

## We Have the Power To Serve You Best



**MESSAGE  
FROM  
MANAGER  
BILLY  
KULWICKI**

**A**s you might know, Lamar Electric Cooperative is not alone in its mission of bringing reliable supplies of electricity to rural residents.

There are almost 70 electric distribution cooperatives like Lamar Electric Cooperative in Texas and more than 850 nationwide. Despite our obvious similarities, each business is different—first and foremost because the areas we serve are unique.

Each co-op has its own individual history and serves a distinctive mix of residential, industrial, commercial and agricultural members. And, each makes its own business decisions independently. That's what Cooperative Principle No. 4, Autonomy and Independence, is all about. It's one of seven principles all cooperative forms of business are based upon.

Electric cooperatives are subject to less regulation by federal and state governments because of the healthy way in which you, the members, regulate us. Our independence from distant, outside regulators is also based on our historical commitment to the communities we serve.

To be autonomous and independent is crucial for our cooperative to be able to best serve the needs of you, the members. That's because what might be a sound decision for one co-op, say, with a relatively small number of members spread out in an extremely rural area, might not work for another that has a larger number of members, some living in a more urban setting.

Local service and attention to your unique needs are why having local control is best for the co-op.

Although Lamar Electric sails its own ship, so to speak, we are not sailing alone.

Our co-op belongs to the statewide association, Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC), and the national group, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), and Touchstone Energy®, a national alliance of more than 640 electric cooperatives.

These umbrella groups provide support and products such as TEC's *Texas Co-op Power* magazine and its Loss Control Program, which provides valuable safety courses to our employees. Touchstone Energy gives us access to online energy audits and marketing campaigns. TEC and NRECA provide advice on what lawmakers in Austin and Washington, D.C., are doing that could affect co-ops. And our membership in TEC allows us to purchase equipment and materials, such as transformers and utility poles, at significantly less expense than if we tried to buy them on our own because of the power of aggregation.

However, none of these groups tells

us what we must do. The decisions about how to bring you electricity at the best possible cost are left to our employees and to our board of directors, which is elected by you, the members.

When Lamar Electric enters into agreements with electricity suppliers, those contracts don't give them the right to tell our co-op whom to serve or what rates to charge. That's left up to the co-op.

On occasion, we might need a large amount of capital to pay for expansion. We can borrow it from a number of sources, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service or the Cooperative Finance Corporation, a bank that is itself a cooperative. Of course, while we enter into any such agreement with a great deal of deliberation, the deal would not give the lending entity any power over our operations.

The leaders of our co-op, who are also members, know this area and its needs well. Our independence and autonomy to make our own decisions allow us to serve you in the most efficient way possible. And that's the way it should be.

### COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

#### Autonomy and Independence



**Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.**

**Cooperatives—  
Owned by Our Members  
Committed to Our Communities**



Touchstone Energy®

# LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE JOINS TOUCHSTONE ENERGY ALLIANCE

It's official. Soon you will see the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives logo accompanying the familiar name and logo of Lamar Electric Cooperative on utility trucks, your electric bill and at the office at 1485 N. Main in Paris.

On January 1, 2008, Lamar Electric joined the ranks of electric cooperatives across the country as a Touchstone Energy cooperative. Touchstone Energy is a nationwide brand and marketing effort that identifies cooperative utilities providing superior customer service while maintaining a strong local presence.

The Touchstone Energy brand will take Lamar Electric Co-op and its members into the future as the electric utility industry changes. More than 600 Touchstone Energy cooperatives in 45 states are delivering energy and energy solutions to more than 22 million customers every day.

It's much more than a graphic addition to our name and logo. It's a commitment to our customers, both households and businesses, that they can count on us, as a locally based and controlled utility, to deliver reliable, affordable energy services and to be an advocate for their energy and community needs.

We believe our local presence is

one of our strongest assets, and our affiliation with Touchstone Energy will remind our members who we are and what we stand for.

Electric cooperatives across the United States launched the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives brand to represent the advantages of locally owned and controlled electric service, which is rooted in the direct link that electric cooperatives such as Lamar Electric have with their members.

The dictionary definition of a touchstone is a test of genuineness. Touchstone Energy symbolizes everything that electric cooperatives represent today: electric power, human connections and the strength of co-ops' commitment to the communities and the consumers they serve.

By pooling resources through the brand with other cooperative utilities, Lamar Electric will be able to provide consumer information and awareness of their customer-focused services as the electric utility industry evolves.

We'll help our consumers cut through all the clutter. We'll be here for our members, our customers, for the long haul. If it's accountability, service and commitment to community you want, look no further than Lamar Electric Cooperative.



**LAMAR  
ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE**

1485 North Main Street  
P.O. Box 580 • Paris, TX 75461  
Phone (903) 784-4303

For general information and outages after hours, call (903) 784-4303 local, or 1-800-782-9010 toll-free

Operating in Lamar, Red River, Delta and Fannin counties

Find us on the web at [www.lamarelectric.coop](http://www.lamarelectric.coop)

#### MANAGER

Billy Kulwicki

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

##### CHAIRMAN

Allen Branch . . . . . Sumner

##### VICE CHAIRMAN

Bill E. Cunningham . . . . . Reno

##### SECRETARY-TREASURER

Billy Hines . . . . . Clarksville

James Sam Cooper . . . . . Roxton

Charles Dooley . . . . . Annona

Mark Jones . . . . . Paris

Willie (Bill) Ross . . . . . Paris

Ron E. Tippit . . . . . Clarksville

Mike Williams . . . . . Detroit

#### YOUR "LOCAL PAGES"

This section of *Texas Co-op Power* magazine is produced by LEC each month to provide you with information about current events, safety, special programs and other activities of the cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the local office.

#### MEMBER BENEFITS:

- Level billing
- Automated meter reading
- Free bank draft service
- Visa, Discover and MasterCard accepted
- Security lighting available

## WE HAVE A NEW LOOK ONLINE



Check out our newly redesigned website at [www.lamarelectric.coop](http://www.lamarelectric.coop), where you can:

- Pay your bill online,
- Get energy-saving information,
- Find out more about products and services available to our members,
- And much more.

## MAKE ELECTRICAL SAFETY YOUR GOAL

What's your perennial New Year's resolution: Dieting? Saving more money? Getting lots of exercise?

Here are a few that will be easier to keep—and can do you, your family and your home a world of good. Do these every January:

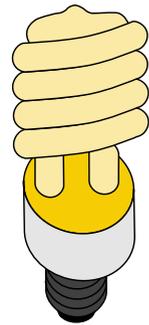
- Remove covers from overhead lights and wash them in warm, soapy water. Clean light covers let more light

shine through, which will make your room look brighter and save you from turning on a second lamp.

- Pull your refrigerator away from the wall and vacuum or dust its condenser and coils. Clean coils prevent your fridge's working parts from heating up.

- Spring for an annual inspection of your heating system. A tune-up can save you as much as 5 percent on your heating bill.

- Hire a licensed electrician to inspect your home's electrical wiring system—not every year, but at least once a decade. When's the last time you did that?



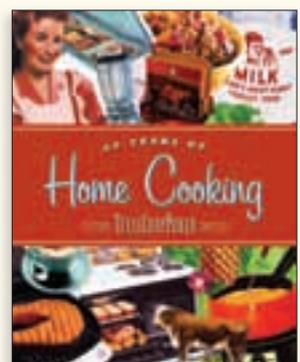
## Save Energy Save Money

Fluorescent lighting is four times more efficient than incandescent lighting.

**You Have the Power!**

## The PERFECT GIFT for FOOD LOVERS

Full Color, Hardbound,  
More Than 600 Recipes  
From 60 Years of  
Texas Co-op Power



Now available at Lamar Electric Cooperative. Come by and purchase your copy today!

# Win a Free Trip to Washington, D.C.

Lamar Electric Cooperative is again sponsoring two students from the Lamar Electric service area for an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., on June 12-20, 2008.

For more than 40 years, electric cooperatives have sponsored high school students from across America on a visit to the nation's capital to meet their members of Congress. You could be a part of this tremendous opportunity to learn about the political process and how your federal government works. More than 40,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this unique program.

Lamar Electric winners will join approximately 100 students from across Texas, winners of similar contests, on this trip of a lifetime. Sponsorship includes airfare, transportation while in Washington, hotel rooms, meals and entrance into many of the sites, and Youth Tour T-shirts.

While in Washington, tour participants from Texas will visit their congressional representatives; tour the House and Senate chambers, the Supreme Court and the Library of Congress; and have photo sessions on Capitol Hill and in front of the White House.

The group will also see the wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns; see Kennedy's gravesite; tour Arlington National Cemetery, the Lincoln Memorial, Vietnam Memorial, World War II Memorial, Korean Memorial, Mount Vernon, Roosevelt Memorial, Old Town Alexandria, Ford's Theatre and the Petersen House; and visit the Smithsonian Museums of American Art, National History, American History, American Indians and Air and Space. Union Station and the Old Post Office Pavilion are also on the itinerary. In addition, the students



will visit the Washington Zoo, Pentagon City Mall and Hard Rock Café and experience the Washington at Night Driving Tour and see the Sunset Parade at Iwo Jima. On the last night in Washington, Youth Tour groups from all states will come together for a dinner and dance.

To enter this year's contest, you must be from 15 to 19 years of age and have completed your sophomore year before June 1, 2008, and your parents or legal guardians must be residing members of Lamar Electric Cooperative. Applications are available from your school counselor, at the Lamar Electric Cooperative office or online at [www.lamarelectric.coop](http://www.lamarelectric.coop).

Mail your application to Lamar Electric Cooperative, Attn: Laura Williams, P.O. Box 580, Paris, TX 75461, or deliver to 1485 N. Main in Paris by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 1, 2008.

For more information, contact Williams at (903) 784-4303.



## WE RESOLVE TO ...

**Provide you with the most reliable electric service possible.**

**Keep our rates as low as possible.**

**Provide friendly and efficient customer service at all times.**

**Never forget that you are a member-owner of this cooperative.**

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM

**the Directors and Employees of  
Lamar Electric Cooperative**