




A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
216 S. Vine, El Dorado, KS  
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# Butler REC NEWS

## From the Manager

This summer has been one for the record books. We experienced the most days over 100 degrees since 1980, and our electric bills suffered because of the extended heat.

The cooperative's power bill set a record for July of \$1,336,645.50, which was 31 percent higher than our previous summer record in August 2010.

I know many of you had record bills also, but with our new demand rate our average customer bill was 7 percent under what it would have been on the old style rate structure for July.

We continue to see that many of you are trying to conserve during from 5 to 8 p.m. Combined, you have lowered our peak by 1.5 to two megawatts, which is about a 5 to 7 percent reduction.

I was able to proudly report your accomplishments to the other Kansas Electric Cooperatives at our summer statewide meeting on August 1. They were very impressed with what you had accomplished. Keep up the good work, it will become more and more important as the

cost of electricity increases as it is projected.

Much of the increase is due to the costs of environmental regulations that require generation plant modifications. It might not seem like your bills are improving much, but you are making a difference.

### Metal Theft Threatens Safety, Lives:

Would you risk being hit by lightning for \$100? Seems a bit ludicrous, but desperate times cause folks to do foolish things.

Thefts of copper, aluminum, and bronze are on the rise, at abandoned commercial buildings, empty homes, and—most dangerously—at power substations near neighborhoods. We need your help to keep our equipment safe, prevent outages, and save lives.

At an electric co-op in Oklahoma last year, metal thieves took off with about \$100 worth of wire in a substation, but left behind a \$1 million repair bill after a fire destroyed regulators, switches, and a \$600,000 transformer. The co-op was able to move quickly to

reroute power to more than 3,500 consumers who were temporarily left in the dark after the incident.

The cost for scrap copper goes up and down, but recently it's been on the rise—and so have robbery attempts. In January 2011, scrap copper sold for five times the amount it went for in 2001. Still, it's hard to understand why folks would put their lives on the line for a few dollars.

The damage done to our system packs a big punch, since equipment can be ruined without the protection copper wires provide. There's also the potential for loss of life. In 2010, metal theft-related deaths occurred in North Carolina, West Virginia, Illinois, and Ohio. Many law enforcement officials believe that methamphetamine users are responsible for much of the problem.

We use copper to ground our equipment, protecting it from electrical surges and lightning by giving electricity a safe path to ground. We use a lot of copper wire in our substations, where we step-down high-voltage electricity

arriving from distant power plants before it travels to your neighborhood. Then another transformer near your home—either mounted on a utility pole or in a green box on the ground—lowers the voltage again so you can use the power at home. Copper is an essential component every step of the way.

Our linemen are highly trained professionals who understand the dangers of working with electricity and take proper safety precautions. To protect the public, we surround our substations with secure fencing and post warning signs. But some thieves will not be deterred.

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, or hanging wire, call the Butler REC immediately at 800-464-0060. If you see anyone other than our utility personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities, call the police.



R. Dale Short

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO

## Alyssa Scott Attends Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

**ALYSSA SCOTT** joined youth from across Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 9-15, in Steamboat Springs, CO.

Scott was selected from a group of high school applicants by Butler REC to attend the camp.

"Butler REC is proud to support the Youth Tour program and send our youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills," said Dale Short, Butler REC's Manager. "Our hope is that local students gained awareness of how our electric co-operatives work and how important it is for the youth to be involved in our community."

During their week-long stay in the Colorado Rocky Mountains, the students created a "candy cooperative". The students established a board of trustees and selected



Alyssa Scott, Edna, enjoys the view on top of Lookout Mountain.

a general manager who held daily membership meetings.

"The thing that I enjoyed the most about camp was the leadership workshop," Scott said. "It taught me

more about my personality type and how I can work with others to become a better leader."

The campers also took part in legislative presentations, a light and high voltage display and a competi-

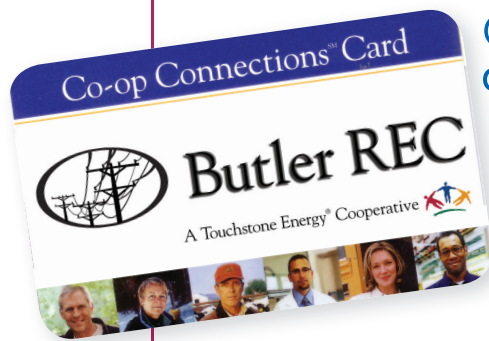
tion to build a transmission line. They explored the Steamboat Village, Old Town Steamboat Springs and toured the Craig Power Plant and Trapper Mine.

"The students this year exhibited amazing leadership potential," Shana Read, Kansas Electric Cooperatives Director of Communications said. "Throughout the week, campers developed their leadership skills and learned about electric cooperatives through camp activities. It is amazing to see how much the students' skills grow in just one week."

For more information about the trip, call Butler REC's office at 800-464-0060.



The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp brought students together from across Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming.



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## Brownouts, What Can You Do?

There are a wide range of causes for brownouts. Just like blackouts, overloads on the electrical system can trigger a brownout, as the generating facility is unable to provide enough power. It can also occur when events such as storms disrupt the distribution grid, or when there are other problems in the system.

Brownouts can last for a few seconds or a few hours, depending on the type of brownout and how quickly a power utility can get full power running again.

During a brownout, you should turn off appliances like computers, as the irregular power supply can damage them. It is also a good idea to turn off lights, leaving one on to alert the customer to the restoration of full power.

You may also want to check with the neighbors; if your house is the only one out, there may be a problem with the power supply in your residence, and you should take a look at your circuit board and breakers. You may have inadvertently caused a brownout by overloading your home's capacity

to carry power.

We also recommend putting a point of use surge suppressor on all important electronic devices. This can be purchased at any electronics store and serves as a line of defense against brownouts and surges.

If your house is not the only one affected, please report it to our offices so that we are aware of the problem. Your rapid reporting can help the utility fix the problem quickly.

When a brownout occurs during hot weather, make sure to keep the fridge closed and keep cool; people who are susceptible to heat such as the elderly should consider seeking out an air conditioned location to wait out the brownout.

If you have any questions about brownouts or surges please call us at 316-321-9600 or 800-464-0060.

### Tips to Head Off a Brownout

- ▶ **Listen to your mother.** ("What do you think—we own the electric company?!") Turn off everything not in use such as lights, TVs, printers and computers and unplug cell phone and battery chargers.
- ▶ **Reduce utility bills by as much as 30 percent.** Look for the Energy Star label, the symbol for energy efficiency, when shopping for major appliances, lighting, windows, and home electronics. Find retailers near you at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).
- ▶ **Shift energy-intensive tasks,** laundry and dishwashing, to off-peak energy demand hours nights and weekends.
- ▶ **Install CFLs.** Replacing four 75-watt incandescent bulbs with 23-watt fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) that use about two-thirds less energy and last up to 10 times longer saves \$190 over the life of the bulbs.

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