

Beefy Dinner Skillet

- 1 pd. lean or extra lean ground beef
- 1 envelope beef flavored onion soup mix
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 (8 oz.) can corn, drained
- 3/4 cup uncooked elbow macaroni
- 1/2 cup low-fat cheddar cheese, shredded
- Salt and pepper to taste

Brown ground beef in large skillet. Drain. Return meat to skillet. Stir in the soup mix, water, onions, tomato sauce, corn and macaroni. Bring mixture to a boil. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Remove cover and simmer until macaroni is tender, stir occasionally. Top with cheese. *Makes 5, 1 cup servings.*

CALORIES 240; FAT 6g; PROTEIN 24g; SODIUM 640mg; CARBOHYDRATE 26g; FIBER 2g
Excellent source of vitamin C, good source of Iron and vitamin A.



A Touchstone Energy® Partner

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FROM THE CEO'S DESK

J. Ronald McElheney

As mentioned on the front page of this month's newsletter, your cooperative, just like you, is feeling the pressure of rising fuel costs.

And, while the fuel costs we are talking about relates to the generation of electricity (coal, natural gas, and nuclear), it is having as much effect on our budget as the \$4 per gallon of gas (that you have been buying for much of the past 12 months) is having on yours.

Let me assure you that this is not just something that Jones-Onslow and its customers are going through. Electric utilities across the country, large and small, investor-owned, electric cooperatives or municipalities, are experiencing the same thing—12 percent increase; 16 percent increase; 12 percent increase for the rest of 2008 and then a 10 percent increase starting in 2009; and, yes, a 45 percent increase over a three year period. These are actual retail rate increases from across the country that have been implemented or are getting ready to go into effect. It is happening everywhere.

We are fortunate, in one respect, that over half our portfolio of wholesale power is in fixed price and nuclear resources (even though the price of uranium has also increased some, electricity from nuclear plants has been the most stable cost in our portfolio). This helps to lessen the impact, somewhat.

We have been very successful for many years in keeping retail rates to our customers stable but with the ever-rising cost of fuels used to produce electricity, the cooperative must collect these increases in wholesale power costs. We are examining the additional costs and while the exact increase is not known at this time, we will see an increase in retail rates to our customers.

Let me reiterate to you what was mentioned in the front page article—this increase is simply the increased amount that Jones-Onslow is paying for the wholesale power that is purchased.

Our pledge to you is to continue working hard to keep your rates as affordable as possible through these extremely volatile times and to provide the superior service that you have become use to and deserve.

It Works For All Of Us...

The United Way of Onslow County is a local nonprofit organization that supports the needs of county residents through a single community-wide campaign. The funds raised locally by our community remain in Onslow County and support 41 health and human service programs.



The United Way of Onslow County is in the process of raising funds to assist nonprofit agencies that provide vital services here in the county. You may support the local United Way Campaign by mailing a donation to the United Way of Onslow County, 8 Ruth Street, Jacksonville, NC 28540.



Spotlight

A Monthly Publication for the Customers of Jones-Onslow EMC

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Rising Fuel Costs Reflected In Price Cooperative Pays for Wholesale Power...

You can't turn on the television or pick up a newspaper without hearing about rising fuel costs. The pain at the gas pump is a daily reminder of how much costs have soared. And, just like the dramatic price increases in car fuel that you've noticed at the pumps, electric generation fuel costs have continued to increase.

These skyrocketing electric generation fuel costs, including natural gas, coal, and nuclear, have significantly increased the cost Jones-Onslow (and every other electric utility) pays for wholesale power.

Jones-Onslow and its power supplier, North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), have worked to obtain electricity through a variety of resources and to maximize their purchasing power. These prudent business actions help Jones-Onslow and NCEMC obtain the best possible prices for wholesale power; but, little can be done to insulate everyone from the reality of rising energy costs.

In the last six years, natural gas has gone from the \$3 range to over \$13 per million BTU (June 2008). The price dropped to the \$9 range the last week of July and a continued reduction in price would provide some relief. Coal has risen from \$25 per ton to over \$140 per ton and in just the last year it has gone up a whopping 211%.

The cost that Jones-Onslow pays for wholesale electricity is by far the largest expense. For the cooperative, over 65 cents of every dollar goes toward the purchase of electricity for our customers. The price of coal and natural gas are very important to Jones-Onslow because close to 50 percent of all the

kilowatt hours customers use at their homes and businesses each month have been produced at coal or natural gas electric generation facilities.

These rising fuel costs are completely outside Jones-Onslow's control (the market sets the price for these fuels on a nationwide basis). And they are putting a financial burden on the cooperative.

As a cooperative, we are structured to keep costs and rates closely aligned. When we establish our budget each year, we don't pad or over-inflate our costs to make a large profit at the end of the year — those monies or profit would simply be returned to you, the customer, in the form of member dividends or capital credits. Keeping rates closely aligned with our costs allows the customer to see savings up front, in the form of lower rates.

However, when situations like this happen, the cooperative must be able to recoup these expenses from our customers.

We are currently examining the additional fuel costs that have been incurred during 2008 and the projected cost for 2009. While the exact increase has yet to be determined, we will see an increase in retail rates to our customers. But, this increase is simply the increased amount that Jones-Onslow is paying for the wholesale power that is purchased.

We will continue to remain proactive in planning for your future energy needs. The challenge for Jones-Onslow is to continue to examine and explore innovative methods to operate as efficiently as possible while continuing to maintain the most reliable electric service to our customers.

CFLs are the Smart Choice

If every American home replaced just one light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL), we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year, more than \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of more than 800,000 cars.

LIGHT OUTPUT EQUIVALENCY

To determine which ENERGY STAR qualified light bulbs will provide the same amount of light as your current incandescent light bulbs, consult the following chart:

INCANDESCENT LIGHT BULBS WATTS	MINIMUM LIGHT OUTPUT LUMENS	COMMON ENERGY STAR QUALIFIED LIGHT BULBS WATTS
40	450	9-13
60	800	13-15
75	1,100	18-25
100	1,600	23-30
150	2,600	30-52

ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs

- Use about 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer.
- Save about \$30 or more in electricity costs over each bulb's lifetime.
- Produce about 75 percent less heat, so they're safer to operate and can cut energy costs associated with home cooling.
- Are available in different sizes and shapes to fit in almost any fixture, for indoors and outdoors.

here's a bright idea
recycling made easy!



CFLs are Responsible for Less Mercury than Incandescent Light Bulbs.

Ironically, even though compact fluorescent light bulbs contain small amounts of mercury, they present an opportunity to REDUCE the amount of mercury released to the environment. The highest source of mercury in our air comes from burning fossil fuels such as coal. A CFL uses 75% less energy than an incandescent light bulb and lasts up to 10 times longer. By replacing an incandescent bulb with a CFL, you save energy AND help the environment.

The next step for the environment:

Recycle your CFLs at the end of their useful life.

Bulb Recycling

Compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) contain a small amount of mercury (about 4 mg). To gain the greatest environmental advantage from CFL's, they should be disposed of in a way that properly captures and recycles their mercury.

To facilitate proper disposal, Jones-Onslow EMC has CFL recycling stations at both the Jacksonville and Sneads Ferry offices. Bring in your used CFLs and we'll make sure they are sent to an authorized recycling center.



To find out more about CFLs, got to www.energystar.gov and click on lighting under Products.

Cooperative Employees Are Easy to Identify

Here's an important home safety tip to remember. If someone comes to your door who says they are an employee of your local electric cooperative, be alert. For your protection, all Jones-Onslow employees carry photo identification badges and will present them upon request. For additional identification, our meter readers and outside crews wear uniforms and our staking representatives wear "JOEMC" polo shirts. All employees drive company trucks or vans that are clearly marked with our name. If you are ever unsure of the identity of any personnel on your property, please feel free to call our office.

Also, be aware that Jones-Onslow employs contract crews for certain jobs. Their vehicles are clearly marked with signage that indicates they are working for Jones-Onslow.



Safety First When Working Outdoors



Late summer and early fall often finds many of us working outdoors before the weather turns cooler, but these outdoor chores require caution, especially around electricity. Faulty extension cords are a common source of injury, as are metal ladders coming into contact with overhead power lines.

Here are a few safety tips to follow when working outside:

Ladders

- Use fiberglass or wooden ladders when working around overhead wires or other electrical sources. Metal ladders conduct electricity and can kill anyone who is touching the ladder if it comes into contact with electricity.
- If you must use a metal ladder, carefully check the location of all overhead power lines to avoid contacting the wire or touching the ladder to something that touches the electrical source, such as a tree branch.
- Lower a ladder before carrying or moving it.
- Never work on a windy day, as a gust of wind could shift a ladder into an overhead power line.
- When placing a ladder on the ground, make sure the distance to the nearest overhead power line is at least twice the length of the ladder.
- Make sure to place a ladder on solid level ground to prevent sliding.

Extension cords and power tools

- Check power tools and electrical cords to make sure they are in good repair, and only use power tools outside that are designed for outdoor use.
- Extension cords should also be designed for outdoor use. They are thicker, more durable, and have features for preventing moisture damage.
- Always use three-wire extension cords with three-pronged plugs.
- Check the amperage rating of the extension cord to make sure it's large enough to meet the power demand of the tool.
- Do not plug one extension cord into another. Use the proper length for the job.
- Unplug extension cords when you are finished using them. Never leave an open extension cord plugged into an outlet.

Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission, www.cpsc.gov; Central Alabama Electric Cooperative, www.caec.com