New amendments to a federal regulation may affect how customers use their debit cards.

Each bank has an overdraft policy and at many banks, once people overdraft their account, they are charged an overdraft fee every time they make a purchase until their account is back to a positive balance. This fee can vary from bank to bank. At Bank of Oklahoma, the fee is $28.95.

Regulation E, which went into effect on Aug. 15, gives debit card users the chance to have fewer overdraft fees. It also requires that banks only charge five overdraft fees per night instead of 10, which is the way it was before Regulation E.

“I feel it should only be charged once and that should call you when you overdraft,” said Akshay Khandekar, mechanical and aerospace senior.

Debit card users have the option of opting-in or opting-out of Regulation E. This means that if users have $10 in their account, make a purchase for $20 and choose to opt-out of Regulation E, the card will be declined.

However, this does not mean that overdrafts can’t happen when people opt-out.

“It is not a foolproof way when you opt-out,” Stacie Stromberg, Stillwater’s Bank of Oklahoma manager said.

If customers choose to opt-out and have $10 in their account and make several purchases of less than $10 that add up to more than $10, overdraft fees will be charged to their account, Stromberg said.

Opting-in to Regulation E is free and allows customers to make purchases that are more than what they have in their account. “If they opt-in, it is an added benefit to the customers,” Stromberg said.

Once customers have opted-in to Regulation E, they have until the bank’s cut-off time for that day to deposit money in to their account to avoid overdraft fees. This means that if they made a deposit early in the day that won’t show-up in their accounts until that night, they can have access to that money immediately.

However, when customers opt-in to Regulation E, a computer generates how much they are allowed to overdraft. This means that if customers deposit a $1000, but only as a $500 limit, their card will be declined.

“I think it is a good idea because people do live paycheck to paycheck and still have to pay bills,” said Anna Davis, accounting senior.

1. Headline: Fewer Overdraft Fees with Changes to Federal Regulations
2. Minority: Akshay Khandekar
3. Info Box:

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| Regulation E |
| * Free to Opt-in |
| * Only five overdraft fees per day instead of 10 |
| * Less overdraft fees |

1. Link to Regulation E: <http://www.fdic.gov/regulations/laws/rules/6500-3100.html>