

Finding Shelter from the Storm

**MESSAGE FROM MANAGER
BARRY MURCHISON**

As many people living along the Gulf Coast and in East Texas who were in the path of Hurricane Ike can attest firsthand, life without electricity is difficult at best. Electricity, once considered a luxury for wealthy urbanites, is an integral part of modern society.

These days, we are so dependent on electricity in almost every aspect of life that an outage leaves businesses hobbled, traffic snarled and families not only in the dark, but also at the mercy of the elements.

Electric cooperatives like Lamar Electric know how much communities depend on their power lifeline. That's why co-op crews, with the help of workers from across Texas and other states, leapt into action in September to help restore electricity to members left powerless by Hurricane Ike, which left one co-op completely without power and nine others with outages over parts of their systems.

Hard work and smart planning by those co-ops paid off, and less than two weeks later, the lights were back on for all but a few individual members. Some customers of investor-owned utilities, on the other hand, endured blackouts that stretched into October.

The co-ops' quick turnaround not only is a credit to hard-working linemen and others, but it also demonstrates one of the advantages of electric cooperatives, which follow the principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives. If disaster strikes, co-ops are there for one another just like a good neighbor would be.

Co-ops are also banding together to respond to another storm. This one is not one of Mother Nature's design, but a brewing one that could knock out our supply of reliable and affordable electricity.

Consider this: Few new generation plants are being built; demand for power, along with prices for fuel and materials, is rising; and uncertainty is growing about what pending rules to regulate so-called "greenhouse gas" emissions will mean for power producers. Although technology that makes renewable energy more cost-effective is being developed, wind and solar are still energy sources with only limited applications.

These factors combined put the long-term future of affordable power in question.

This is where you can help your cooperative and yourself. Contact the politicians making decisions that will affect your future and let them know how important it is that they keep you in mind when crafting energy policies.

We make it easy for you to do so with the "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign. Just go to WWW.ourenergy.coop or contact Lamar Electric for help in starting a dialogue with your elected leaders and let them know your concerns. If you don't know which questions to ask to get the conversation started, the campaign offers some suggestions.

Electric cooperatives know how important electricity is to our members. That's why when disaster strikes, we will work until the lights are back on. And that's also why we will continue to push for responsible growth in the electric system—so you won't be left in the dark.

Is Your Home Bundled Up for Winter?

Proper Insulation Is Key to Efficiency

One of the simplest ways to reduce your home's heating and cooling costs—and improve comfort—involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides resistance to heat flow. The more heat-flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated areas and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls and floors—wherever there is a difference in temperature.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. Proper insulation decreases heat loss.

Heat flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of multilayered insulation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

The effectiveness of insulation also depends on how and where it's installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it's important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.

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

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE PROVIDES EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO LOCAL SCHOOLS

Lamar Electric Cooperative is making it easier for area schools to teach about electricity, the history of electric cooperatives and energy efficiency with two new programs for elementary and middle schools.



The Kids "Super Energy Saver" school program featuring CFL Charlie, Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives' energy-efficiency mascot, is ready to head into classrooms and help educate kids about co-ops, energy efficiency, renewable energy and electrical safety.

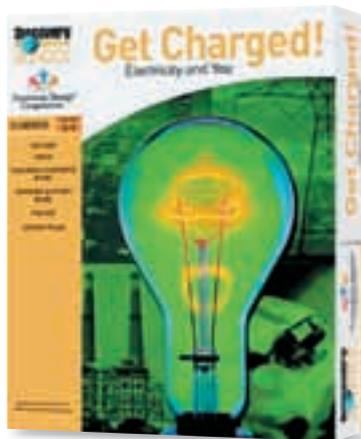
The Kids "Super Energy Saver" Classroom Kits, designed for grades 1 through 5, are packed with materials that will teach kids how to become "Super Energy Savers" at home, such as take-home checklists that walk kids and parents through their homes identifying energy-saving practices; Super Energy Saver certificates signed by CFL Charlie; activity sheets and folders; and CFL Charlie switchplate covers that remind kids to turn off lights when not in use.

"Get Charged! Electricity and You" is designed for grades 5 through 9 and is available to schools to make sure that students receive a quality education on electricity—from its beginnings to its importance in today's world. By streamlining the vast amounts of information on electricity and the important role cooperatives played in bringing this commodity to rural America, students are able to easily digest the lesson plans in this educational campaign.

This program is made available through a partnership with Touchstone Energy Cooperatives and Discovery Channel School. The comprehensive kit of educational materials focuses on electricity, a component of the National Academy of Science's National Science Education Standards (NSES). While individual states differ in their implementation and assessment of standards, they often base those for science topics on the NSES. Developed by teachers, scientists, science educators and other experts, the standards for grades kindergarten through 12 describe what students should understand and be able to do in various science categories.

"Providing our local schools with effective educational resources on electricity and the vital efforts rural electric co-ops put forth in bringing power to the people all across America exemplifies our commitment to community," said Member Services Manager Laura Williams. "By investing in our local students' education, we ensure that our customers, both households and businesses, can continue to count on us to provide them with more than just electricity."

Other electrical safety and educational programs are also available to schools and community groups. Educators interested in bringing these free programs to your school should contact Williams at (903) 784-4303 or come by the co-op office at 1485 N. Main in Paris.



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

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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
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ALLAMERICANDIRECT.COM JOINS CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

TV Provider Makes Lamar Electric Members a Picture-Perfect Offer

Boost your TV entertainment with a special offer from Lamar Electric Cooperative's Co-op Connections Program. AllAmericanDirect.com has joined the program with an enticing new offer.

Lamar Electric Co-op continues to provide you with unparalleled benefits by teaming up with AllAmericanDirect.com and its special offer from DISH Network. Co-op Connections members receive a \$50 instant credit on their first bill, plus free HBO and Starz for three months as well as complimentary, professional installation. In addition, members will receive a free DVR upgrade

to catch all their favorite programming when they're not at home. DISH Network has more than 100 HD channels offering sports, movies, news and a variety of entertainment.

AllAmericanDirect.com also offers a variety of electronic entertainment and services such as high-speed Internet and a full line of high-definition televisions. Co-op Connections members can receive a \$100 mail-in rebate on HughesNet High Speed Satellite Internet with a new subscription.

To access this great deal, go to

www.connections.coop or visit www.lamarelectric.coop.

"We are delighted to add another outstanding national company such as AllAmericanDirect.com in offering Co-op Connections members exclusive deals and discounts," said Member Services Manager Laura Williams. "We hope that you will take full advantage of this unique offer."

Established in 1982, AllAmericanDirect

.com is a nationwide retailer for DISH Network Satellite TV, HughesNet Satellite Internet, Verizon Wireless and a full line of consumer electronics,

including digital converter boxes.

Touchstone Energy® cooperatives is a national alliance of local consumer-owned electric cooperatives providing high standards of service to customers large and small. More than 670 Touchstone Energy Cooperatives in 46 states are delivering energy and energy solutions to approximately 30 million customers every day. Touchstone Energy cooperatives serve their members with integrity, accountability, innovation and a long-standing commitment to communities.



Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.

Hamilton Wright Mabie

BEST WISHES
for a joyous
holiday season from
Lamar
Electric Cooperative

Our offices will be closed
December 24-25
and January 1 in
observance of the holidays.



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Checks to Cash

15 PERCENT DISCOUNT ON CHECK-CASHING FEES

- 3185 Lamar Ave. in Paris. Call (903) 785-6666.

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- Lowell Gillie, Owner. Call (903) 982-6399.

Jackson-Hewitt

25 PERCENT OFF TAX PREPARATION FEES ONLY. DISCOUNT MUST BE DISCLOSED WHEN ASKED DURING INTERVIEW PROCESS.

- 3185 Lamar Ave. in Paris. Call (903) 737-0811.

Papa Murphy's Pizza

OFFERING \$3 OFF FAMILY-SIZE PIZZA (LIMIT 3 PER ORDER)

- 2705 Lamar Ave. in Paris. Call (903) 785-0036.

Quality Craft Picture Frames

OFFERING 20 PERCENT OFF CUSTOM FRAMING INCLUDING FRAME, MAT AND GLASS

- 2030 Clarksville St. in Paris. Call (903) 785-2760.

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\$5,582.41 Saved

On prescriptions by members using their Co-op Connections® Card

In September, 210 prescriptions were filled and members saved \$2,049.14, averaging 24 percent off the retail price.

This valuable member benefit is absolutely free!

Want to do some price checking on your prescriptions? Visit www.rxpricequotes.com to see the discounted price from our local pharmacies.



Even if you have medical coverage, compare your coverage to the discounts. Sometimes the Co-op Connections discount is better than your medical insurance!

The pharmacy will need the group and member numbers on the back of the card to process the discount.

LEVEL BILLING PLAN CAN HELP YOU BUDGET BILLS

Residential members' electric usage varies throughout the year, leading to fluctuations in their electric bills. This variance can make family budgeting difficult. Many Lamar Electric Cooperative members receive higher bills during the winter and summer months, while spring and fall usually bring the lowest power bills.

Members of Lamar Electric Cooperative may qualify for the co-op's Level Billing Plan. This plan basically allows the member to pay an average amount each month throughout the year, eliminating the high bills associated with higher winter and summer power usage. Level Billing Plan participants must also realize that they will be paying MORE during some months than their actual usage.

With the plan, the member's account is settled in full each December. The Level Billing Plan amount is automatically reviewed and adjusted each January to reflect the member's



most recent usage history.

To participate in the plan, members must have been a cooperative customer for at least 12 months. The account must be in good standing with a satisfactory payment history.

Upon approval, the member will pay the same amount, as determined by the cooperative each month. The December bill will be an amount that brings the member's bill to a "fully paid" status.

If the plan is terminated, a settle-

ment is required to clear the account. If electric service is terminated by the cooperative for past-due amounts, the entire amount owed must be paid prior to restoration of service and the plan is automatically terminated.

Each month, the member's bill denotes the amount to be paid to satisfy the Level Billing Plan agreement, the member's actual monthly usage and the status of payments compared to billing to that point. This allows members to keep up with the actual status of their bill from month to month.

The Level Billing Plan takes the surprise out of your seasonal electric bill and gives you, the member, the control you need to help plan your family budget.

Members who are interested in Lamar Electric Cooperative's Level Billing Plan may contact the billing department for full details and an application.

Don't Get Burned by Energy Scams

By Christine Grammes

The devices could not be simpler—small gray boxes that plug into an electrical outlet in the home. The accompanying advertising insisted that these products, costing up to \$300, could shrink electric bills by 10 percent and reduce energy consumption by 25 percent. In times of rising energy prices, who wouldn't want to try them?

In May 2008, the Texas Office of the Attorney General took legal action against the firm offering what it called the Xpower Energy Saver or Mega Power Saver, which sell for \$200 and \$300, respectively. A lab at the University of Texas at Austin tested the

units and concluded that they could not live up to their promises.

In addition, the lab revealed that the products are, in reality, ordinary capacitors. Capacitors are regularly used by electricians, and they can be purchased for less than \$20.

Electric cooperatives warn consumers to beware of such claims.

"When energy prices go up, people get flooded with ads about gadgets and gizmos that claim to save money," said Larry Williams of Lamar Electric Cooperative. "We urge people to check with us first before they buy these products."

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) also warns consumers to be careful about marketers or home-improve-

ment contractors aggressively trying to sell energy-saving products. According to the agency, consumers should look carefully and check independent information—such as from state or local consumer protection offices like the Better Business Bureau—about companies selling such items.

"Don't fall for high-pressure sales pitches from contractors or door-to-door salespeople," says the FTC.

Williams reminds consumers of the role that their electric co-op can play in helping them to lower energy costs.

"Your electric cooperative is your advocate," Williams concludes. "We are here to help you make sense of energy-savings claims and also help you find real ways to save on your electric bill."

Spread Holiday Cheer

A Little Further This Year With Your Co-op Connections Card



Amazing Grace Antiques & Gifts. 20% off new gift merchandise. 10% off antique purchase of \$50 or more. 510 Second St. NE, Childress 79201, (940) 937-2066

Anna's Gourmet Goodies. Visit our online store and enter the coupon code TEC06 for 10% off your order. www.annasgourmetgoodies.com

Antiques and Uniques. 10% discount on \$25 or more purchase. 214 W. Main, Crosbyton 79322, (806) 675-1047

Barnes & Noble.com. Discounts of up to 40% off the list price on books and other merchandise offered in the Co-op Connections customized online bookstore. www.bn.com/connections

BowlingShirt.com. 10% off any order placed through our website with the use of the discount code TSECIOP. www.bowlingshirt.com

Carroll's Flowers and Gifts. 20% off storewide. 1001 East Ave., Wellington 79095, (806) 447-2878, 1-800-766-4564

Catherine's Flowers & Gifts. 20% off any regularly priced merchandise. 1107 Ave. F NW, Childress 79201, (940) 937-8201, 1-800 262 0952

Cogdell's General Store. 10% off regularly priced items; free gift with purchase of \$25 or more. 3121 Fourth St., Lubbock 79409, (806) 742-2497

Danley's Texan Style. 10% discount. P.O. Box 1679, Stephenville 76401, (512) 757-1003. danleys@texanstyle.com

DiscoveryStore.com. Free shipping when you spend \$75 or more at discoverystore.com/coop

Dollins Pecan Co., Inc., dba Durham Pecan Co., 10% discount on all retail purchases. 111 N. Houston, Comanche 76442, (325) 356-5291

Everything But Water. Free ground shipping on any online orders with coupon code TOUCHSTONE at www.everythingbutwater.com

G&G Designs and Gift Shop. 10% off all gifts. 909 Ninth St., Wellington 79095, (806) 205-2066

Gifts & Fashions by K. 10% off any purchase. 616 S. Broadway, Aspermont 79502, (940) 989-3618

Henson's Antiques. 10% off antiques and collectibles. 230 Market St., Baird 79504, (325) 893-5710

Linda Bingham Photographic Art. 10% discount on art; 10% discount on session fee. 1102 E. Milton, Comanche 76442, (325) 356-2849

Llano Estacado Winery, Inc. 10% off all products in the winery's tasting room and via the winery's website. 3426 E. FM 1585, Lubbock 79404. www.llanowine.com

Lobster Gram. 10% discount off any purchases made using the code ENERGY, 1-800-LIVE-LOB. www.LiveLob.com

Olde Station Antiques. 15% discount unless already reduced or marked "firm." 100 S. Main St., Shamrock 79079, (806) 256-1828

Omaha Steaks. Save 66% on The Ultimate Pack, plus get 6 free Omaha Steaks Burgers sent to every shipping address in your order. 1-800-960-8400. www.omahasteaks.com/energy



Original Rug Company. 10% discount on all area rugs at www.originalrugs.com with coupon code TY120071

PajamaGram. Use code PGTouchstone to save 15% on any purchase of \$75 or more through December 31, 2008. 1-800-GIV-EPJS

Red & Black College Bookstore. 10% off clothing and gifts. Sixth and University, Lubbock 79424. www.redandblackbookstore.com

Sheplers. 20% off total purchase in-store when you show your card. Visit www.sheplers.com to find nearest location.

ShopKitchenAid.com. Enter promo code KAC00P to receive your free shipping on orders over \$75 and 20% off stand mixer attachments and accessories. www.shopkitchenaid.com

Silver Sensations by Beverly. 10% discount. Heartland Mall, Early 76802, (325) 647-2648

Texas Threads. 10% off all purchases. 241 N. Main, Hereford 79045, (806) 363-1187

The Pampered Lady. Fruits & Passion gift set with the purchase of Chimere sheets. 910 Ave. F NW, Childress 79201, (940) 937-2222

Wishes. Free gift with purchase. 203 W. Walker, Breckenridge 76424, (254) 559-9700

Vermont Teddy Bear Company. Use code VTBTouchstone to save 15% on any purchase of \$75 or more through December 31, 2008. 1-800-829-BEAR. www.VermontTeddyBear.com

XM Radio. XpressEZ normally \$69.99, co-op price \$24.99. XpressR normally \$129.99, co-op price \$99.99. Pioneer Inno normally \$249.99, co-op price \$199.99. 1-866-SHO-PXMI. <http://shopoffers.xmradio.com>

Please note, some offers are available only online.
For full details and many more great discounts, visit
www.connections.coop.

Lamar Electric Cooperative

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