

## Heater Hype Warning



**MESSAGE  
FROM  
MANAGER  
JERRY D.  
WILLIAMS**

**A**s cold weather moves in, we get more calls from members concerned about higher bills.

Everyone would like to stay cozy and warm in the winter and cool in the summer with the least amount of impact on their electric bill. Unfortunately some vendors' heaters are more hype than heat. This is the time of year you will see full-page newspaper advertisements for energy-efficient heaters with beautiful wood mantles or wood framing that are handmade by kind-looking bearded gentlemen driving horse-drawn buggies. The bottom line is these heaters are usually simple electric space heaters that look good.

A lot of folks have been disappointed when they buy "energy-efficient" space heaters to help heat their homes. A space heater is exactly what the name implies—designed to heat a small "space." Space heaters can be as simple as the plain white model found on the Walmart shelf or the fancy heaters covered in wood. Either way, a 1,000-watt heater will produce 3,412 British thermal units (commonly called Btus) of heat. The heating coils are electric resistance heat, which is 100 percent efficient. If that 1,000-watt heater is on for one hour, it will use 1,000 watts for an hour or 1 kWh on your electric meter. We use a "k" to indicate 1,000 and the "h" stands for "hour."

In the past, Lamar Electric sold a space heater that was constructed to look like a fireplace, complete with a wood mantle, wood hearth and lights

that resembled flames. One still decorates our front lobby. It was pretty and decorated many living rooms. This fake fireplace used 1,500 watts of electricity, and had a small fan that would blow the heat a few feet directly in front. It did have one great energy-saving item. It had a separate switch for the flames, which allowed you to see pretty flames coming from this beautiful wood fireplace and not operate the heating unit.

Don't be fooled by salesmen or advertising displays that tell you, "These heaters will cost you pennies a day." They generally don't say how many pennies. The heaters may be efficient because it has a little fan to blow over the red-hot electric coils, but no matter how you slice it, a watt is a watt.

There are some situations where a space heater is the least expensive way to go, but be cautious. If you only want to heat the space around your feet and chair while you watch TV for a few hours, the space heater may be the least expensive. You can also turn the central heating unit thermostat down (as low as 50 degrees), place the space heater in a room that is occupied by several people and close that room off from the rest of the home. This method of "zone heating" can help reduce your heating costs, especially if you toss everyone a blanket and call the dog (cat) to join you. Just remember, space heaters are not a very good solution to heat the whole house.

I have visited with folks who had five space heaters scattered through their home and couldn't understand why their electric bill was so high. Let's do some math, using the popular 1,500-watt model. Most space heaters have a thermostat, but with one heater per room it will seldom go off, unless something like the sun adds warmth. If we assume the heater is on for 40 minutes and off for 20 minutes, the

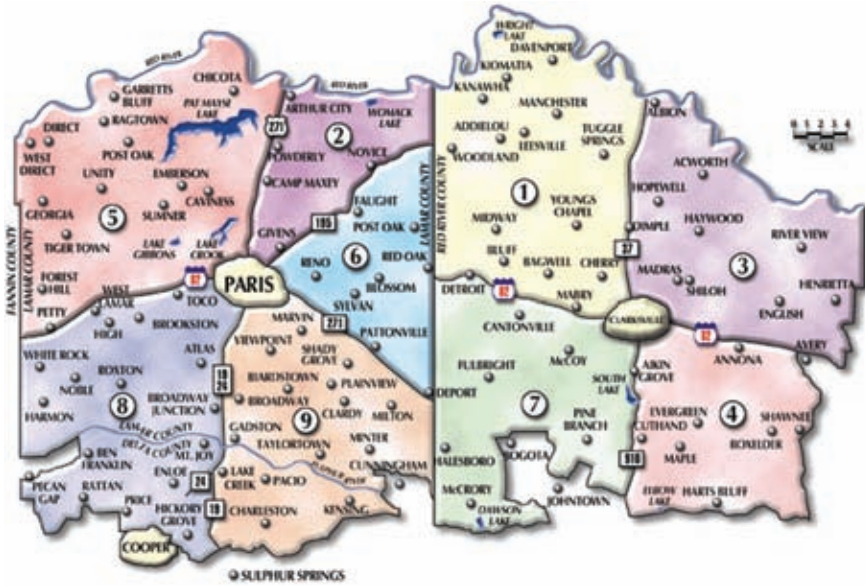
result is 16 hours of run time per day. Sixteen hours at 1.5 kWh per hour (remember 1,000 watts = 1 kWh; so 1,500 watts = 1.5 kWh) adds up to 24 kWh per day. That doesn't sound so bad, until you multiply it by about 10 cents per kWh and get \$2.40 per day for about 20 days of the month. The total is \$48 for that one heater. Only pennies a day! Imagine you had 5 heaters going for a total of \$240 for the month. Remember the \$240 is before you add any electricity for your lights, big screen TV, refrigerator, etc.

So, what is the most efficient way to stay warm? Glad you ask. The electric heat pump is the way to go. Unless you can invest in a geothermal electric heat pump (the absolute most efficient), the standard air-source heat pump is generally the most efficient. The heat pump is basically a central air conditioner with a few extra parts. The outdoor unit looks exactly the same as one for a central air conditioner. It is called a heat pump because it literally pumps heat into your house (heating mode) or pumps heat out of your house (cooling mode) into your compressor/condenser outside unit.

The costs of fuels, such as natural gas, propane and electricity, have shifted dramatically over the past decade. Many new heating systems last 20 years or more, so with wide variations in fuel costs, long-term estimated operating costs and paybacks are not always reliable. I think you will find electricity prices are the most stable and will probably continue that way.

You may have heard that it is impossible to get more energy out than you put in; but it is not unusual for a heat pump to be 300 or 400 percent efficient. In other words, you get 3 or 4 times as much energy out as you put in. That's right; 1,000 watts in and over 10,000 Btu out. Stand by for more details next month.

**CHECK OUT OUR CONVENIENT BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS AT [WWW.LAMARELECTRIC.COOP](http://WWW.LAMARELECTRIC.COOP).**



## Lamar EC Appoints Board Member

In November, the Lamar Electric Board of Directors appointed Matthew Albus to the District 8 seat left vacant after the death of Director James Sam Cooper on July 31. Albus was appointed to serve the remainder of Cooper's term, which expires in April 2014.

Albus lives in the Roxton community and is an engineer for Kimberly-Clark in Paris. He has a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from Texas A&M University and has been a member of Lamar Electric for six years.

## Co-op Annual Meeting Set for April 28

Lamar Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 28 at Love Civic Center, 2025 S. Collegiate Drive in Paris. There will be additional information in Texas Co-op Power regarding the meeting over the next few months.

Three positions on the board of directors are up for election each year. This year, Districts 5, 6 and 7 will be voting at the annual meeting. Members residing in Districts 5, 6 and 7 who wish to be a candidate for one of the three available board positions must appear in person at the main office of the cooperative and fill out a nomination form between January 29 and February 28, as outlined in the co-op's bylaws. If you are unsure of which district you live in, please refer to the district map above.

The bylaws spell out the qualifications to be a board member:

### Co-op Bylaws Excerpts, Article III

**SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS.** No person shall be eligible to become a board member of the cooperative who:

- a) Has not been a member of the Cooperative for at least one year prior to nomination;
- b) Has not been a bona fide resident of the board district for which seeking election for at least one year prior to nomination;
- c) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative;
- d) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years;
- e) Is a close relative of an employee or an employee's spouse ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, grandchild, 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).

f) Has been convicted, pleaded guilty or plead "no contest" to a felony; or

g) Is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

No person shall be eligible to remain a board member who:

- a) Is not a member of the Cooperative;
  - b) Is not a bona fide resident of the district for which elected;
  - c) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative;
  - d) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years; or
  - e) Is a close relative of an employee or an employee's spouse ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, grandchild, 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).
  - f) Has been convicted, pleaded guilty or plead "no contest" to a felony; or
  - g) 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.

## COUNTRY CORNER EVENTS

### January 26-29

"Bye Bye Birdie"—Paris Community Theatre in downtown Paris. Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m.; Sunday 2:30 p.m.

### January 28

Red River Valley Down Syndrome Society's "Snowflakes & Diamonds Gala"—For more information, call Gina at (903) 783-1922.

*If you have events you would like listed for Delta, Lamar or Red River counties, please contact Marci Thompson via email at marci@lamar electric.coop or call (903) 783-4911. Events for the March issue are due by January 15.*



# Annual Pole Top Rescue Training



FROM LEFT: Lineman Danny Michael, Staking Engineer Casey Martin, Safety Coordinator Scott Sansom, Crew Foreman Ronnie Bridges



## NOVEMBER BLOOD DRIVE

*Lamar Electric Cooperative members and employees lined up to donate at the November blood drive.*

**TOP:** A Carter BloodCare employee checks in Lamar Electric employee Betty Wood.

**BOTTOM:** Lamar Electric member Carol Smith from Paris takes her turn in the chair.



**ATTENTION, STUDENTS!**

**TEXAS CO-OP POWER**

**CO-OP TEENS POWER TEXAS**

**One 30-second TV ad can win you \$1500!**



**STUDENTS, GRADES 6-12:** Make your own TV ad for your co-op and post it on YouTube. You could win a cash prize!

**TEACHERS:** You could win \$1000 for your school by sponsoring the grand prizewinner.

For full details, go to [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)

# Win a Free Trip to Washington, D.C., this June

Lamar Electric Cooperative is again sponsoring two students from its service area on an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 14-22, 2012.

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 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 while in Washington, hotel rooms, meals and Youth Tour T-shirts.

While in Washington, tour participants from Texas will visit their congressmen, tour the House and Senate chambers, 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; tour Arlington National Cemetery, the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial, the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, Mount Vernon, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Old Town Alexandria, Ford's Theatre and Petersen House; visit the Smithsonian museums of American Art, Natural History, American History; the American

Indian; Air & Space Museum; and see Union Station and the Old Post Office Pavilion. In addition, the students will visit the Washington Zoo, Pentagon City Mall and Hard Rock Café; experience the Washington at Night Driving Tour; and see the Sunset Parade at Iwo Jima. On their 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:

- You must be a junior or senior in high school, AND
- You must reside in a home served by Lamar Electric Cooperative OR you must attend one of the four high schools served by Lamar Electric Cooperative: Detroit, Faith Christian, Prairiland and Roxton. Home-schooled students in homes served by Lamar Electric are also eligible.

## HOW TO ENTER:

Let us know a little information about yourself and send us a two-page article (about 300 words) on "Electricity in the Future." It's that simple!

The application can be found on our website: [www.lamarelectric.coop](http://www.lamarelectric.coop). Once the information is entered on the application, simply click on the email button, attach your two-page article (must be in PDF or Word format) and send to: [dctrip@lamarelectric.coop](mailto:dctrip@lamarelectric.coop).

The deadline is 5 p.m. February 24, 2012.

For more information, contact Marci Thompson at Lamar Electric Cooperative at (903) 783-4911 or [marci@lamarelectric.coop](mailto:marci@lamarelectric.coop).

## LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2012 YOUTH TOUR CONTEST

*Deadline is 5 p.m. February 24, 2012.*

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cellphone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Father/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Mother/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Is parent/guardian an active member residing FULL TIME in LEC's service territory? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please give account number # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of High School \_\_\_\_\_

Applicants hereby acknowledge that the application article becomes the property of Lamar Electric and may be published.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_