

Technology Alone Isn't the Answer



**MESSAGE
FROM
MANAGER
JERRY D.
WILLIAMS**

Growing demand, environmental costs and regulatory issues add up to make an adequate, affordable future supply of electricity uncertain.

Alternative sources of power have been held out as the greatest hope for U.S. energy independence. Renewable energy is a key part of a plan promoted by politicians and others who want to cut down on fossil fuel use in electricity production.

That's a commendable ideal, and while sources that harness the sun, wind or water to generate power are relatively nonpolluting, they are no perfect solution, and we shouldn't count on them too heavily in the near term.

Some of the issues with these sources are already known, and some are beginning to crop up as the technologies become more widely used.

Take wind, for example. Installation of wind power is growing rapidly, especially in West Texas. Wind is an ideal solution, many believe, because it is "free" to use and doesn't cause pollution.

However, wind turbines must be located in places where the wind blows constantly, and in Texas, those places are largely away from densely populated areas. So an expensive network of transmission lines must be built to carry that power to

where it is needed in urban centers. The cost of building those lines will be borne by ratepayers like you.

In addition, the wind is not always steady, meaning that when it doesn't blow with sufficient force, power production at wind farms is nonexistent. This makes wind unsuitable for baseline power, the constant flow of electricity on which we all count.

That's where solar power could come in, at least in daylight. But on cloudy days, power production drops dramatically. To get around that, companies are building plants in the often-cloudless desert—both photovoltaic arrays, which convert sunlight directly into electricity, and solar-thermal

plants, which turn the sun's heat into steam used to drive turbines.

Those plants are clean, yet they have another drawback: They need lots of water to run. A recent article in *The New York Times* detailed a conflict in Nevada between a developer who wants to build two large solar farms, which would need hundreds of millions of gallons of water a year for cooling, about 20 percent of what's available in the area, and local residents who worry that their wells will go dry.

The lack of available water is similarly throttling plans for other water-intensive renewable facilities like biofuel and clean-coal plants, a hurdle that was not evident in planning processes.

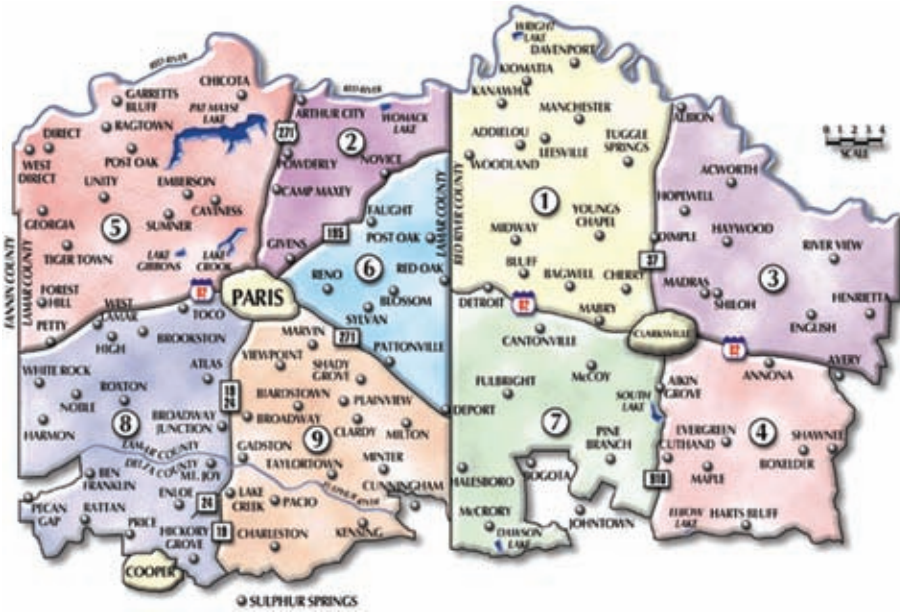
This goes to show that while new technologies are important to solving our energy problems, we can't count on innovation alone. We've got a long way to go before some of these technologies can fill the majority of our power needs. That's why it's important that, right now, we all embrace conservation and efficiency.

Be conservative in your use of electricity. Cut back where you can, especially the simple things, like turning off lights when you leave a room or making sure you have a full load before using dish or clothes washers. If you have the means, make an investment in weatherizing your home. With tax credits and other incentives, not to mention lower electricity bills, such investments will pay for themselves.

As always, your cooperative stands ready to help you with advice and ideas on how to make the wisest use of electricity.



Alternative energy sources such as wind and solar are likely to help fill energy needs in the future, but conserving today is one of the best things you can do to help solve our energy problems.



1485 North Main St.
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
- Visa, Discover, MasterCard and American Express accepted

Co-op Annual Meeting Set for April 17

Lamar Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 17, at the Paris High School Auditorium at 2400 Jefferson Road in Paris. There will be additional information in this magazine regarding the meeting over the next few months.

Three positions on the board of directors are up for election each year. This year, Districts 2, 3 and 4 will be voting at the annual meeting. Members residing in Districts 2, 3 and 4 who wish to be a candidate for one of the three board positions must file an application not less than 60 days (February 15) or more than 90 days (January 17) before the annual meeting date.

The qualifications to be a board member are:

Co-op Bylaws Excerpts, Article IV

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS. 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 for which elected or to be elected; or
- (b) Is in any way employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative;
- (c) Is an employee of this Cooperative or has been terminated from the Cooperative less than five years; or
- (d) Is a close relative of an employee or an employee's spouse ("close relative" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, parent, child, brother, sister, step-parent, step-child, step-brother, step-sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, and/or sister-in-law.
- (e) Has been convicted, plead guilty, or plead "no contest" to a felony; or
- (f) is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

Upon establishment of the fact that a board member is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the board shall remove such board member.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board or at any special or annual meeting of the members.

Win A Free Trip to Washington, D.C., This June

Lamar Electric Cooperative is again sponsoring two students from the Lamar Electric service area for an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 10-18 on the Government-in-Action Youth Tour.

For more than 40 years, electric cooperatives have sponsored high school students from across America to visit the nation's capital and meet their members of Congress. You



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bers, the Supreme Court and the Library of Congress and will 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 and tour Arlington Cemetery. Other historic sites to be visited include the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial, the World War II Memorial, the Korean Memorial, Mount Vernon, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Old Town Alexandria, Ford's Theatre and Petersen House, the Smithsonian Museums of American Art, National History, American History and the National Museum of the American Indian and the Air and Space Museum. The students also will visit Union Station and the Old Post Office Pavilion. In addition, they will visit the National Zoo, the Pentagon City Mall and Hard Rock Café and will 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 be eligible for this year's contest, applicants must:

- Be between 17 and 19 years of age
- Their parents or legal guardians must be residing members of Lamar Electric Cooperative, or applicants must attend one of the three high schools serviced by Lamar Electric Cooperative: Detroit, Prairiland and Roxton.

Applications are available from your school counselor, at the Lamar Electric Cooperative office or online at www.lamarelectric.coop.

Application Requirements:

- Submit the completed application.
- Submit two letters of recommendation from teachers, employers and/or church/civic leaders.
- Submit a two-page essay on the topic "What can be done to improve my community?"
- If you are chosen to represent LEC in Washington, D.C., you will be required to give a short presentation at LEC's July board meeting about your trip.

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 from other cooperatives—on this trip of a lifetime. Sponsorship includes airfare, transportation in Washington, hotel rooms, meals, entrance into many of the sites and Youth Tour T-shirts.

While in Washington, tour participants from Texas will visit their congressman, tour the House and Senate cham-

Mail your application to Lamar Electric Cooperative, Attn: Marci Thompson, P.O. Box 580, Paris, TX 75461, or deliver it to 1485 N. Main St. in Paris by 5 p.m. on Friday, January 29, 2010.

For more information, contact Marci Thompson at Lamar Electric Cooperative at (903) 784-4303.



**LAMAR
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

*wishes you peace, health
and joy in 2010 and always.*

**COUNTRY
CORNER
EVENTS**

JANUARY

10 Miss Teen Paris Pageant

16 Paris Bluegrass Show: 18 W. Hearne St. (next to South Main Café), Paris: Matinee, 4 to 5:30 p.m. and evening session, 7 to 9 p.m.

28-31 Paris Community Theatre presents "The Music Man"; times not available at press time.

Every Wednesday 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., Diabetic Management Classes, OnCall Home Health, 125 N. Collegiate Drive, Paris

If you have any events that you would like listed for Delta, Lamar or Red River counties, please contact Marci Thompson via e-mail at marci@lamarelectric.coop or phone at (903) 783-4911.

**Power
TIP**

SAVE ENERGY ■ SAVE MONEY

Federal tax credits are available for home energy-efficiency improvements, including windows, doors, water heaters and HVAC equipment for existing homes. For details, visit energystar.gov/taxcredits.

Source: EnergyStar