

# VVEC LINE LIFE

MAY 2026 | PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF VERDIGRIS VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE | A SUPPLEMENT TO OKLAHOMA LIVING | WWW.VVEC.COM



## Empowering the Next Generation: Youth Tour Winners Announced



Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative is proud to announce the winners of this year's Youth Tour and scholarship program - four outstanding students who represent the future of our communities: Lucy Williams of Oologah-Talala High School, Angel Martin of Caney Valley High School, Daylan Boyd and Hayden Stoy of Barnsdall High School.

Selected through a competitive essay process, these students demonstrated not only strong writing skills, but a clear understanding of leadership, community involvement and the cooperative difference.

Lucy Williams and Angel Martin have been selected to represent VVEC on the 2026 Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. During this once-in-a-lifetime experience, they will join

students from across the country to learn about leadership, government and the electric cooperative story. From visiting historic landmarks to meeting elected officials, the trip is designed to inspire, educate and empower the next generation of leaders.

Also recognized are Daylan Boyd, recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship, and Hayden Stoy, who was awarded a \$750 scholarship. These scholarships support their continued education and reflect their hard work, dedication and bright futures ahead.

We are incredibly proud of each of these students and can't wait to see the impact they will make. Congratulations on this well-earned achievement.

Your co-op family is cheering you on every step of the way!



Pictured left to right are: Lucy Williams, Oologah-Talala High School; Angel Martin, Caney Valley High School; Daylan Boyd, Barnsdall High School; Hayden Stoy, Barnsdall High School

VVEC encourages the safe, efficient use of electricity and actively supports community initiatives that benefit our members and the public.

### IN CASE OF AN OUTAGE

- First, check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
- Then, call the co-op at 371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, leave your information; every message will be answered.
- Download the SmartHub app at [www.smarthubapp.com](http://www.smarthubapp.com) to report outages from your smartphone.

### WINTER RESIDENTIAL RATES

October through March usage;  
November through April billing

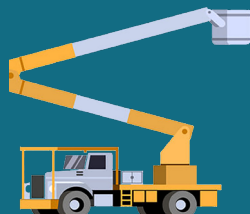
Customer Charge	\$40.00
Energy Charge	\$.08279/kwh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 62.088 mills per kwh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2% of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes, if applicable.

Tree crews are working to clear right-of-way on the Oologah and Javine substations.

Brush Coordinator:  
Chub Brewer  
918-586-6208



# MEMBER APPRECIATION LUNCH!

JUNE 5, 2026 | 11 AM - 1 PM

8901 E 146<sup>TH</sup> ST N  
COLLINSVILLE, OK 74021

© NRECA

## LOOK! A NEW WAY TO PAY!

MEMBERS CAN NOW CALL:

# (855) 941-3586

- TO MAKE A PAYMENT, WITHOUT FEES. NO MORE THIRD-PARTY PAYMENTS!
- TO CHECK YOUR BALANCE
- TO SIGN UP FOR AUTO-PAY

...AND SO MUCH MORE!

### WAYS TO PAY

IN OFFICE | BY MAIL | AT KIOSK  
AUTO-PAY | SMARTHUB  
BY CALLING 855-941-3586  
ONLINE AT [WWW.VVEC.COM](http://WWW.VVEC.COM)

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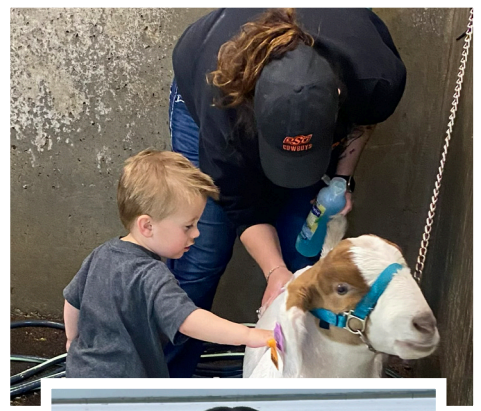
Scan the QR code to the left on a mobile device to download the SmartHub App.



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



## LANEY BRANEN



This month, we're proud to spotlight Laney Branen, Office Service Representative, who will celebrate two years with VVEC this July.

Laney has spent her time in Office Services, where she enjoys the family-like atmosphere and strong relationships with her coworkers.

Outside of work, she enjoys working in show livestock, spending time with friends and family - especially her nephew, Cutter - and going on day adventures with her dog, Hydie!

What makes Laney smile most? Making other people smile and her favorite quote reflects that awesome positivity: "Smile - it increases your face value!" - Dolly Parton

We're grateful to have Laney as part of the VVEC family and appreciate the positivity she brings every day.

*Fun fact: May is also her birthday month, so be sure to wish her a happy one!*

**MEMORIAL DAY**

Honor Their Courage. Remember Their Sacrifice.

**OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAY, MAY 25, 2026 IN OBSERVANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY.**

**WE WILL RE-OPEN ON TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026 AT 7:30 AM.**



# When wildfires spread, safety first!

## MAY IS NATIONAL WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH

Wildfires move fast, but research shows that most homes don't ignite from an unstoppable wall of flames. They ignite from embers - tiny burning pieces of wood or vegetation that can travel over a mile in the wind and land on or near your home. The good news? There are steps you can take to help your home withstand nearby flames.

The most important area to focus on is your Home Ignition Zone - your house and its 200-foot perimeter. Think of it in three layers: closest, middle and outer. Let's walk through what to do in each.

### 1. THE IMMEDIATE ZONE (0-5 feet from your home)

This is the most important zone. Start here. Your goal: create a clean, non-combustible buffer.

- Clear leaves, pine needles and debris from roofs and gutters.
- Repair missing or loose shingles and roof tiles.
- Screen vents with 1/8-inch metal mesh to block embers.
- Repair damaged window screens and replace broken windows.
- Remove mulch, firewood, plants, leaves and anything that can burn from around the house.
- Don't store anything under decks or porches; screen openings to prevent debris buildup.
- Keep the 5 feet closest to buildings, structures and decks clear of flammable materials. Swap mulch for gravel or crushed stone.

### 2. THE INTERMEDIATE ZONE (5-30 feet from your home)

This is your landscaping safety zone. The goal is to slow and reduce fire.

- Keep grass trimmed to 4 inches or shorter.
- Trim limbs off tree trunks for at least 10 feet above the ground.
- Space tree canopies at least 18 feet apart (more if on a slope).
- Make sure mature trees are 10-20 feet away from the home.
- Remove shrubs and low branches below trees to prevent fire from climbing.
- Clear plants and grass around propane tanks.
- Create fuel breaks with walkways, gravel paths, patios or driveways



**WILDFIRE  
GO BAG  
Checklist**

Safe  
Electricity.org

- ✓ FOOD & WATER
- ✓ CLOTHING & TOILETRIES
- ✓ MEDICATIONS
- ✓ FIRST AID
- ✓ FACE MASKS
- ✓ CELL PHONE & CHARGER
- ✓ FLASHLIGHT & BATTERIES
- ✓ IMPORTANT DOCS & PHOTOS
- ✓ PET ESSENTIALS

### 3. THE EXTENDED ZONE (30-200 feet from your home)

The goal here is to interrupt the fire's path and keep flames small and on the ground.

- Remove piles of leaves, fallen branches and dead plants.
- Remove small conifer trees growing between larger mature trees.
- Clear vegetation around sheds
- Leave at least 12 feet between canopy tops for trees 30 to 60 feet from the home
- Leave at least 6 feet between canopy tops for trees 60 to 100 feet from the home



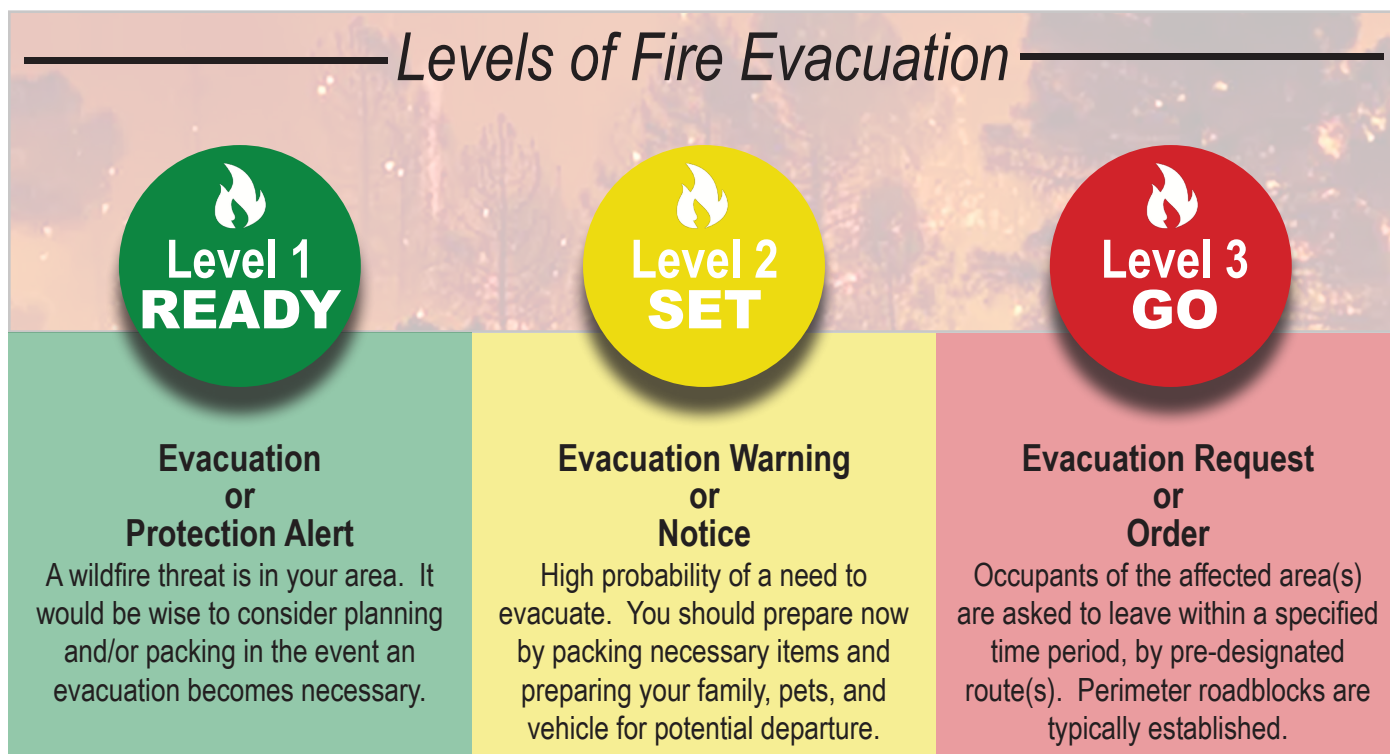
### ACCESS AND EMERGENCY PREP

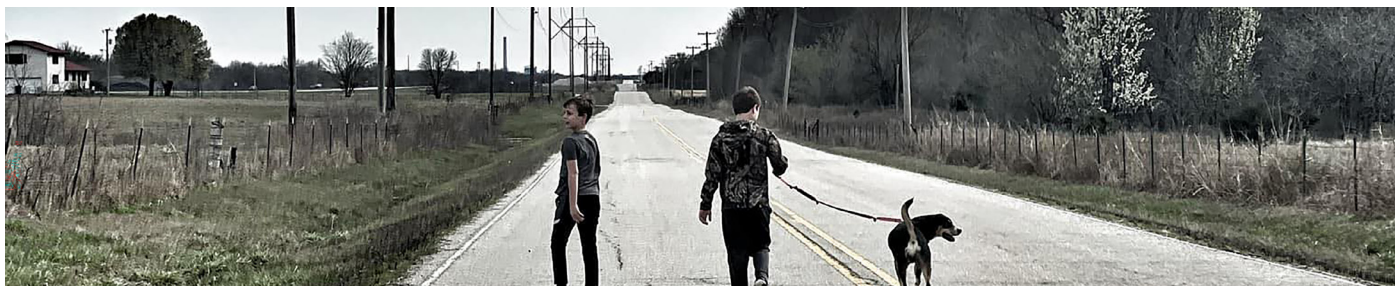
When every minute counts, make it easy to get help.

- Clearly mark your home address with numbers visible from the road.
- Know two ways out of your neighborhood.
- Have a predetermined meeting place.
- Make a wildfire evacuation plan (include your pets and livestock).
- Leave early if you feel unsafe - don't wait to be told.

You don't need to fireproof your entire property to make a difference. The small details closest to your home could determine whether it withstands a wildfire.

One weekend of cleanup and some thoughtful upgrades can dramatically shift the odds in your favor and bring peace of mind for seasons to come.





## Step Into Summer: A Heart-Healthy Start

It is easy to choose an exercise goal, pick the most difficult exercise regimen possible (we are looking at you, CrossFit) and then adopt an all-or-nothing attitude. After a few days of going all-in, your muscles ache and you wonder what you were thinking.

While many people are drawn to something more glamorous than walking, it has advantages. The only equipment required is a comfortable pair of shoes and proper outerwear, depending on weather conditions. Also, it is easy to start and even easier to continue as an exercise habit.

According to the Mayo Clinic, a majority of adults in the U.S. do not get the recommended 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week.

Experts at the Mayo suggest aiming for around 30 to 60 minutes of aerobic activity most days of the week. Also, try to incorporate muscle-strengthening exercises at least twice a week.

If your exercise routine is nowhere near 30 minutes most days, take heart. Any activity is better than none at all; you can start with any daily amount that is comfortable for you and increase it over time.

### Make a plan

Walking can have a greater impact on disease risk and various health conditions than just about any other remedy



available, according to Harvard. In fact, walking for 2.5 hours a week can cut your risk of heart attack by 30%. If 2.5 hours seems overwhelming, think of it as 21 minutes each day.

Other things to consider when starting a walking program:

- The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends starting slowly and building up to maintain motivation and avoid overuse injuries.
- ACSM advises to warm up at a slow pace for at least 5 minutes, increase your pace for 10 to 30 minutes, then cool down by walking at a slow pace (like you did to warm up) for at least 5 minutes.
- Slowly increase your time and distance, up to 20% every two weeks, until you reach your time or distance goal.

ACSM recommends walking or another moderate-intensity activity for 150 minutes each week for health benefits and 250 minutes or more if weight loss is the goal.

### Before you start



It is helpful to:

- Research a walking plan suitable for your fitness level.
- Find a walking buddy.
- Establish safe locations to walk, both indoors and outside.
- Track your progress with an activity tracker.
- Listen to music or audiobooks while walking.

***Before starting any exercise program, check with your doctor, especially if you have had a heart attack or have been diagnosed with heart disease. Walking is a great way to get active since you can easily adapt your routine depending on your fitness level.***



Many people have good intentions to move more, but then the day unfolds with little else other than chair time. You get to work and have that sit-down meeting, a nice co-worker brings in doughnuts (“What the heck?” that voice in your head reasons, and the heavy treat makes you sluggish), and the day is filled with several work fires to put out. You vow to move more tomorrow, but as they say, tomorrow never comes.

Instead of waiting for another day, find easy ways to increase movement today. The American Heart Association offers seven easy ways to boost your activity level with no gym membership required (although a gym is also a good way to get moving).

- Grab the leash and walk your dog. Both you and your four-legged friend will be healthier for it.
- Take your kid (or spouse or friend) for a walk. It is a great way to get face time without screens.
- Try a 10-minute home workout. Exercising in shorter increments can improve your health because the time spent moving adds up. People usually have an extra 10 minutes here or there throughout the day, but may not find a solid 30 minutes or an hour to exercise.
- Walk and talk. Or walk and work. Walk while you are on the phone, or use a walking desk at work. If it is nice outside, have a walking meeting.
- Tune into fitness. Walk or jog in place, lift weights, or do yoga while you binge watch your favorite episodes.
- Ditch the car. Park farther away from the building to get in extra steps. Or, bike or walk to your destination.
- Take the stairs, even if just for a floor or two. The elevator may go up, but your heart rate will not as you press the floor number and listen to the nondescript, piped-in music.

Stop putting off until tomorrow what you can do today. Look for opportunities to move more.

Your heart will thank you, and every step counts!



## small steps equal **BIG STRIDES**

Increasing activity improves your physical and mental health, stress levels, sleep, productivity, and more!

2.5

hours of walking each week for a year is like walking across the state of Wyoming

1

hour of dancing every week for a year is like walking from Chicago to Indianapolis

30

minutes of playing tennis (singles) is like walking a 5K

30

minutes of grocery shopping every other week for a year is like walking a marathon

10

minutes of stretching is like walking the length of a football field

20

minutes of vacuuming is like walking 1 mile



Source:  
heart.org



Line Life is published monthly by Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative, Collinsville, Oklahoma (ISSN 10884378) for its members in Tulsa, Rogers, Washington, Nowata and Osage counties.

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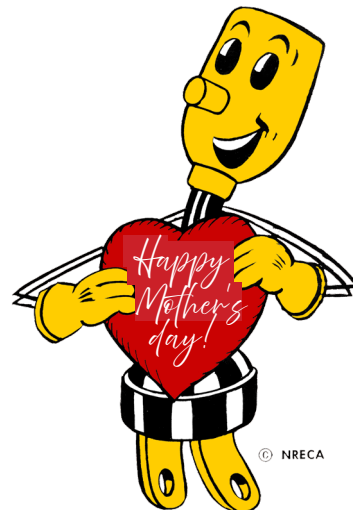
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**MAY 2026**  
VOLUME 85 | NUMBER 5

# CLASSIFIEDS

**SUBMIT ADS** to [classified@vvec.com](mailto:classified@vvec.com) or send to ATTN: Classified, P.O. Box 219 Collinsville, OK 74021. Ads must be in writing. Your account number, name, address and a phone number is required on all ads. The deadline for all ads is the 1st of the month. Ads submitted by the 1st of the month will run in the following month's newsletter. *Classified ads are a free service to VVEC members only. As many ads as space allows will be included in each issue. VVEC reserves the right to delete or shorten items or descriptions.*

- Professional, personalized dog grooming at your home. Small dogs only. Most dogs only \$40.00. Over 40 years experience. 918-381-1170
- Handyman service to repair and remodel; affordable plumbing and electric. Call or text for free estimate; references available. 918-231-6385
- 450-gal propane tank with approx 180-200 gal propane for sale. Would make excellent smoker. Located in Dewey area. Buyer will need to move. \$300. 918-467-0234.



## HAS YOUR STATUS CHANGED?

If you've recently gotten married, divorced, or experienced the loss of a spouse, please let us know so we can update your account. Keeping your information current helps ensure your capital credit account stays accurate and makes it easier for you to do business with us when you need to.

Due to federal legislation enacted after September 11, 2001, we are unable to discuss account details with anyone not listed on the account.

If you have been widowed, your account can be placed in your name, we'll just need you to update your application. Additionally, if a

parent or family member who held a VVEC account has passed away, please let us know so we can take care of those details. Accounts cannot remain in the name of a deceased individual.

While you're updating your information, it's also a great time to double-check that your service address is correct.

We're here to help every step of the way. Please contact our Office Service Representatives at 918-371-2584 - we're happy to assist you!



## MAY MYSTERY PICTURE

Think you recognize the location? Call Megan Jackson at 918-586-6241 **starting MAY 1** to submit your guess. The **first** correct answer wins a \$50 bill credit!

*Contest runs through the end of May.*

**April Mystery Location:**  
Wildhorse School Steps and Flagpole north of Prue