

# OKLAHOMA PUBLIC POWER

A publication of the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma

July 2013

## MESO Members from Across the State Participate in Pole Climbing School

More than 10 feet in the air, affixed to a utility pole, and playing catch with a football. Yes, that was the sight recently during Pole Climbing School sponsored by the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma (MESO) and Edmond Electric.

"We know that once we get a lineman up on a pole, the quicker we can get him thinking about something other than just hanging on, the better they will be up there," said Tom Dougherty, director of training and safety for MESO.

In addition to hands on training, the two-day school also included classroom sessions. The underlying message throughout the training was to emphasize that safety must be the first priority.

The more than a dozen stu-



dents – from Stillwater, Marlow, Watonga, Kingfisher, Newkirk and Collinsville – represented a wide range of experience.

"Some of the guys had some experience while others had

barely ever climbed," Dougherty said. "But, we offer something for everyone. Veteran climbers can pick up something new, and pass along information to our newer quys."

Shannon Dodd and Clint Seaman, both with Edmond Electric, helped with training responsibilities.

(see SCHOOL, page 10)

### Pryor and Google Launch Free Public Wi-Fi

A \$200,000 grant from Google, which operates a data center located in Pryor's MidAmerica Industrial Park, has allowed the city to create a free wireless network in the downtown area, from US 69 to Elliott Street and from Northeast First Street.

This marks the first free highspeed wireless Internet initiative in Mayes County, according to Barbara Hawkins of the Pryor Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Jimmy Tramel said. "The

City of Pryor is very fortunate to have Google. Since the day the company came to MidAmerica Industrial Park they have partnered with our community to help the city and its residents."

"Providing the citizens with free Wi-Fi in the downtown area is just the most recent project," continued Tramel.

For more information about the partnership between the City of Pryor and Google, contact Hawkins at 918-825-0157.

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    Department
    Recognized

## Obama Directs EPA to Issue Carbon Standards for New and Existing Power Plants as Part of Climate Change Plan

By Robert Varela, APPA

To provide you with good, consistent national background on the issue, we are sharing reporting from our friends at the APPA (American Public Power Association).

As this issue could impact every MESO member city and electric customer, we, along the APPA, will monitor the President and EPA's efforts closely and be the voice for our member cities and their customers.

As part of a broader climate action plan, President Obama yesterday said he is directing the Environmental Protection Agency to work expeditiously to complete "carbon pollution" standards for both new and existing

power plants. In a separate June 25 memorandum, the president directed EPA to re-propose by Sept. 20 its proposed New Source Performance Standard to limit greenhouse gas emissions from new power plants, and to propose standards, regulations, or guidelines, as appropriate, by June 1, 2014, for existing, reconstructed and modified plants. The memo directs EPA to issue final rules or guidelines for existing plants by June 1, 2015.

APPA supports several aspects of President Obama's proposal, but has concerns about other aspects of his plan (see story on page 5).

The guidelines addressing existing power plants are to include a requirement that states submit

Pond Creek\*

Prescott, Ark\*

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to EPA the implementation plans required under Section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act and its implementing regulations by no later than June 30, 2016, the memo said. The memo calls for EPA to work with states, the power sector, labor leaders, non-governmental organizations, other experts, tribal

(see EPA, page 10)

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### **MESO Welcomes Osburn's Leadership at OMPA**

David Osburn, a thirty-year industry veteran, prepares to assume leadership at the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority (OMPA) as general manager Aug. 1 succeeding Cindy Holman who is retiring.

"We look forward to working with Dave in his new role as general manager at OMPA," said Tom Rider, general manager for the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma.

Osburn brings three decades of industry experience to his new role. He joined the team at OMPA in

2007 and has served as director of operations, director of engineering and operations, and as assistant general manager.

He led the OMPA's transition from a part-time dispatch center to a 24-hour, seven days a week operation,

(see OSBURN, page 10)



### **MESO/Edmond Electric Offering Emergency Restoration Training**

MESO and Edmond Electric will partner to offer Emergency Restoration Training July 30 and 31 in Edmond.

The a two-day training session will be led by Tom Dougherty, director of training and safety for MESO. It will cover the basics of storm restoration and potential problems following natural disasters such as tornado, wind, hail, and ice storms.

Students will receive both classroom and handson training in a wide variety of areas including: how to repair downed power lines, how to replace broken cross arms and blown fuse links, proper communications protocol, and more.

Both journeyman lineman and apprentices will gain valuable knowledge and skills to deal with local situations and if they are called upon during a Mutual Aid event. Your local two or three- man crews will work closely with teams from other communities.

Contact Dougherty at tomd@meso.org to register or learn more about the Emergency Restoration Training.



## **Celebrating Holman's Service to OMPA**

Cindy Holman will retire from the Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority (OMPA) July 31 as general manager after 28 years of service.

"On behalf of MESO, I congratulate Cindy on a great career with OMPA and offer her our best wishes," said Tom Rider, general manager of the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma. "We have enjoyed our working relationship.

"She will be remembered for countless contributions and accomplishments, we will always appreciate her service and dedication to the member cities."

During her six-year tenure as OMPA's General Manager, Holman led additions to OMPA's power supply including the John W. Turk, Jr. Power Plant, a contract with the Canadian Hills Wind Farm, and a landfill-gas-to-energy project, which is the first such project to begin commercial operations in the state of Oklahoma.

She also was involved with the decision to construct the Charles D. Lamb Energy Center in Kay County, Oklahoma. Construction on the facility will begin in 2014. Her leadership included four new Oklahoma cities joining OMPA and two Arkansas cities signing- short-term contracts.

A widely recognized leader in the industry, Holman has served on numerous national and regional boards and committees, including: the Transmission Access Policy Study Group, Southwest Power Pool, and the American Public Power Association.

Holman became only the second general manager at OMPA



in 2007. She served in many roles during her career at OMPA including director of operations and chief financial officer and the director of the Financial Services Department.

## **GRDA Learns from Customer Satisfaction Survey**

Findings in a new customer satisfaction survey, conducted by the Grand River Dam Authority, helped gauge customer thoughts on a number of issues.

The survey contained questions on topics ranging from generation assets, outage response and customer service, to technical support, staff professionalism and overall communication. The online survey was sent to representatives of all GRDA customer classes (municipal, cooperative, industrial) in May.

"We were just really appreciative of the response we received," said GRDA Corporate Communications Director Justin Alberty. "Internally, it's good information for GRDA to have and serves as an important yardstick for our staff."

As expected, "electricity" and "customer service" ranked one and two at the top of the list of GRDA-related topics customers

considered most important. Following those customer ranked in order and terms of importance,

"working relationship with staff", "communications" and "GRDA image." Of the 45 customer representatives that responded to the online survey, 38 selected the "ele

survey, 38 selected the "electricity" option.

The survey also found a majority of customers (59 percent, or 27 respondents) feel it is "very important" GRDA owns its own electric generation assets. Meanwhile, an overwhelming majority (76 percent) had a favorable opinion of the Authority's current generation options.

Those are options that have been shared with customers at recent meetings, including an early June municipal customer group meeting at GRDA's Engineering and Technology Center (ETC) in Tulsa. Prior to that, GRDA also discussed the generation issue during the 2013 MESO Public

Power Conference in Midwest City in April. It was also a topic at the annual customer meetings, held at the GRDA Ecosystems and

Education Center in Langley in January.

Last month, customer representatives were also on hand at the GRDA Board meeting (held at the Oklahoma State Capitol) to share their thoughts on GRDA's future generation plan. At its July 10 meeting, the board will continue the discussions on future generation and the final plan.

Anyone interested in seeing the full results from the GRDA Customer Satisfaction Survey can contact Alberty at <a href="mailto:jalberty@grda.com">jalberty@grda.com</a>.

## APPA Supports Some Parts of Obama's Climate Change Plan, But Has Concerns About Other Aspects

By Robert Varela, APPA

APPA supports several aspects of President Obama's plan to address climate change, including his proposals to increase energy efficiency efforts, streamline development of hydro power and other renewable resources, and increase use of nuclear power. The association yesterday said it also supports the President's call for an "all of the above" strategy, including coal, when it comes to the fuels used to produce electricity. At the same time, APPA has significant concerns with several other aspects of the President's proposal.

First, APPA is concerned about the potential or likely impacts of the President's directive to the Environmental Protection Agency to expedite regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from power plants by establishing New Source Performance Standards under the Clean Air Act. APPA is encouraged that the President directed EPA "to re-propose last year's flawed proposed rule for new power plants that effectively banned new coal-fired plants." However, APPA is concerned that the net effect of a re-proposed rule may be the same. The association urged EPA "to make substantial changes, including provisions that differentiate between fuel types and set a standard for coal that can be achieved using current commercially available technology."

Of even greater concern is how EPA will address emissions from existing power plants, APPA said. Under the Clean Air Act, EPA is to set broad national guidelines, not numeric emissions requirements or limits, and allow the states to develop specific programs to implement those guidelines. Since there is no commercially available technology to control greenhouse gas emissions from power plants, "state programs will likely and appropriately vary depending on a number of factors," APPA noted. Thus, if done correctly, greenhouse gas emissions programs for ex-

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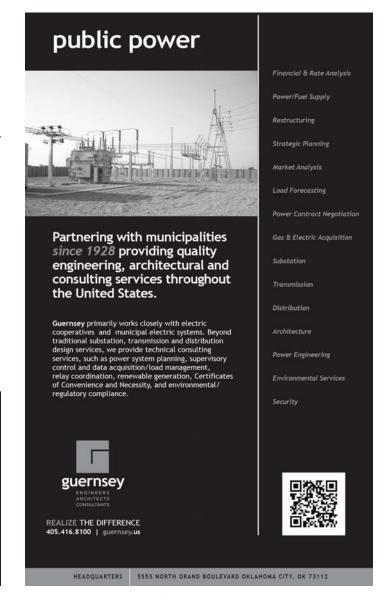
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"Electrical Wasuafacturer's Representations"

isting coal plants "would not necessarily prohibit their operation." APPA said it looks forward to working with EPA on these rulemakings.

APPA wants to keep electricity affordable, "but this becomes a challenge under the President's proposal." The shift from coal to natural gas for electric generation is already creating several cost and operational issues, including fuel price volatility for utilities and their customers, the need for additional pipeline capacity and storage, lack of flexibility in pipeline rate schedules to accommodate the needs of electric generation, and misalignment of the gas and electric days, APPA said. "With respect to increased use of renewable energy sources – a goal strongly supported by APPA and its members – it is not clear that the President's proposal includes a recognition (see APPA, page 11)



## OMPA WISE Programs Promote High-Efficiency Heat Pumps and Air Conditioners

The Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority's (OMPA) WISE Rebate & Loan Programs help participating member cities to encourage residential and commercial customers to install one of three types of heat pumps.

Both the utility and the customer can enjoy the benefits of a high efficiency heat pump. The utility benefits from the reduction in summer peaks and overall improvement in load factor.

During the summer, higher-efficiency air conditioners and heat pumps can help reduce customers' cooling costs. Customers heating with heat pumps should have lower bills for most of the winter.

WISE offers low-interest financing to qualified residential customers for approved energy saving measures including new

heat pumps and air conditioners, electric water heaters, extra insulation, programmable thermostats, weather-stripping and more.

Both secured (home equity)

and unsecured loans are available through the Bank of Okla-

homa at a below-market interest rate. Loans can range from \$1,000 to \$100,000 with payment schedules from 36 months to 15 years (depending on type of loan).

For more information on the WISE Rebate and Loan Programs, visit the OMPA website at <a href="https://www.ompa.com/programs/wise-rebate-programs">www.ompa.com/programs/wise-rebate-programs</a>.

**66**Your mind is for creating ideas, not for holding onto them.

David Allen, author of personal and organizational books



## Claremore Electric Department Recognized by MESO



The Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma (MESO) recognized the Claremore Electric Department for outstanding achievement in electric operations and safety.

"Claremore Electric's success comes from a commitment to provide the very best service in the safest manner possible," said Tom Rider, general manager of MESO. "Employees complete safety reviews before each job and attend monthly training and safety sessions in addition to other training provided by the utility."

Claremore was recognized in the category for cities with more than 10,000 residents. The department was also recognized for having zero days away from work for 2012, according to information provided to MESO. Director of Electric Utility Larry Hughes said workers have to complete 8,000 hours on the job to become a journeyman lineman and pass a test once a year afterwards.

Claremore Electric Utility's employee training is in conjunction with MESO and tests are administered and graded through the program.

"Most of our (workers) are scoring in the 90th percentile on the testing," he said.

Rider said it's not just the book and material training, but also onsite experience with the crew and crew chief that brings success into the work place.

"Making sure the job is done right the first time and every time is the key."

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## Coffeyville, KS Municipal Light & Power Recognized

Coffeyville, KS Municipal Light & Power, the city's electric division, was named for Outstanding Achievement in MESO's annual Electric Operations and Reliability Competition in the four-state region for 2012. The utility was recognized in the category for cities over 10,000 population and cited for achieving a high level of service reliability for member cities.

Coffeyville Light & Power had the highest reliability level of service recorded by public power systems in 2012 with power being available 99.9970% of the time meaning the average customer lost power for less than thirty-two minutes out of 8,760 hours in the last year.

The city-owned utility also typically identified, responded to, and corrected a power outage problem in two hours on average. By hav-



ing local ownership of the electric system and crews located within two miles of most customers, customers don't wait for electric service crews in Coffeyville. While providing excellent service and response time to its customers, Coffeyville Light & Power also had an outstanding safety record for the year. In 2012, Coffeyville Light & Power had no "lost days" – days where workers were off the job due to an on-the-job injury.



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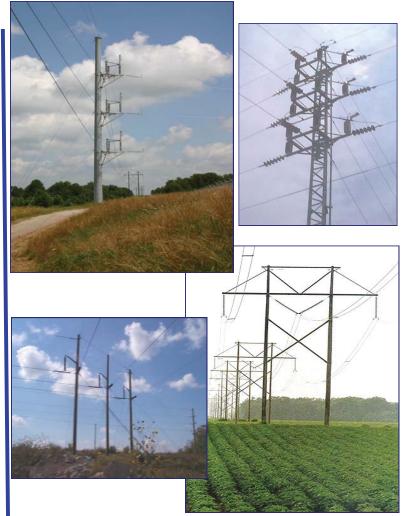
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**EPA** (continued from page 2)

officials, other stakeholders, and members of the public.

Obama directed EPA, to the extent possible, to:

- tailor the regulations and guidelines to reduce costs;
- allow the use of marketbased instruments, performance standards, and otherregulatory flexibilities;
- ensure that the standards enable continued reliance on a range of energy sources and technologies; and
- ensure that the standards are developed and implemented in a manner consistent with the continued provision of reliable and affordable electric power for consumers and businesses.

The president said he remains

firmly committed to his 2009 pledge that by 2020, America would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in the range of 17 percent below 2005 levels if all other major economies agreed to limit their emissions as well.

To meet a goal of doubling renewable electricity generation by 2020, the plan calls for the Interior Department to permit another 10 gigawatts of renewables on public lands by 2020, and calls for expanding and modernizing the grid as directed in a June 7 presidential memorandum. The plan sets a new goal for the federal government: to consume 20 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2020, more than double the current goal of 7.5 percent.

In coming weeks, the Depart-

(see EPA, page 11)

#### **School**

(continued from page 1)

"We thank Edmond Electric, Shannon and Clint," Dougherty said. "Our partnership is what makes this training happen."

Contact Dougherty at tomd@ meso.org to learn more about MESO training programs.









#### Osburn

(continued from page 3)

which has provided power cost savings for members and the ability to respond quickly to changes in the market place on an hourly basis due to the nature of real time market operations.

Osburn's other industry experience includes serving as general manager of Richmond Power & Light utility in Indiana. In addition to an electrical distribution system, the utility has a coal-fired power plant for the municipal system that serves approximately 21,500 customers.

He has served on the American Public Power Association Board and the Indiana Municipal Power Authority Board. He is a past recipient of APPA's Harold Kramer-John Preston Personal Service Award.

He is a graduate of Purdue University with a bachelor's of science degree in Electrical Engineering and received his master's in business administration degree from Indiana Wesleyan University.

#### **EPA**

(continued from page 2)

ment of Energy will issue a draft of a solicitation that would make up to \$8 billion in (self-pay) loan guarantee authority available for a wide array of advanced fossil energy projects under its Section 1703 loan guarantee program, the plan said. DOE will take comments on the draft solicitation, with a plan to issue a final solicitation by this fall.

The president's plan sets a new energy efficiency goal: "Efficiency standards for appliances and federal buildings set in the [president's] first and second terms combined will reduce carbon pollution by at least 3 billion metric tons cumulatively by 2030 – equivalent to nearly one-half of the carbon pollution from the entire U.S. energy sector for one year – while continuing to cut families' energy bills."

Through steady, responsible action to cut carbon pollution, we can protect our children's health and begin to slow the effects of climate change so that we leave behind a cleaner, more stable environment," the plan said. The effects of climate change already are being felt, the plan said, noting that last year was the warmest on record for the

contiguous United States.

"Cutting carbon pollution will help spark business innovation to modernize our power plants, resulting in cleaner forms of American-made energy that will create good jobs and cut our dependence on foreign oil," according to the plan. "Combined with the administration's other actions to increase the efficiency of our cars and household appliances, the president's plan will reduce the amount of energy consumed by American families, cutting down on their gas and utility bills."

The plan is posted on the White House's website.

#### **APPA**

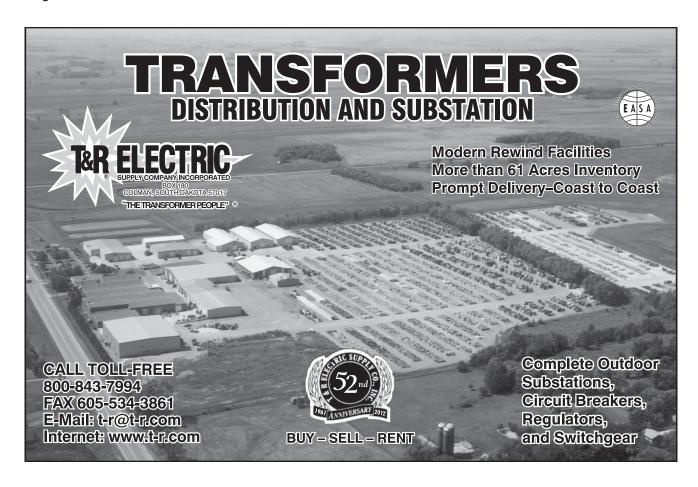
(continued from page 5)

that the predominant renewables, wind and solar, must be backed up on a one-for-one basis by another source of electricity, usually natural gas."

Finally, APPA said, the administration's repeated proposals to severely limit the ability of state and local governments to issue taxexempt bonds is inconsistent with the President's call for increased investments by public power

utilities, the hardening of public infrastructure against the effects of climate change, and lowering consumers' utility bills.

APPA's statement is posted in the newsroom of its website.



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