



The official  
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## 2 in-teg-ri-ty:

*firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values.*

### Integrity Matters

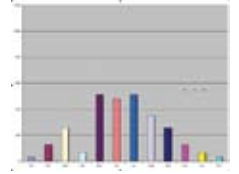
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# Prevent Fires by Taking Safety Precautions

February is usually the beginning of Oklahoma's fire season. However, this year February isn't the beginning, it is the continuation of a fire season that has already burned more than 416,000 acres of land, destroyed hundreds of structures, killed two people, and killed or maimed numerous head of livestock.

Being 12 to 14 inches below normal rainfall amounts is the biggest cause of the grass fires burning across the state. But humans are contributing to the fires, both deliberately and accidentally.

Cushing Fire Chief Dennis Fisher says preventing grass fires and protecting people and property is the purpose behind Gov. Brad Henry's recent burn ban. The ban makes it illegal to burn trash, have campfires or grill outdoors.

But the lack of rain, coupled with low humidity and high winds continue to fuel grass fires that spread across the state.

"Any time you see a fire, call 911 or your local fire department," says Fisher. "Don't assume someone has already reported it."

He goes on to say that if you are instructed to evacuate your home, quickly grab the necessary items you need and leave.

"Don't worry about shutting off the electricity to your home or any out buildings," he says. "Our firefighters are trained in how to pull a meter, and make the structure safe so they won't have the threat of getting electrocuted while battling the fire."

Although this winter is warmer than usual, Fisher says people are still using their fireplaces.

"We're finding they're using fireplaces as their primary heat source, because they're trying

to keep down bills due to the high gas prices. Plus, people are trying to burn trash in their fireplace since they can't burn it outside.

"This can be dangerous because it sends embers up the chimney and onto the dry ground," he says.

Fisher recommends burning only good, seasoned wood and making sure the chimney is clean. "And don't burn newspapers or magazines."

He says to be careful with the ashes after having cleaned the fireplace.

"Put them in a metal container, such as a bucket, for two to three days and wet them down. If you spread them on the ground after that time, wet them down again and make certain they are no longer hot or burning," he says.

Fisher reminds everyone violating the burn ban is serious and can result in both a monetary fine and time in jail.

"People just need to be aware of what they're doing," he says.

"Our normal fire season is from Feb. 1 to March 31, so we haven't even started the heavy part of the season yet."



# A Matter of Integrity

by Jack Clinkscale, General Manager

My son and I were having a conversation recently and the talk turned to integrity. Now that he is in college and only comes home on occasions that involve money or something else he might need, we have fewer occasions to talk about the meaningful things in life. Since he will soon be out in the real world having to earn a living, I figure I better take advantage of the short time I have left to impart any last words of wisdom to him.

Integrity is a learned behavior. I don't believe one is born with an inherent sense of integrity; it is something that is first learned from those around us and later from our own life experiences. Unfortunately, integrity seems to be less visible now than in our grandfathers' generation. Many business deals involving millions of dollars were once settled with a handshake. Nowadays we must sign multiple documents just to rent or buy a house, get cable or satellite

TV, and yes, even to receive electric service.

There are many things in America that result from wealth. Big homes, new cars and boats, a home on the lake, and a fine wardrobe are status symbols for today's society. Integrity is different. Whether you are rich,

*"Whether you are rich, poor, or somewhere in between, anyone can have integrity."*

poor, or somewhere in between, anyone can have integrity. Wealth does not guarantee integrity, just as poverty does not exclude integrity. Integrity can be built over a lifetime and lost in a minute. And sadly, when integrity is lost it cannot easily be regained.

I value integrity in a person much more than wealth, possessions or social status. In trying times, wealth and trendy things come and go but integrity never varies. I've heard it said "you can't take it with you." Usually

this is in reference to one's worldly possessions when we all make that inevitable trip to wherever we go in the afterlife dictated by our personal beliefs. I believe you can take integrity with you.

I also believe integrity is with you 24/7 or not at all. You can't have integrity at home and lose it when you go to your business or job. It doesn't take time off; you either have it all the time or not at all.

I told my son he could question my judgment, my intelligence, my lifestyle or any other thing he might take issue with, but don't question my integrity. He, probably like you, wondered what had caused me to go on at length about integrity. I didn't really have a reason, but the older I get, much like my wise old grandfather, I find myself thinking of things of a philosophical nature. I'm sure before long, I'll start most of my sentences with "back in my day..."

## THE LAMP

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# Long-Time Lineman Kenny Templeton Retires

On Friday, Jan. 6 Kenny Tempeton hung up his line-  
man's hooks and headed for the house.

Kenny came to work at IEC in 1967 as a lineman. He  
was promoted to foreman in 1974 and remained in that posi-  
tion until he left in 1981 to work in the oil field.

Kenny returned to the co-op in 1989 and became fore-  
man in 1995. In 1996 he became the co-op's safety coor-  
dinator, where he helped the linemen and servicemen work  
safely. He returned to being a lineman in 2001.

Don't look for Kenny to be sitting in a rocking chair  
on the porch now that he's retired. He has a lot of ways to  
spend his free time. Kenny is a horseman, he makes saddles  
and numerous other leather items, and he's planning to spend  
time with his grandchildren.

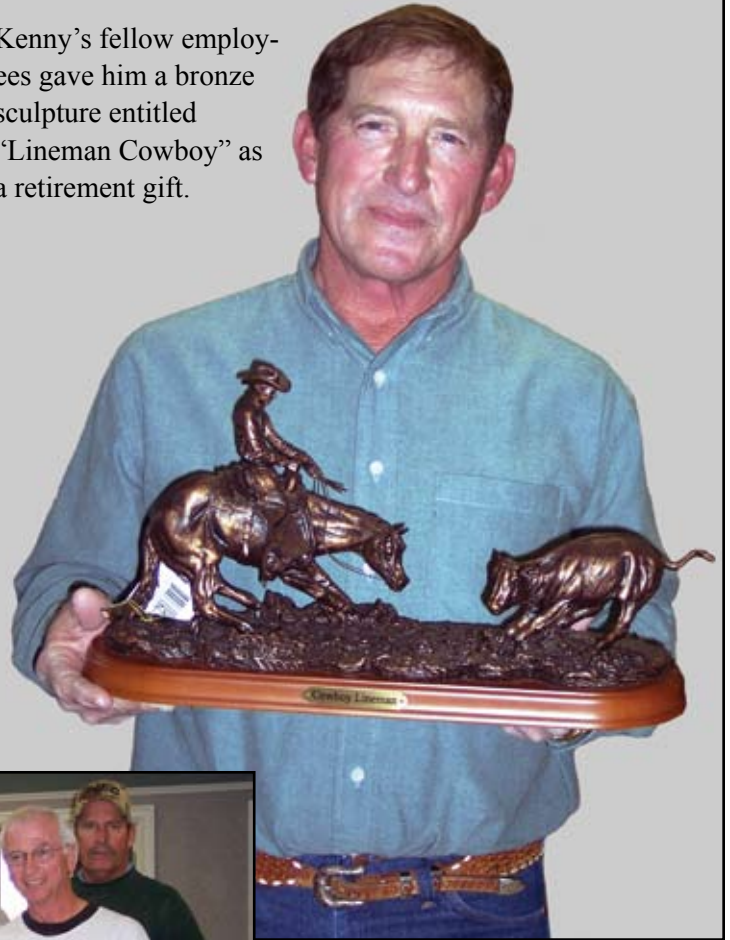
Always quick with a smile, handshake and a joke, he is  
well-liked among his co-workers.

"We wish Kenny well," says IEC General Manager Jack

Clink-  
scale,  
"but  
we're  
certainly  
going  
to miss  
him."



Kenny's fellow employ-  
ees gave him a bronze  
sculpture entitled  
"Lineman Cowboy" as  
a retirement gift.



## Kenny and the Old Guys

No, they're not a singing group.  
They are some of the Operations per-  
sonnel who have worked with Kenny  
the longest. They include (left to right)  
David Donalson, Bob Peterson, Rick  
Davis, Mike Allen, Charlie Taylor and  
Jim Morgan.

# Uncle Sam Offers Tax Credits for Energy Efficient Home Improvements

If you made energy efficient improvements to your home in  
2005, you could be eligible for government-sponsored tax credits.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, which into effect in August,  
provides valuable federal tax credits to consumers who made  
certain, specified energy-efficiency upgrades to their homes, or  
purchased fuel-efficient hybrid-electric vehicles.

If you made improvements to the shell of your home such as  
installing energy efficient windows, insulation, or envelope and  
duct sealing; air conditioners and heat pumps, or water heaters,  
you could be eligible for a tax credit.

Also, if you purchased a new hybrid vehicle, installed solar  
equipment such as photovoltaic cells and solar water heating sys-  
tems, or fuel cells, there are tax credits that may apply to you.

Naturally, there are qualifications and requirements you need  
to meet. So, the best thing to do is visit with your tax professional.  
He or she can tell you if you are eligible for any of these credits.

To learn more about these tax credits – for your 2005 or 2006  
taxes – visit [www.ase.org/content/article/detail/2654](http://www.ase.org/content/article/detail/2654) or [www.energytaxincentives.org](http://www.energytaxincentives.org).

# RECIPE



## We have Programs to Help You Save Energy and Money

There are a number of ways you can reduce your energy bill in the coming months. While IEC works hard to minimize the impact a price increase will have on you, here are some easy ways for you to take advantage of some extra savings right away.

**\$** Request an energy audit. This free service allows a trained professional from IEC to come into your home or business and evaluate your energy use. We'll look for ways you may be able to save money!

**\$** Implement energy efficiency improvements and activities in your home. Often, relatively simple things like putting plastic over your windows in the winter, purchasing a certain furnace (if you're in the market for a new one), and turning the thermostat down a notch or two, can add up to big savings. We're happy to share some of these cost-saving ideas with you.

**\$** Switch to budget billing and/or automatic payment options. When the bitter winds of winter are blowing and are causing heating bills to rise, spread those costs out over several months with our budget-billing program. Budget billing can be a helpful way for you to effectively plan and balance your energy spending. And, you can also have your energy payments automatically withdrawn each month from an account you designate. This not only can save you money, but also time each month!

These are just a few ways you can save money. We'd like to visit with you about other options that may be worth considering. Give us a call at (918) 358-2514 and let us get to work for you!

*February is National Heart Month. This recipe is both delicious and good for you. For more heart healthy recipes, visit [www.AmericanHeart.org](http://www.AmericanHeart.org).*

## Chicken & Toasted Walnut Salad

12 oz. chicken tenders	1/4 tsp. pepper
Vegetable oil spray	3/4 cup halved green or red seedless grapes
1/4 cup fat-free or light sour cream	1 med. rib of celery, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp. fat-free half-and-half or fat-free milk	1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
2 Tbsp. fat-free or light mayonnaise	1/4 cup finely chopped dried apricots
1/2 tsp. curry powder (optional)	1/4 cup finely chopped walnut pieces, dry-roasted
1/4 tsp. salt	

Discard all visible fat from the chicken. Heat a large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Remove from the heat and lightly spray with vegetable oil spray. Cook the chicken for 5 minutes on each side, or until no longer pink in the center. Transfer to a cutting board to cool slightly.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the sour cream, half-and-half, mayonnaise, curry, salt, and pepper until completely blended.

Stir in remaining ingredients except the chicken. Chop the cooled chicken into bite-size pieces. Stir into the salad. Serve or cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

**SERVING SUGGESTIONS:** Place 1/2 cup of salad in hollowed out apple halves.  
**YIELD:** 4 1/2-cup servings.

*This recipe and others which have been printed in past issues of The Lamp, can be found on our Web site at [www.iecok.com](http://www.iecok.com).*

## Standards Raised for AC Efficiency

The government significantly raised energy efficiency standards for air conditioners in January. And a recent survey indicates 90 percent of homeowners know nothing about it.

The 2005 Home Air Conditioning Test by Emerson, an air-conditioning manufacturer, also said only one out of 10 homeowners knows the seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) of the family's air conditioner.

The SEER tells you how energy efficient your air conditioner is. The SEER rating is determined by dividing the air conditioner's total cooling output

by the amount of energy it uses. The Department of Energy's new energy-efficiency standards mandate that all air conditioners manufactured after Jan. 23 must meet a minimum rating of 13 SEER, up 30 percent from the previous 10 SEER standard.

Some manufacturers are targeting the compressor—which pumps refrigerant through the system—when making improvements, resulting in quieter, lighter and smaller systems.

For homeowners, this means purchasing a new air conditioner this spring could reduce energy bills.