

Country News



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K.C. Electric Offers QuickPay

BY TIMOTHY J. POWER, GENERAL MANAGER

Online retail and banking are no longer considered new technologies. Many of you have probably made purchases online and/or regularly use your online bank account. As more and more businesses continue to go online, we want to make sure we are keeping up.



Timothy J. Power

With this in mind, we will now be offering QuickPay. This is K.C. Electric's version of online bill pay. By going to our website (www.kcelectric.coop), you can click on our QuickPay logo and securely pay your bill online. In addition, you will also be able to view your bill online. There is no charge for this service.

New website

In addition to QuickPay, we will be revamping our website in the months ahead. We will be giving it a new look and providing

more timely and useful information. Stay tuned as we look to launch the new website in December or January.

Thank you

I just wanted to thank all of you who participated in the customer satisfaction survey we sent out this summer. The

survey was sent to a random sample of just over 1,000 members. I am happy to report that K.C. Electric received a score of 85 on the survey. This is an extremely good score, especially when you compare it to the average electric cooperative score of 79 and the average investor-owned electric utility score of 75. We appreciate your support and look forward to continuing to provide you with quality service at an affordable price. (Carl Adolf Jr. 302750000)

Getting a Lesson in Aerial Spraying 101

BY BEN ORRELL, MEMBER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE

I didn't know enough about aerial spraying to be conversant, so I recently paid a visit to a pro. For an hour and a half I asked every question that came into my head, and I must say that Scott and Joyce Koch were great hosts, excellent teachers and just super people to get to know. They operate Koch Ag Service, Inc., which is located just east of Cheyenne Wells.

I have done some flying myself but have always watched crop dusters with admiration and respect. The flying they do is low level and from their vantage point you really get a different perspective on the world. No room for error down there.

Scott did not plan to be a crop duster. He planned to farm. He was a successful farmer until the high interest rates of the '80s ended that. While farming, however, he learned to fly from his brother Bernie, who lives in Flagler.

Flying was in the family blood. Scott's dad was a pilot at the end of World War II and Scott's mother did some flying as well. Both of them gave it up, but Bernie and Scott did not. It was not Scott's family, however, who gave Bernie and Scott their first ride but rather a family friend, Richard Peterson of Flagler. Scott said that without Richard's mentoring he doubted that he or his brother would be in the business today.

With Scott's farming background, he found that jobs weren't hard to come by in agricultural related fields. He landed one quickly and began selling machinery. He moved from that to selling fertilizer and eventually moved to Ulysses, Kansas, as assistant fertilizer manager. After a couple of years there he returned to Cheyenne Wells. That was 1996. He bought a piece of ground near the airport as well as a spraying business.

Housing was so scarce that Joyce and the children lived in Burlington for awhile and Scott lived in a basement in Cheyenne Wells.

As you might imagine, no new business is easy. Scott says that 90 percent of the job is regulatory compliance and bookwork. In order to fly and do spraying, he had to have a restricted commercial license. In addition, to be an aerial applicator you have



Scott Koch stands next to the plane he uses to spray fields.

to have annual continuing education. On the positive side, you never have to worry about getting enough flying time to remain current in the aircraft. It is not uncommon to get 400 hours in the air in one summer.

As in any business there are questions that pop up all too often that are redundant and sometimes annoying. One of those is "Have you ever hit anything while crop

dusting?" The answer to that question is "I have never hit anything I wasn't aiming at." (No I wasn't the one who asked.)

Aerial application does require a special breed but it is not throwing caution to the wind and taking crazy chances either. Technology has taken a major foothold in the business. The old days of using flaggers are gone. Now they use global positioning system or GPS called SATLOC. That enables them to fly exact patterns, and it even regulates the flow of the liquid being distributed based on ground speed and a variety of other factors.

After an hour plus at the kitchen table it was time to go see the aircraft. When we walked into the hangar Scott said the aircraft isn't pretty but it is functional. Obviously, he has high standards because the aircraft and the hangar were spotless.

Near the end of the time I spent with Scott, I asked him what advice he could give a young person wanting to get into the flying part of the ag business. "Go to an ag flying school, get a job with someone who can be a good mentor even if it means starting out at the bottom. Work your way up and save your money so you can buy your own business."

Scott said he started out with less than



Scott Koch sprays fields with this Air Tractor 402.



nothing and now has a thriving business. Hard work, being frugal and running the operation as a family business got them where they are today. The Kochs will gladly say that they are blessed. God plays a major role in their lives. Scott has even done some flying missionary work. That aircraft was eventually donated to Wings of Hope. The Koch's live their lives humble but confident. They now own the entire airport although they allow private aircraft to land there.

Oh yeah, did I tell you about the aircraft? It is an Air Tractor 402, made in Olney, Texas. It is gorgeous, sleek and aerodynamic. It flies at about 145 mph, has 3.5 hours of fuel. It averages 43 gallons per hour. It has power out the kazoo with its 600-horsepower turboprop. It has a reversible prop so it can stop on a dime. It is a tail dragger with a tiny cockpit. It has a 400-gallon hopper for spray liquid. Air Tractor also builds 500-, 600-, and 800- gallon versions and is working on a 1,000-gallon version to be a slurry bomber for fires. Even with all that power when Scott is fully loaded he uses every inch of the half-mile runway. (William Mallory, 604300002)

I stood and gazed into the cockpit for a long time. The instrument panel is absolutely full of switches, gauges and instru-

ments. Most of that is for control of the spraying equipment and for the GPS. Still with all that, the main ingredient is the pilot. Once he begins a spray run it is all visual. Altimeters are no good at that point and you had better have good depth perception. Spray patterns can be varied with changing altitudes. Spraying is normally between 1 and 5 gallons per acre.

I assumed that spraying could only be done when the winds were dead calm. Scott said that he prefers a light breeze because it enables him to control the spray better. He can spray herbicides with up to a 10 mph wind and insecticides up to 12-15 mph.

Scott obviously loves his work and he loves flying. He reads anything he can get his hands on that pertains to his work and flying in general. In the 20 years he has been in the spraying business he has owned seven different aircraft. Each one was an improvement over the previous. I didn't have to ask, Scott volunteered that he never imagined back in the '80s that he would be in the aerial spraying business, but life takes you in the direction you need to go and now he couldn't imagine doing anything else.

Pardon me, but I have to say this one more time. That airplane is gorgeous.

ELECTRIC CO-OPS SERVE FEWER BUSINESSES

Electric cooperatives are local, not-for-profit companies that provide safe, reliable, affordable electricity to their members. However, these small electric companies do differ from other electric companies in several ways.

One of the most striking differences is that they don't sell as much electricity to businesses and commercial operations as other utilities do. Nearly three-quarters of all U.S. electric co-ops sell more than half of their power to residential customers. And almost 25 percent of co-ops sell more than 80 percent of their power to the residential market. The typical co-op median is 63 percent residential. (*WIN R.M. Miller 1005200004)

Investor-owned and publicly owned non-cooperative utilities sell only 37 percent of their power to residential customers.

Residential customers use less electricity and, for co-ops, they are often miles apart. That means less income per mile of line for co-ops. That disparity in income compared to infrastructure is one of the big differences between co-ops and other utilities.



K.C. Electric will be closed November 11 for Veterans Day.

"Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices."

— President Harry S. Truman

K.C. Electric office will be closed November 25 and 26 for Thanksgiving. Have a safe and happy holiday.

CLAIM YOUR CREDIT ON YOUR BILL

Each month, K.C. Electric offers consumers a chance to earn a \$10 credit on their next electric bill. If you recognize your 10-digit account number in this magazine, call 719-743-2431 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

In September the following members called to claim their savings: Linda Barnhart, Burlington, and CW Laundry, Cheyenne Wells. Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* and pick up the phone. That's all the energy you'll need to claim your energy bucks.

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine (check the date on the front cover).

YOUR NEIGHBOR'S KITCHEN

Holiday Turkey Leftover Soup

1 large onion, finely chopped
 2 tablespoons butter
 2 14 1/2-ounce cans chicken broth
 3 cups diced small red potatoes
 2 cups cooked turkey, cubed
 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon pepper
 1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning
 2 cups whipping cream

In large saucepan, sauté onions until tender in butter. Add broth and potatoes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Stir in turkey, vegetables and seasonings. Cook for about 12 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender. Stir in cream and heat through, but do not let soup boil. Serves 8.

SARAH HUDNALL, LIMON



Cranberry Salad

1 3-ounce package raspberry gelatin
 1 3-ounce package lemon gelatin
 2 cups boiling water
 1 cup ground cranberries
 3/4 cup crushed pineapple
 1 1/4 cups sugar
 1 cup finely cut celery
 1 3/4 cups seedless grapes
 1 cup chopped walnuts

Dissolve both gelatins in boiling water. Combine remaining ingredients and stir into gelatin. Chill for at least 6 hours.

Pumpkin Bars

2 cups all-purpose flour
 2 teaspoons baking powder
 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 teaspoon salt
 4 beaten eggs
 1 16-ounce can pumpkin
 1 1/2 cups sugar
 1 cup cooking oil

Stir together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda and salt. Combine eggs, pumpkin, sugar and oil; beat until combined. Add dry ingredients to pumpkin mixture; beat until well blended. Spread batter in an ungreased 15-by-10-by-1-inch baking pan.

Bake at 350 degree oven for 25 to 30 minutes. Cool. Frost with Cream Cheese Frosting. (D and M Farms 1121590004)

Cream Cheese Frosting

2 8 ounces packages cream cheese, softened
 1/2 cup butter, softened
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 5 to 6 cups confectioners' sugar

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, butter, vanilla and salt until smooth. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar. Store frosting in the refrigerator.

JESSICA BORNS, HUGO



LIGHT UP HOLIDAY SAVINGS WITH LEDS

Decorating with lights this holiday season? Consider light-emitting diodes (LEDs). They cost more initially but last twice as long as traditional lights and you'll recover the difference in three to four years.

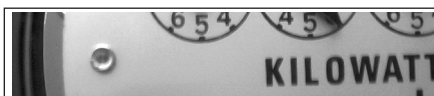
LEDs are:

- Efficient — LEDs use between 1 kilowatt-hour and 3 kWh of energy, compared to between 12 kWh and 105 kWh for traditional lights, saving \$11 every holiday season. (Gering Bros 1122580000)
- Durable — LEDs last about 4,000 hours. They're also made of plastic and less likely to break.

Don't want to use LEDs? Consider trimming back the number of hours your traditional lights are on.

ENERGY TIP

If your home is more than 10 years old, it likely needs more insulation. How much depends on a variety of factors, most importantly where you live. For example, insulation for a home in the Northeast will have a higher R-value rating than a home in southern California. Check out www.simplyinsulate.com to find out more.



IRRIGATION METER READING

Irrigation meters will be read on:

November 1 and 2
 November 29-30
 December 29-30