

Smart Solutions for Our Energy Future

We have new leadership in Washington, D.C., and with it, a new focus on energy policy. Barack Obama took office as the 44th president of the United States last month, and during his first months in the White House, the economic crisis will remain a major focus. But the new administration also promises increased attention to energy matters. As all of us paying electric bills every month can agree, the two go hand in hand. It is crucial that any energy policy discussed in Washington comes with a price tag that won't leave consumers in the dark.

Through the nationwide grassroots awareness campaign called "Our Energy, Our Future," co-op consumers have contacted their elected federal officials with three crucial energy policy questions focused on capacity, technology and affordability. With a new president and a new Congress, electric cooperatives will need to continue pressing for answers.

These answers won't be clear-cut.

Although demand for electricity is steadily climbing across the United States, relatively high costs for construction materials and uncertainty about climate-change goals have stalled the development of new base-load generation: the large, efficient stations that provide dependable and affordable electric power year-round.

So here's the important question: How can we keep power flowing and electric bills affordable? There's simply no single answer, and electric co-ops know from experience that it will take

a variety of new generation resources and technologies, not to mention conservation efforts on the part of electricity users, to ensure reliable and affordable power in the coming years. We must invest in renewable energy, clean-coal technology, nuclear power, an updated transmission grid and improvements in energy efficiency across the board. You can help curb the growth in demand by making efficient use of electricity and conserving it when you can.

Of course, the investment in infrastructure on a large scale will require a massive investment of government resources and leadership—similar to putting a person on the moon. As consumer advocates and industry leaders, electric co-ops can provide lawmakers with expertise on what programs are affordable, sustainable and technologically feasible.

All of this must be grounded in goals and public policy that put consumers first. This is no time for policymakers to ignore our needs with a wink and a nod to special interest groups. Now, more than ever, Main Street must come before Wall Street.

You can help in this effort and make a real difference by telling members of Congress your story—why affordable electricity is important to you and your family. Tens of thousands of electric co-op members have done so already, and as a result we've sent more than 1.5 million messages to Congress, calling attention to our nation's impending electricity crisis.

BLAST WINTER ENERGY HOGS

As harsh winter weather sets in, now is the time to send your home's energy hogs out the door.

Rid your home of these common winter culprits:

DIRTY AIR FILTERS. They make your heating system work harder to keep the air comfortable.

Change the filter every month.

LEAKY DUCTS. A contractor can test your ducts for leakage and repair any problems.

CHILLY WATER HEATER. If your water heater is in the garage or basement, it's spending some of its energy trying to keep itself warm—instead of devoting all its energy to heating water. Pick up an insulating jacket at a hardware or home store and wrap it up.

WOOD FIREPLACE. Traditional fireplaces suck heated air into the chimney and release it outdoors. Retire yours, close off the damper and add an electric fireplace insert, which doesn't add much heat to a room but looks nice in the hearth.

DRAFTY DOORS AND WINDOWS. Caulk and weatherstripping are easy to apply around windows and doors, especially those leading to a basement or attic. And you'll see a difference on your energy bill.

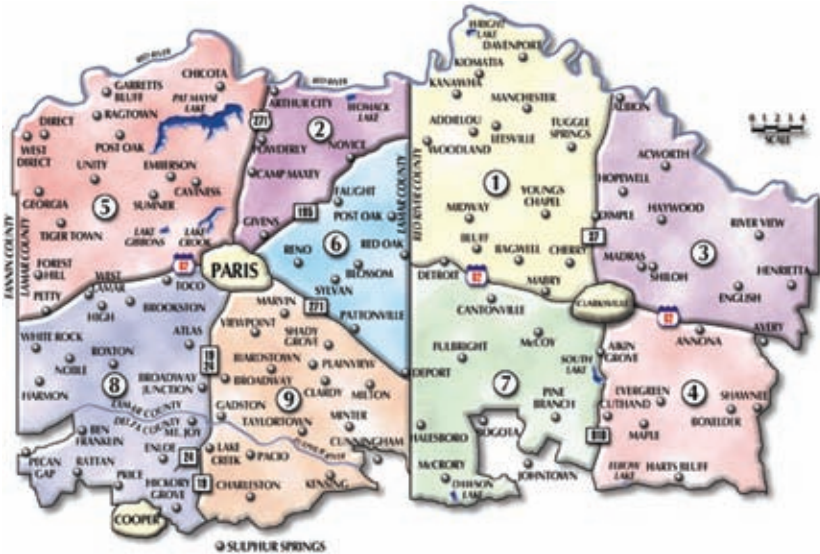


**IT'S TIME TO COME TOGETHER
AND CHANGE OUR FUTURE**

**PLEASE VISIT
WWW.ourenergy.coop
TODAY**

**Make your voice heard and
help guide policymakers
toward a smart,
affordable energy future.**

Co-op Annual Meeting Set for May 9



Lamar Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting on May 9 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 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 9 through March 9. Districts 5, 6 and 7 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 which elected;
- 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, pleaded guilty 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.



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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

INTERIM MANAGER
Barry Murchison

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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VICE CHAIRMAN

Bill E. Cunningham Reno

SECRETARY-TREASURER

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Charles Dooley Annona
Mark Jones Paris
Ron E. Tippit Clarksville
Mike Williams Detroit
Lyle Yoder Pattonville

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



Safety isn't important just around high voltage and power lines. Household current can be dangerous, too, when not used properly.

19 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER

1. If you have small children or pets, make sure unused wall outlets have safety coverings. Unprotected wall outlets can be a hazard.

2. Check that outlets and wall switches are cool to the touch. Unusual warmth may indicate an unsafe wiring connection and should be checked by an electrician.

3. Make sure all outlets and switches are working properly. Faulty equipment may mean unsafe wiring.

4. All outlets and switches should have faceplates. Exposed wiring is a shock hazard.

5. Check that extension cords are correctly rated for the amount of electricity they are to carry and are Underwriters Laboratories (UL) approved.

6. Screw lightbulbs in securely. Loose bulbs may cause a fire.

7. Check all electric cords for visible damage. Cracked or frayed cords can be dangerous.

8. To avoid excessive wear and cord damage, ensure that cords don't run under rugs and don't have furniture resting on them.

9. Do not nail or staple electric cords in place. Cord damage can result in a fire and shock hazard.

10. If you are wet, standing on a wet surface or are in water, you should not touch any electrical device.

11. Small appliances (hair dryers, toasters, etc.) should be unplugged when not in use. Unattended, connected

appliances create an unnecessary risk.

12. Keep all appliance cords away from hot surfaces (toasters, range tops, ovens, etc.). Cords can be damaged by excessive heat.

13. Check that all appliances and electric equipment are located away from the sink and bath. Appliances can kill if they come in contact with water.

14. In kitchens, bathrooms and anywhere there is water nearby, standard outlets should be replaced with ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). GFCIs are devices that will provide shock protection by quickly cutting off the circuit and preventing injury. GFCIs should be UL-approved and installed by a licensed electrician.

15. Never insert any metal object, such as a fork, into an appliance.

16. Make sure you're using the correct wattage and proper kind of lightbulb in an overhead or ceiling fixture. The wrong type of bulb can lead to overheating or fire. If you don't know the correct wattage, use a bulb no larger than 60 watts.

17. Make sure extension and lamp cords are out of traffic areas. Cords can create tripping hazards and may be damaged by foot traffic.

18. Never leave electric heaters or hot plates unattended when in use.

19. If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse or trips a circuit breaker, or if it has given you a shock, unplug it and have it repaired or replaced.

LAMAR ELECTRIC TO AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, 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 full-time 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.

This year's application deadline is February 27.

To request an application, contact Laura Williams at Lamar Electric Cooperative at (903) 784-4303, download the application from our website, www.lamarelectric.coop, or pick one up at your school's counselor's office.



Co-op Connections®

1st Choice Pest Control

OFFERING \$10 OFF INITIAL GENERAL PEST CONTROL SERVICE

■ Ricky Williams, state-certified licensed applicator. Call (903) 785-5679 to schedule an appointment.

B&D Taxidermy

OFFERING \$10 OFF TAXIDERMY SERVICES

■ Benzy and Debbie Jo Hostetler, Owners. Call (903) 737-8604.

Checks to Cash

15 PERCENT DISCOUNT ON CHECK-CASHING FEES

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

Gillie Insulation

10 PERCENT OFF WITH YOUR CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD

■ 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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\$10,241.58 Saved

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

In November, 207 prescriptions were filled and members saved \$2,477.97, averaging 26 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.