

Play It Safe with Power Lines



**MESSAGE
FROM
MANAGER
JERRY D.
WILLIAMS**

I read a pretty amazing story the other day. It involved two teens in Indiana, Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor, who were driving down the road with some friends when their car started to fishtail. Lee did his best to keep the vehicle on the road. But before he knew it, he was sliding straight into a utility pole—and that pole came down, lines and all, right on top of his overturned car.

Now, most folks faced with this situation would do what comes naturally: Get out of the car. But Lee and Ashley knew better. Not a week earlier, they had attended a safety demonstration at their school sponsored by their local electric co-op. One of the key messages relayed was

“stay in your car if it ever hits a power pole, where you’ll be safe from any electrical current.”

The two did just that and kept their friends in the car and family members at a safe distance once they arrived. As a result, the entire group walked away with just a few minor injuries. However, without a basic knowledge of electrical safety, the outcome that night could have been much different.

A few years ago a small wind storm blew through north Louisiana one Saturday afternoon, causing a sweet gum limb to break off and lodge on an electric power line. The tree limb hung on a fork and was balanced, hanging on the top power line. The limb did not touch the neutral wire that was located about four feet lower.

As with most afternoon thunderstorms, the wind soon subsided, the rain stopped and the sun came out. A 76-year-old co-op member decided to take his deer dogs out for some exercise and see what they would do. A 9-year-old boy followed the man down a power line right-of-way,

where they both saw this tree limb just hanging in the air, with some branches only a few feet off the ground. As the old man rode his four-wheeler up under the line, he told the boy he was going to get the limb off the line. Those were his last words.

As the electric current surged through the man’s body, the intense electric arc even ignited his overalls. As I watched the ambulance crew load the body on a

stretcher, it made a lasting impression on me. Don’t make the same mistake: If you see a tree limb hanging on an electric line, leave it alone and call your electric co-op.

Lamar Electric Cooperative provides electric power that is a phenomenal resource, powering our modern lifestyles in a safe, reliable and affordable way. But electricity must be respected: If safety isn’t made a priority, what changes our lives for the better could change them for the worse in an instant.

Lee and Ashley know this from experience. Because they were prepared, they lived to tell their story. The folks at Lamar Electric are striving to keep you informed of electrical safety so you don’t have to learn a similar lesson the hard way.

Safety is a fundamental part of the culture at Lamar Electric Cooperative. Being an electric lineworker is ranked by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the country’s top 10 most dangerous jobs, on the same list as fishermen, loggers and military servicemen. We demand that not only those out in the field, but also employees at all levels make safety a top priority.

As part of our safety commitment, we want you to know fundamental safety rules around electric power lines that will save your life. If you have a situation like Lee and Ashley, stay in your car and keep others away until you are sure the power has been turned off. If you see a tree limb hanging on an electric power line, stay away from it and call your electric provider. For more information on electrical safety, you can check www.safeelectricity.org and <http://esfi.org>.

I hope there won’t be any stories about Lamar Electric Cooperative members getting into sticky situations as did Lee and Ashley. But if there are, a few minutes spent studying safety today could ensure a happy ending.



If your vehicle comes in contact with a power line, would you know what to do?



Members of the Prairiland Beta Club Talent Team are, from left: Colton Reynolds, vocals; Blake Gentry, guitar; Macee Mabry, vocals; Chase Stogsdill, mandolin; Brittany Hines, vocals; and Tyler Brown, upright bass.

Congratulations, Prairiland Beta Club Talent Team

Lamar Electric Co-op would like to congratulate the Prairiland Beta Club Talent Team for winning first place in state competition on Saturday, January 16, in San Antonio. They will compete at nationals in Louisville, Kentucky, in July.

The team performed "White Liar" by Miranda Lambert at the state competition. They won first place out of 11 schools in group talent, which includes five or more participants.

TEAM MEMBERS

Tyler Brown
Blake Gentry
Brittany Hines
Macee Mabry
Colton Reynolds
Chase Stogsdill

PARENTS

Jacky and Dorothy Brown
Donny and LeAnne Gentry
Daniel and Teri Hines
Mark and Judy Mabry
Mark and Mika Reynolds
Greg Stogsdill and
Eran and Laurinda Yoder

TOWN

Blossom
Blossom
Bogata
Pattonville
Blossom
Blossom
Hopewell

Way to go, and good luck at nationals from the folks at Lamar Electric Co-op!



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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

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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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CONGRATULATIONS!



Lamar Electric Cooperative member Edna Edwards (left) of Paris was the lucky winner of a Texas Co-op Power cookbook. LEC Member Services Director Marci Thompson presented the prize to Edwards for participating in a co-op sponsored blood drive in March.



Keeping your refrigerator and freezer full helps them to retain cold air when you open the door, thus preventing them from working too hard. Use containers of water to fill the gaps.

More than 150 Vendors and Concessions!

FINE ARTS, HOME DECOR, APPAREL, JEWELRY, UNIQUE GIFTS, ACCESSORIES FOR HOME & GARDEN, FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT!

A colorful illustration of a busy art fair scene. In the foreground, a woman in a pink dress and a man in a white and red striped shirt are walking. In the background, there are various stalls and people, including a man painting on a canvas. The scene is lively and festive.

49th Annual

Paris Art Fair

Saturday, May 8th
9am-4pm @ Love Civic Center @ Paris, Texas

Art and Fun Fair, Open House

E-BILL

NOW AVAILABLE AT LAMAR EC

Take advantage of paying your bill online at www.lamarelectric.coop with electronic e-check, Visa or Mastercard. It's as easy as logging on to our website, creating your password and completing your transaction.

You can view:

- Your bill
- Payments made
- Monthly usage chart

More features will be coming in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (903) 784-4303.



MEMORIAL DAY

We at Lamar Electric Cooperative salute the men and women who have given their lives in service of their country.



Our offices will be closed Monday, May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.

Crews will be on standby in case of power outages.

COUNTRY CORNER EVENTS

MAY

- 1 Kids' Safe Saturday**—10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Love Civic Center in Paris
- Roxton Hawg Waller Festival**—9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Roxton High School
- Uncle Jesse's 23rd Annual Big Bass Classic Fishing Tournament**—Pat Mayse Lake. For more information, call the Chamber of Commerce at (903) 784-2501.
- Lamar County Master Gardeners' Annual Plant Sale**—9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Farmers Market on SW First Street in Paris. For more information, call Becky Skinner at (214) 577-8122 or (903) 785-3126.
- Paris Community Theatre presents "The Pied Piper"**
 - May 1 at 7:30 p.m.
 - May 2 at 7:30 p.m.
 - May 8 at 7:30 p.m.
 - May 9 at 7:30 p.m.
 - May 15 at 7:30 p.m.
 - May 16 at 7:30 p.m.
- 6 Cruisin' on the Plaza**—5 to 8 p.m. in downtown Paris. Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy cars, fellowship and music.
- 8 Paris Art Fair**—9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Love Civic Center in Paris
- 15 Women in the Outdoors**—Pioneer Chapter of NE Texas at Rusty Lowe's Ranch in Clarksville. For more information, call Angie Bishop, (903) 249-1466, or Chance Bishop (903) 249-7961.
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters Bowl For Kids' Sake**—Bowling sessions at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. at Paris Lanes. For more information, call Emily Neeley at (903) 784-7388.
- 22 Historic Clarksville Square Fine Arts Festival**—9 a.m. to 8 p.m., outside on the square at Clarksville
- 31 Memorial Day**—Lamar Electric Co-op will be closed for the holiday.

If you have any events that you would like listed for Delta, Lamar or Red River counties, please contact Marci Thompson. Information must be submitted two months in advance for the magazine. E-mail marci@lamarelectric.coop or call (903) 783-4911.