, put marigolds in your



wedding bouquet. Keep in mind, however, that romance can be hazardous. New World settlers banned public acts of affection. When a sea captain returned to Boston after three years at sea, he kissed his wife in public and was sent to the stocks for "lewd and unseemly behavior."

## Windy wisdom

Weather lore says of March, "In like a lion and out like a lamb." This month's winds usher in warmer spring weather to come. In 1805, Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort devised a wind velocity scale, which described a wind between 39 and 46 mph as a "fresh gale." According to the scale (used by the

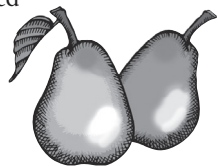


National Weather Service in a modified form), wind speeds of 73 mph and higher are classified as a hurricane. In between the fresh gale (or gale) and the hurricane are the strong gale (47 to 54 mph), the whole gale (or storm, 55 to 63 mph), and the violent storm (up to 72 mph).

For recipes, gardening tips and weather forecasts, visit:  
[www.almanac.com](http://www.almanac.com)

### Recipe for Pear Ginger Chutney

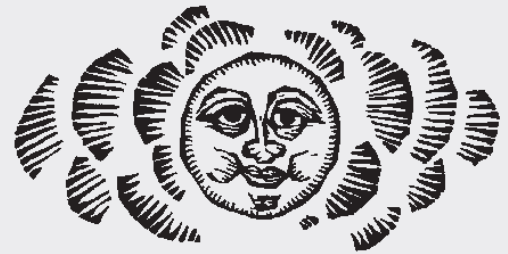
5 cups pears, peeled, cored and chopped  
1/3 cup gingerroot, chopped  
1 lemon, seeded and chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 cup brown sugar



1 cup currants  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
2 tablespoons curry powder  
2 red peppers, seeded and chopped  
2 cups cider vinegar

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and simmer until sauce thickens, about 2 hours, stirring frequently. Sterilize jars according to manufacturer's directions. Put hot chutney into dry, sterilized jars, leaving 1/2-inch headroom; wipe the rims clean and seal the jars. Process jars in a boiling-water bath for 15 minutes. Remove jars and let cool. Makes 3 pints.

## THE OLD FARMER'S



# WEATHER PROVERBS

**When the wind veers against the sun, trust it not, for back 'twill run.**

**When sheep collect and huddle, tomorrow will become a puddle.**

**If the wind is northeast at the vernal equinox, it will be a good season for wheat and a poor one for corn.**

**Dust in March brings grass and foliage.**

**The moon, her face if red be, of water speaks she.**

**Rheumatic pains indicate bad weather.**

**In March much snow, to plants and trees much woe.**



# Keeping it bright efficiently

*Select the right bulbs for use in your home*

**Dear Jim: We are remodeling some rooms in our home and need new lighting options. I always used 60- and 100-watt bulbs, but they are difficult to find now. What new types of lights are best to use? - Michael S.**



by Jim Dulley

Dear Michael: The standard high-wattage incandescent bulb technology is certainly not illegal, but it does not meet the current energy-efficiency standards. Also, the bulb life is very short when compared to newer technology standards, so the overall cost of using the older bulbs is high.

The wattage of a light bulb refers to how much electricity it consumes, not how much light it produces. The amount of light is measured in units called lumens. A 60-watt incandescent light bulb produces about 800 lumens of light, and a 100-watt bulb produces about 1,600 lumens.

Today, your primary bulb choices are halogen, CFLs (compact fluorescent lights) and LEDs (light emitting diodes), listed here in order of increasing efficiency. For many home applications, LEDs are the best choice even though they cost more initially.

Halogen bulbs are basically incandescent bulbs with halogen gas around the filament to improve efficiency enough to meet efficiency standards.

CFLs are much more efficient, using only about 25 percent as much electricity as incandescent bulbs to produce the same amount of light — and they last 10 times longer.

Today's CFL bulbs have greatly improved when compared to the original versions. Instant start models are available, and some are even dimmable using a standard dimmer wall switch.

The types of phosphor layers on the inside surface of the bulb determine the light quality and color.

CFL bulbs can produce true full-spectrum (simulates natural sunlight) light quality and can be purchased with warm white, cool white and daylight color temperatures. Many people objected to the cool white (bluish) color temperature of the early CFLs — they wanted something that mimicked the color of incandescent lamps (warm white). Daylight lamps have an even higher color temperature, and they produce more accurate colors and are good for tasks such as reading and painting.

LEDs are the newest and most efficient light source available and provide an excellent payback. A 12-watt LED produces as much light as a 60-watt incandescent bulb. The LED bulb should also last a minimum of 20,000 hours. Most of them are dimmable, work well at cold

temperatures and reach full brightness immediately.

LEDs gradually get dimmer over time. When a LED is rated for 20,000 hours, its output will stay above 70 percent of its original brightness for that time.

If you have been using incandescent bulbs, you are probably accustomed to a yellowish light quality. This is called the "color temperature" of a bulb. Incandescent bulbs are in the 2700-degree K range. The whiter "daylight" LEDs and CFLs are in the 4,000- to 5,000-degree K range. Most people grow accustomed to the whiter light and prefer it. The color temperature is listed on the packaging.

CRI (color rendering index) is another quality of the light bulb to consider. A higher CRI makes objects in a room look more like they would look under natural sunlight. A CRI above 80 is considered adequate for homes, but 90 or above makes everything look better and doesn't cost much more.

There are four general types of lighting uses — ambient, accent, decorative and task. Ambient lighting is for general illumination with comfortable brightness. Accent lighting can create a mood in the room or highlight areas or objects. Decorative lighting is when the light itself is the object, such as a chandelier. Task lighting is for reading or doing a specific activity, such as reading.

For effective lighting in your rooms, install several grouped circuits with dimmers to control and vary the lighting schemes. For example, choose high-CRI bulbs over a dining table to enhance the appearance of food. An overhead high color temperature bulb above a chair would be good for reading or other tasks.

For existing rooms, where it may not be easy to rewire or add circuits, switch to LEDs in most fixtures, and install dimmer wall switches. There are many new types of LEDs available to replace almost any incandescent bulb. Unlike incandescent bulbs, LEDs do not lose efficiency as they are dimmed.

The goal for lighting efficiency is to use as little lighting as needed. Where you do not have a wall switch, such as with a table lamp, install a three-way socket and use a new three-way LED. Add a four-bulb lighting kit to a ceiling fan with a switch to allow you to switch on fewer than all four lights.

Remember to turn off lights when you leave a room. A rule of thumb for CFLs is to switch them off if you plan to be out of the room for 15 minutes or more. Switching them on and off more often will shorten their life. Contrary to popular belief, with the new electronic ballasts, "switching" does not use a large amount of current each time they're switched on.

*Do you have an energy-efficiency question for Jim? Email him at [contact@dulley.com](mailto:contact@dulley.com) or write to: James Dulley, Rural Missouri, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244.*

**Left:** The new efficient dimmable LED bulbs look similar to old incandescent bulbs. **Below:** All types and styles of LED bulbs are now available to replace almost any incandescent bulb.



photos courtesy of CREE Lighting



## Board Approves 2015 Budget and Rate Increase

In December 2014, the Board of Directors met and approved the 2015 Budget. The budget addressed challenges such as increased purchased power costs, system improvements necessary to ensure continued reliable service and the revenue required to achieve the Cooperative's financial obligations.

A major budget consideration for this year was an increase in purchased power costs for 2015. Periods of high demand for electricity during the first 3 months of 2014 set the stage for billing demand increases of at least \$430,000 by KAMO Power in 2015. Billing demands are based in part on average peak system loads set in prior months.

Along with routine maintenance, the 2015 Budget calls for the completion of a 3-phase line conversion out of the Cedar Springs substation. Additionally, the Cooperative plans to update its aging Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system over a 3-year period, including the replacement of remaining analog meters.

The biggest increase in the 2015 Budget is in right-of-way clearing. The Board of Directors has made a commitment to safeguard our system from damaging storms by accelerating the systematic trimming of trees that are growing too close to our lines. The Board believes this proactive approach will pay dividends in the future, both in savings and reliability.

Upon giving our budget information to rate consultant's Toth & Associates, Inc., they recommended that an overall rate increase of approximately 9% should be implemented effective April 1, 2015, which the Board approved. For example, a residential customer using 1,000 kWhs would see an increase of about \$10.60 per month to their bill. The rate increase should allow the Cooperative to meet the financial criteria for its lenders while still allowing annual retirement of capital credits.

If you are interested in seeing how the Cooperative can help you reduce your electric bills, we invite you to visit our website at [www.sacosage.com](http://www.sacosage.com) to learn more about rebates on high efficiency heat pumps as well as the possible benefits of a home energy audit. We truly want to do what is best for our members, and when you save, so do we. Together, we can make a difference.



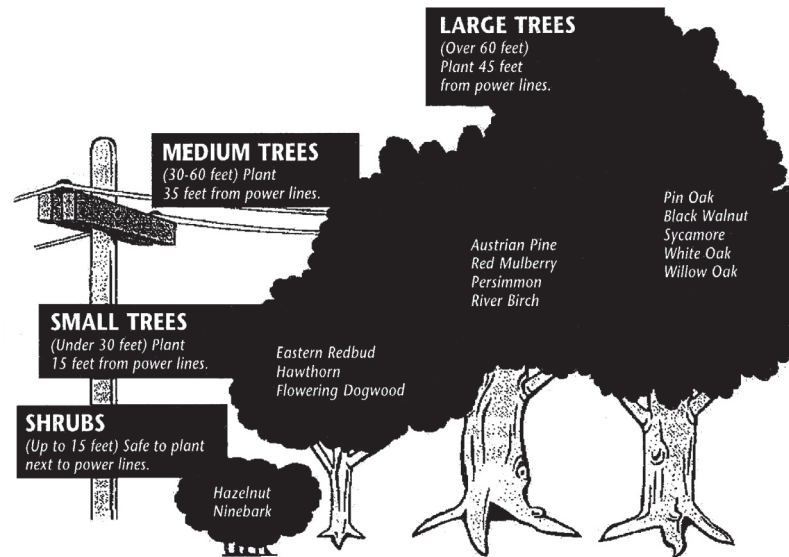
## Youth Tour Deadline

There is still time if you are a high school junior to enter the 2015 Youth Tour Program.

It is a chance to take a "trip of a lifetime" to our nation's capital this summer.

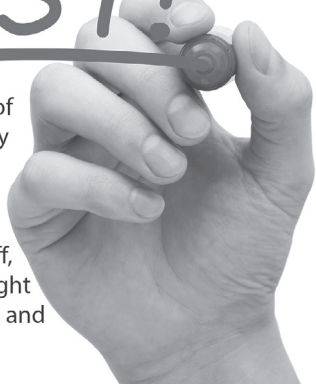
**"How electricity has affected my education?"** is the question you will need to answer as you enter the essay contest for an opportunity to travel along with approximately 85 other students from across Missouri to Washington D.C. in June. Deadline for entering is Friday, April 3rd. For more information you may visit our website at [www.sacosage.com](http://www.sacosage.com) or call Janna Dody or Aaron Ash at 417-876-2721.

## RIGHT-OF-WAY TREE PLANTING GUIDE



## SAFETY FIRST!

Wiring defects are a major cause of residential fires. Check periodically for loose wall receptacles, loose wires, or loose lighting fixtures. Listen for popping or sizzling behind walls. Immediately shut off, then professionally replace, any light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that spark and flicker.



### Energy Efficiency

### Tip of the Month

Upgrading to compact fluorescent lightbulbs and fixtures in a typical home costs about \$200, but with an annual savings of \$80, the initial investment pays for itself in 2.5 years with a 41-percent rate of return. That's an excellent investment by anyone's standards!