

We Deliver Information as Well as Your Electricity



**MESSAGE
FROM
MANAGER
BILLY
KULWICKI**

By reading this column and the other information in these pages, you are helping Lamar Electric Cooperative fulfill one of the seven principles all cooperatives strive to follow, Principle No. 5: education, training and information.

You are holding one of this cooperative's primary conduits of education and information, *Texas Co-op Power* magazine. Through these pages, we are able to communicate directly with you, the member-owner, on important co-op business such as bylaws changes and director elections. In addition, we can pass along energy-saving tips that could save you money and safety information that might even save your life.

In addition to information in the magazine, we also sponsor programs to educate young people in our service territories.

Lamar Electric also supports the education of our young people by sponsoring a scholarship program and sending students to Washington, D.C., on the annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour.

Our scholarships are funded through the unclaimed capital credits that are returned to the co-op. In the past, these funds would have reverted

to the state's general fund. But thanks to a legislative change a few years ago, we can now use that money to help send deserving students to an institution of higher education.

On the Youth Tour, students receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the nation's capital to tour historic sites, see important governmental buildings, meet lawmakers and learn more about how our system of government works.

There is still time to apply for this year's scholarship award (see story on page 20).

Our directors undergo an extensive series of courses designed to teach them the basics of electric system management and keep them informed of the latest developments to help them make the best decisions possible about your electric service.

Our education efforts also extend to our employees. We encourage and support them in taking courses through the state organization, Texas Electric Cooperatives, or the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The better trained employees become, the more valuable they are to the co-op. The investment in time and money is well worth it.

We also sponsor safety seminars that our linemen and other field workers attend. This education is vital to keeping our work force safe and reducing the costs involved with lost-time accidents.

Our focus on education is part of the overall effort this co-op makes to improve the communities that we serve. Lamar Electric is proud of our record of achievement in this area.

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

5

Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

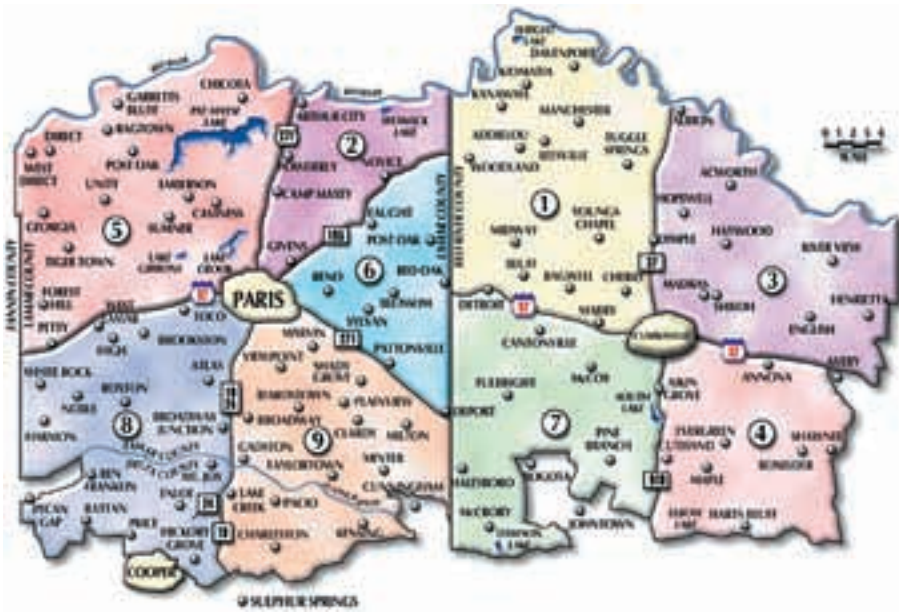
**Cooperatives—
Owned by Our Members
Committed to Our Communities**

OUR APOLOGIES

In the December issue of *Texas Co-op Power*, we reported on Lamar Electric co-sponsoring the Rural-Urban Dinner, but we failed to thank the Roxton School District for supplying the facilities for the meeting. We would also like to thank the Roxton High School students for providing the entertainment.



**CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB AT
WWW.LAMARELECTRIC.COOP**



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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

MANAGER
Billy Kulwicki

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- CHAIRMAN**
Allen Branch Sumner
- VICE CHAIRMAN**
Bill E. Cunningham Reno
- SECRETARY-TREASURER**
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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

Co-op Annual Meeting Set for May 3

Lamar Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting on May 3 at Love Civic Center in Paris. There will be additional information in this magazine each month until then.

Upon meeting director qualifications, members may register to run for the director positions up for election this year. Potential candidates

will be required to register no less than 60 days or more than 90 days before the date of the annual meeting.

Those wishing to register for director seats must do so from February 4 through March 4. Districts 1, 8 and 9 will be open this year. If you are unsure which district you live in, please refer to the district map above.

DIRECTOR QUALIFICATIONS

CO-OP BYLAWS, ARTICLE IV, SECTION 3

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a board member of the cooperative who:

- a) Is not a member and bona fide resident of the board district in which elected; or
- b) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative,

or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the cooperative; or

- c) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years ago; or
- d) Is a close relative of an employee ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, parent, brother or sister); or
- e) Has been convicted of, pleaded guilty to or pleaded "no contest" to a felony; or
- f) Is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Lamar Electric Cooperative awards two \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors who plan to pursue an academic degree or certification from a university, college or junior college.

To be considered for this scholarship, the applicant must:

- Live in the home of a parent or legal guardian who is a fulltime resident in the Lamar Electric Cooperative service area and maintains an active Lamar Electric account.

- Be a graduating senior attending a high school or an accredited Home Extended Studies program within the counties served by Lamar Electric Cooperative.

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 29, 2008.

To request an application, contact Laura Williams at Lamar Electric Cooperative at (903) 784-4303 or download the application from our website: www.lamarelectric.coop.



Contrary to a common myth, leaving your office equipment running won't save energy.

ENERGY USE: MYTH AND FACT

As electricity costs continue to rise, we're all looking for ways to reduce energy use. Although there are a lot of good ideas out there, there are also a lot of misconceptions about what is really effective. Here is one of the most common myths and the facts to set you on the right path.

MYTH: Computers, monitors and other office equipment will use less energy and last longer if they are left running all of the time.

FACT: Turning equipment off overnight does not shorten its life, and the small surge of power that occurs when some devices are turned on is much smaller than the energy used by running equipment when it is not needed. In fact, leaving computers and other office equipment on overnight and on weekends wastes significant amounts of energy and also adds to the wear and tear on the equipment.

In general, turn off equipment you are not using or make sure that energy-saving features are enabled. Some office equipment, including printers and scanners, features small transformers that use energy even when the equipment is turned off. Plug all such devices into a power strip so they can be shut down completely with one flick of the switch.

TEST YOUR POWER LINE SAFETY KNOWLEDGE

TRUE OR FALSE? Power lines are insulated for contact.

False. While power lines may have a covering to protect against weather, they are not insulated for contact. Birds can sit on power lines unhurt because they don't represent a path to the ground. You and your ladder do.

TRUE OR FALSE? I should keep myself and any equipment I'm using at least 10 feet away from any power lines.

True. You don't need to contact a power line to be in danger; electricity can jump, or arc, from a

power line to a worker who gets too close. The best insulator is lots of space. You should keep yourself and any equipment you're using a minimum of 10 feet away from power lines, but far greater distances are recommended.

TRUE OR FALSE? I can be electrocuted by a power line even if I am wearing gloves and rubber boots.

True. Work gloves and rubber boots offer no protection against contact with a power line. Once again, space, and lots of it, is the best insulator.



Don't Get Burned

As you warm yourself and your family indoors during the cold winter months, don't get burned.

Stay safe around heaters, stoves and other hot objects. Some tips:

- Keep your space heater several feet away from yourself, your furniture and your draperies while it's turned on. And never leave a child alone in a room with an operating space heater.

- Don't try to balance a child in one arm and hold a cup of hot coffee or tea with the opposite hand.

- Avoid loose clothing while cooking or tending to the fireplace. Throw on a short-sleeved shirt to cut your risk of catching your clothes on fire.

- Turn pot handles away from the edge of the stove to avoid knocking the pots over.

- Puncture microwavable plastic bags and keep containers slightly ventilated while they're in the microwave oven. This prevents buildup of scalding steam.

- If you have a grease fire, don't try to move or touch the pan. Instead, turn



Distractions in the kitchen can be dangerous.

off the heat and cover it with a lid.

- Place fireplace ashes in a metal container outside by themselves. This gets them out of the house and isolates them from flammable materials.

- Teach kids respect for fire: Let them know that it's dangerous and not something to play with or around.

cracks between windows and walls, as well as around door frames.

- Replace your screens with storm windows and doors. If you have older or leaky windows that you can't replace, consider doing temporary fixes, such as using plastic film kits that create the effect of an interior storm window.

- If you are shopping for new windows, doors or skylights, look for ones with the Energy Star label.

- Make sure attics and flooring above unheated areas, such as crawl spaces and the garage, are properly insulated.

- Have your furnace checked by a professional to make sure it's operating safely and at its optimal level—and change your furnace filters monthly.

- Have a programmable thermostat installed to automatically raise and lower home temperatures for energy savings by day and night.

HOW MUCH ENERGY DOES IT REALLY USE?

If you're trying to decide whether to invest in a more energy-efficient appliance or you'd like to determine your electricity loads, you can estimate appliance energy consumption.

You can use this formula to estimate an appliance's energy use:

Wattage × hours used per day × days used per year ÷ 1,000 = kilowatt-hour (kWh) consumption per year

For example:

Personal computer (120 watts) and monitor (150 watts):

(120 watts + 150 watts) × 4 hours per day × 365 days per year ÷ 1,000 = 394 kWh/year

Then, calculate the annual cost to run an appliance by multiplying the kWh per year by your electric co-op's rate per kWh consumed.

394 kWh × \$0.11742 (Lamar EC's current residential rate) = \$46.26 per year

You can usually find the wattage of appliances stamped on the bottom or back of the appliance, or on its nameplate. The wattage listed is the maximum power drawn by the appliance. Since many appliances have a range of settings, the actual amount of power consumed depends on the setting used at any one time.

Here are some examples of wattages for various household appliances:

| APPLIANCE | WATTS |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Clothes washer | 350-500 |
| Clothes dryer | 1,800-5,000 |
| Dishwasher | 1,200-2,400 |
| Microwave oven | 750-1,100 |
| Personal computer | |
| CPU—awake/asleep | 120/30 |
| Monitor—awake/asleep | 150/30 |
| Laptop | 50 |
| Refrigerator (16 cubic feet) | 725 |
| Televisions | |
| 27-inch | 113 |
| 36-inch | 133 |
| 53- to 61-inch projection | 170 |
| Flat screen | 120 |
| Water heater | 4,500-5,500 |

KEEP THE COLD AIR OUTSIDE THIS WINTER

Don't let your hard-earned money blow away through drafty doors and windows or uninsulated attics, walls and floors. As we stay indoors to stay warm this winter, save your money and reduce your utility bills by following these tips:

- Find air leaks inside and around the exterior of the home. Check around fixtures that penetrate walls, such as exhaust fans and electrical outlets. Look for unfilled gaps and cracks near dryer vents, chimneys and faucet pipes.

- Seal leaks between moving parts with weather stripping, such as between a door and its frame. Caulk