

# POWER LINE

NEWS FROM THE GRASSROOTS – AMERICA'S COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES • WINTER 2008

## Oregon

OREGON RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

### 2009 and Beyond

By Sandy Flicker, Executive Director, Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Salem, OR



Sandy Flicker

The end of the year is upon us, and we at the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA) are preparing for the 2009 legislative session to begin in January. This will be my last message to Power of Community as I am retiring after 17 years with ORECA at the end of the year.

Ted Case is joining ORECA as the new Executive Director January 1, 2009. He will be a wonderful addition to ORECA as he is currently Director of Government Affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Prior to joining NRECA in 1997, he worked as a legislative assistant for U.S. Representative Bob Smith (R-OR), specializing in natural resource and energy issues. He also served as a Staff Member on the House Natural Resources Committee's Water and Power Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

A native Oregonian, Ted grew up in Klamath Falls. He and his wife Nicole have a three-year old daughter, Malia and an infant son, Jack. I hope you will extend a warm welcome home to him in 2009.

I've always been passionate about keeping local control for cooperatives in Oregon and least cost rates. I will continue that fight as I work with ORECA as a contract lobbyist focusing on state legislative issues in the next session.

The main issue next session is likely going to be climate change. We've already begun discussions with state and federal legislators with the support of Power of Community grassroots members. Many of you contacted your representatives in Congress through [ourenergy.coop](http://ourenergy.coop). As the discussion moves to the local level in the coming months, you'll be hearing a lot about the Oregon Legislature's attempt to address climate change.

Governor Kulongoski recently released his Climate Change agenda. He'll be putting forward a comprehensive legislative package to address Climate Change for the 2009 session. His plan outlines an aggressive approach to minimize the impacts of global warming in four key areas: Greenhouse Gas Reductions; Energy Efficiency

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& Conservation; Renewable Energy; and Sustainable Transportation.

Electric cooperatives in Oregon have been proactively addressing climate change for decades through conservation programs and energy efficiency plans. As we work to draft sensible legislation to address this global concern, ORECA will be fighting to keep co-op members' interests in the minds of our legislators. We want to make certain that legislation does not unduly hurt our co-op members through rate increases; that co-ops are able to continue to access low-cost, emission-free hydropower through the Bonneville Power Administration; and that no business or industry shares an undue burden of reducing carbon emissions.

This upcoming year will bring lots of challenges for the state and the nation. I want to thank all of our Power of Community members in advance for their support and interest in keeping power reliable and affordable for Oregon families and businesses. •

## Oregon Co-ops Get Conservation



Attic insulation inspection – SALEM ELECTRIC

Oregon electric cooperatives have been investing in conservation efforts for almost 3 decades. In 2007 Oregon co-ops spent over \$2.8 million to save over 23.2 million kWh\*— enough energy to power and heat over 1093 homes for an entire year!

Conservation programs range from weatherization of existing homes, Energy Smart

design for new construction, rebates for Energy Star® appliances and water heaters, residential incentives on CFLs, commercial lighting programs, and upgrading transmission equipment to reduce losses on electric lines. Many of the programs offered are managed and partially funded by the Bonneville Power Administration.\*

\* Does not include reporting for 2007 from Columbia Basin Electric Co-op and Umpqua Indian Utility Co-op



**POWER LINE** is published by the Government Relations Department of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) in conjunction with the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA).

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## OTECC Blazing the Trail on Renewable Energy

*Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative – Baker City, OR*

As a leader in the supply of electricity to the citizens of Eastern Oregon, Oregon Trail Electric Consumers Cooperative (OTECC) has always felt it is important to help its members become as energy-efficient as possible. Efficiency and conservation efforts at OTECC are a priority and the success of these programs are significant.

Between the years 2001 and 2008, conservation programs have saved 11,656,613 kWhs, which has a value of \$2,517,368 in savings. How does OTECC do it? It offers programs for Water Heaters, Energy Star Homes, Energy Star Appliances, Heat Pumps, Irrigation Sprinkler and Motor Projects, Renewable Education, PV Systems, Utility System Upgrades, Cattle Fountains, Commercial Lighting, and CFLs and Showerheads.

OTECC listens to its members to come up with programs that are important to them and what will work in our service territory. A perfect example of a program that works in its service territory is the cattle fountain program—this is unique to Eastern Oregon. Not every program will achieve high levels of success in every region.

Renewable energy has also played an important role with OTECC, whether it's purchasing certified renewable energy from BPA beginning in 2002, or its most recent efforts at

renewable education. OTECC has installed a 1KV photo voltaic system at 5 of its area high schools. Each PV system comes equipped with a monitoring system designed to assist educators and students learn more about how renewable energy works and what role it can play in the overall power supply.

Even before renewable energy and climate change were popular issues OTECC was a leader in providing this alternative energy. About 10% of OTECC's load came from a renewable type generator, and its members paid \$91 million in excess power cost for renewable energy that was locally based.

Finally, with renewable energy comes OTECC's net metering program. Any member that installs and operates a solar, wind, fuel cell, or hydroelectric generating facility with the capacity of not more than 25 kW is eligible for its net metering program.

To date, OTECC has 9 members who are participating in net metering, totaling about 25 kW of green generation. Several additional projects are in the works so this number is expected to increase and OTECC looks forward to assisting our membership with integrating renewable energy into our system through net metering.\*

# Energy Efficiency at Central Electric

Central Electric Cooperative – Redmond, OR

*Meeting CEC members' demand for education and conservation options is the job of CEC Member Services Supervisor Vern Rice and Energy Specialist Bryan Boe.*

*Vern and Bryan provide our members information and education, and a range of purchase options for conservation and renewable energy. They work closely with dozens of Central Oregon businesses and individual members to provide various rebates and credits, the most popular of which are outlined below, under the terms of a three-year, \$1.1 million conservation rate credit program provided to CEC by Bonneville Power Administration.*

*Here are some of the current options available through CEC Member Services. That's our approach to conservation the co-op way, adopted 67 years ago, and still going strong.*

## **ENERGY STAR® NEW HOMES** *(Site built and manufactured homes)*

A cash rebate (\$800 - \$1,000) is available to builders of new, certified, site-built or manufactured, electrically heated homes. The local Energy Star Specialist helps get homes verified and certified. Heating contractors must be approved by CEC. Call a CEC Energy Specialist for more information.

**Vern:** "Certified Energy Star Homes have energy savings built in so you won't have to come back and do it later."

**Bryan:** "Passing the performance tests required for Energy Star certification is your assurance of superior efficiency."

## **Heat Pump Program** *(Available to owners of new or existing homes.)*

A cash discount (\$400 - \$800) or low interest loan is available to help install heat pumps properly. Pre-approval is required.

**Vern:** "This is CEC's most

popular program. We provide quality control checks to get heat pumps installed properly."

**Bryan:** "Our challenge is to wring every last nickel of performance out of your new heat pump."

## **RESIDENTIAL WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM**

Owners of electrically heated homes are eligible for financial incentives to improve the "building shell" of their homes to reduce heating costs. The amount of the incentive varies with the weatherization measure. We offer a free on-site energy analysis and follow-up inspection to help you get the job done right.

**Vern:** "This is CEC's longest running conservation program that has helped upgrade older homes since 1984."

**Bryan:** "We can currently help with floor insulation, attic insulation, duct sealing and windows. Homes built before 1980 are prime candidates for an audit."

## **Energy Star® Appliance Rebates** *(Available to owners of homes served by CEC.)*

Cash rebates (\$60 for clothes washers, \$25 for dishwashers) are available for Energy Star™ rated appliances, if your water heater is electric. There is a rebate of \$25 for an Energy Star™ rated refrigerator.

**Vern:** "Appliances cost more to run over their lifetime than you pay for them in the first place. So when you make a purchase, look for that Energy Star rating."

## **Water Heater Rebate Program** *(Available to owners of new or existing homes.)*

A \$50 cash rebate is available for new, qualifying electric water heaters in homes served by CEC.

**Vern:** "Water heating is usually the second-largest energy user in the home. When you have to buy a new water heater make sure it's extra efficient."

## **Solar Water Heater Program** *(Available to homeowners with an electric water heater.)*

A cash discount (typically \$500), or low interest rate loan, is available to help install approved solar water heating systems. Pre-approval is required.

**Vern:** "Discounts and tax credits can substantially reduce the cost of these systems. If your family uses lots of hot water you should check out solar water heating."

**Bryan:** "Solar water heating requires clear access to sunlight. Un-shaded south facing roofs are ideal."

## **Irrigation Rebates** *(Available to CEC irrigation accounts.)*

Cash rebates are available to CEC irrigators for efficient irri-

gation hardware (sprinklers, nozzles, etc.) and for efficient pump motors. An electrically powered irrigation system and irrigation account is required.

**Vern:** "You can use electricity more efficiently, use water more efficiently, and increase crop production. That's definitely a win-win-win situation."

**Bryan:** "Certain types of equipment qualify. Other types do not. Take our program information with you when you go shopping for irrigation products."

## **Compact Fluorescent Lighting** *(Available to any CEC account.)*

CEC co-sponsors the Change a Light, Change the World promotion that offers special, limited time, pricing for specialty CFLs sold at participating local retail outlets.

**Bryan:** "Through the promotions, the co-op buys down the cost of compact fluorescent and other efficient lighting products. You save money and electricity."

## **Solar Photovoltaic Program** *(Available to any CEC account.)*

Solar photovoltaic systems with an approved net metering agreement with CEC are eligible for a rebate of \$0.50 per watt of capacity.

**Vern:** "Photovoltaics generate electricity directly from sunlight. They're expensive, but eligible for rebates + state tax credits + federal tax credits."

**Bryan:** "Contact us before you start so we can help steer you through the maze with fewer bumps."

*continued on page 4*

# Over 1.5 Million Messages Sent to Congress By Terry Halter, NRECA

## OUR ENERGY, OUR FUTURE: A DIALOGUE WITH AMERICA

Oregon's Power of Community members joined electric cooperative advocates from 50 states to achieve an unprecedented milestone: they've sent more than 1.5 million messages to Congress as part of the Our Energy, Our Future™ grassroots awareness campaign.

"This total represents a momentous achievement," says Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. "Never in the history of electric co-ops have we attempted a grassroots effort on such a scale. I can guarantee that your members of Congress are getting the message. Lawmakers now have additional proof that cooperatives genuinely speak for their members, which reinforces our credibility and reframes the national energy debate."

During the past 10 months, co-op members pressed their

Congressional representatives on three critical questions regarding capacity, technology, and affordability. This effort jump-started discussion on the complexities of providing safe, reliable, and affordable power in an environmentally responsible fashion during the coming decades. Now with a new president and a new Congress taking office, the need to develop a national energy policy in a smart, affordable way must be stressed all the more. Electric cooperative advocates will need to continue the conversation.

The Our Energy Our Future campaign has an important role to play with newly elected House and Senate members. Educating them about your electric co-op and its concerns about energy and climate change issues is critical. When the 111th Congress convenes, House and Senate leaders plan a very fast start along several legislative fronts and quick action when the opening gavel drops in January 2009. Bills are expected on climate change, energy,

renewable energy tax incentives, financial markets oversight, and appropriations.

In 2009, we plan to continue the drumbeat for responsible energy policy that meets the needs of consumers by pressing policymakers to invest in renewable energy, clean coal technology, nuclear power, an updated transmission grid, and

energy efficiency improvements. Policymakers, including the Oregon Congressional delegation, must spearhead this monumental effort. It is vital that any path taken keeps electric bills affordable.

Thank you for playing a role in this effort. Continue the conversation by visiting [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).

## Energy Efficiencies at Central Electric

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### Net Metering

*(Available to any CEC account.)*

CEC members are eligible to generate their own alternative power using solar, wind, hydroelectric, or fuel cell systems. A valid net metering agreement must be in place and the system must pass a county and CEC inspection.

**Vern:** "You can generate your own renewable electricity to offset your usage."

**Bryan:** "And if there's any leftover, you can put it back on the CEC grid and get a credit on your bill."

### Green Power

*(Available to any CEC account.)*

CEC members are eligible to buy environmentally friendly green power from the Coffin Butte landfill gas-to-energy generating plant, owned and operated by CEC and 14 other electric cooperatives.

**Vern:** "You can help slow the pace of climate change by signing up for green power."

**Bryan:** "It's easy and it doesn't have to cost a lot." •



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Cooperative Association**

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