

Service Is Our Goal



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

The primary goal of Lamar Electric Cooperative is to provide our members reliable, affordable electricity. We do this with a focus on service that comes from being locally owned and locally run.

Rural Electric Cooperatives and Municipal Owned Electric Utilities that are not a part of Texas' deregulated electricity market—offer lower residential rates compared to those of deregulated investor-owned utilities, according to a recent study. We have known for years that Lamar Electric had lower rates, but it is nice to find the same is true across the rural areas of Texas.

In the 2013 analysis, the Texas Coalition for Affordable Power, or TCAP, found that utilities exempt from deregulation consistently charge less for residential electricity than deregulated utilities. “Despite the drop in deregulated prices, Texans in deregulated areas have continued to pay significantly higher residential rates, on average, than Texans living in areas exempt from deregulation,” the report said.

The TCAP study used data from the

U.S. Energy Information Administration spanning the years 2002, the year Texas deregulation took effect, through 2012, the last year data was available. TCAP is an alliance of cities and other political subdivisions that purchase power for governmental use.

This finding certainly reflects the nature of Rural Electric Cooperatives where service—not profit—is emphasized. Because Lamar Electric and others like us are owned by members like you and don't need to make money for investors, we can focus on keeping electricity rates low. The prices we charge for power are set to cover costs, plus leave an emergency reserve. Anything left over when the financial year is through is put into a capital credits account and is eventually returned to you when the financial health of the co-op allows.

Our Texas Legislature and the Public Service Commission decided several years ago, that areas served by Investor Owned Utilities could get a better deal by breaking the utilities up into three different companies. That is why Oncor does not own any electric generators and does not send anyone an electric bill.

Oncor calculates the amount of money they need to operate and maintain their electric power lines/equipment plus a profit for their investors. This amount is then passed on to every customer connected to their wires, through a charge passed on by one of over 200 Energy Providers in the state. These Energy Providers buy power on the market or contract for power; add on the Oncor charges and Transmission Line charges and send bills to their customers. Along the way, each of these companies adds their profit. California and several other states have already discovered this form of deregulation leads to higher rates and have abandoned the idea.

We are careful stewards of your money and are accountable directly to you, through the board of directors elected by and composed of members like you. We are your neighbors and are able to give you the Home Town Advantage. At Lamar Electric Cooperative, there is no profit motive. The directors, management and employees work hard every day to give you the best possible service at the lowest possible cost. That's the cooperative difference.



Scholarship Deadline Quickly Approaching

The April 11 deadline is approaching for high school seniors to enter for a chance to win one of six scholarships to be given away at the Lamar Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 19.

For more information and an application form, visit lamarelectric.coop and apply today. You can also email Dena Beason for an application at dena@lamarelectric.coop.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1485 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 580
Paris, TX 75461

Lamar Electric Cooperative

Meeting of Members



The Annual Membership Meeting of Lamar Electric Cooperative will be held at Love Civic Center, 2025 S. Collegiate Drive in Paris, on Saturday, April 19.

Registration opens at 9 a.m. The business session will begin 10 a.m. and includes any necessary reports of the officers, board members and committees as well as the election of board members in Districts, 1, 8 and 9, each for a three-year term.

You do not have to be present at the meeting to vote in the director election. Before the meeting, ballots will be mailed to members who reside in those districts. If you reside in one of the districts having an election, you may vote either by mail or in person at the meeting.

Each member in attendance at the meeting will receive a registration gift, and a drawing for other prizes will be held. You must be present at the time of the drawing to be eligible for the prize drawing.

Six \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded at the meeting. Entries must be received at the cooperative office by 5 p.m. April 11.

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A SCHOLARSHIP, A CANDIDATE:

- ▶ Must live full time in a residence served by Lamar Electric, and
- ▶ Be a graduating senior attending a high school or home-school program within the counties served by Lamar Electric.

We look forward to you attending and enjoying your annual meeting.

Watch for additional details in the next issue of Texas Co-op Power.

ROMAN SHCHERBAKOV | ISTOCK | THINKSTOCK

Be on the Lookout

Lamar Electric has awarded several bid jobs to contractors clearing ROW in our service territory. Each contractor can be easily identified by the company logos on their trucks and hard hats.

The ROW work will include clearing brush and trees 15 feet from either side of the pole. The stumps will be treated with Garlon 4 to prevent unwanted sprouts.

Rather than trim a tree and return two to three years later to the same tree, Lamar contract crews are removing the entire tree if it is in the easement area. Cutting the trees at the ground level is less expensive and will help keep the electric rates from increasing.

THE FOLLOWING CONTRACTORS WILL BE CLEARING OUR RIGHT-OF-WAY:

- ▶ **Nelson Tree Service** will clear ROW in the northern part of Lamar County along FM 906 west of Jemasco, by Slate Shoals and Reeds Chapel, to US 271.
- ▶ **Nelson Tree Service** will have another crew clearing line in the Ben Franklin area, Enloe area and east of Cooper in the country club area. Crews will also clear line along Highway 24 from CR 4270 to CR 4105.
- ▶ **Whitmire Line Clearence** will clear ROW in the Toco area. Crews will be working north of the Toco store, along Highway 82 ending at FM 38, and clearing line on CR 23900 and CR 23940.
- ▶ **Ray's Tree Service** will clear ROW along FM 79 northwest of Paris. Crews will clear line from Loop 286 and work their way to CR 32200.

GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO

Jerry D. Williams

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Allen Branch, President, *Sumner*

Charles Dooley, Vice President, *Annona*

Mike Williams, Secretary-Treasurer, *Detroit*

Matthew Albus, *Roxton*

Billy Hines, *Clarksville*

Mark Jones, *Paris*

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Lyle Yoder, *Pattonville*

Member Benefits

- Level billing
- Automated meter reading
- Free bank draft service
- E-Bill
- Visa and MasterCard accepted

Your "Local Pages"

This section of Texas Co-op Power 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.

CONTACT US

CALL US

(903) 784-4303 local or
1-800-782-9010 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

lamarelectric.coop



‘Spring Cleaning’ Delivers Safe, Reliable Power

Spring gives us a chance to thaw out after a chilly winter. Many of us take advantage of longer daylight hours by doing a little spring cleaning and yard work. But the seasonal shift isn't all good news. The rapid change from harsh, cold air to warmer temperatures can trigger severe weather.

To protect our lines and keep power flowing safely to your home, Lamar Electric Cooperative maintains our rights-of-way. Think of it as a spring cleaning for power lines, although on our system, it's pretty much a year-round job.

Right-of-way maintenance keeps tree limbs and other obstacles away from high-voltage power lines. It's an important part of the service we provide to you, our members, for three reasons: safety, reliability and cost.

Our primary concern is the safety of our workers and members. Properly maintained ROW keeps our crews safe when they are restoring service and maintaining

our system. Keeping trees clear of power lines also keeps your family safe.

From making sure a child's treehouse doesn't hit power lines to creating a safe environment while doing yard work, a well maintained ROW helps avoid tragedy.

Power lines are a constant part of our landscape; it's easy to forget they are around. We work hard to keep the area around our lines clear, but we need your help. Be alert this spring. Don't plant trees or tall vegetation under power lines, and keep an eye out for power lines when working in your yard.

If severe spring weather blows through, a well-maintained ROW leads to



Keeping rights-of-way clear reduces outages and provides a safer environment for co-op members and employees.

fewer outages and faster responses. Trees are less of a threat. When trees do fall, crews are able to restore service more quickly than they could with poorly maintained areas.

As a not-for-profit company, Lamar Electric strives to keep costs affordable for you, our members. Maintaining our ROW is an important part of controlling costs. Fewer and shorter outages save everyone money. When crews work in well-maintained areas, we can reduce risks for employees and equipment too—another way to keep costs low.

Safety, reliability and cost: This is why we believe in ROW spring cleaning. If we compromise on one of these areas, it affects the others. At Lamar Electric, we aren't willing to compromise. Maintaining our ROW is a priority for your safety, comfort and pocketbook.

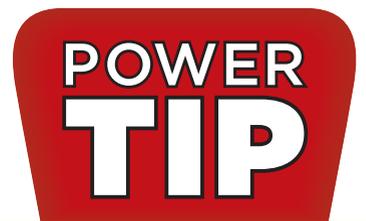


Spring Forward

Daylight Saving Time begins at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 9.

Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour when you go to bed Saturday.

EWAPIX | ISTOCK | THINKSTOCK



Save ENERGY • Save MONEY

The start of spring is a good time to schedule air-conditioner maintenance so your unit will work at its peak during the summer. A thorough tuneup should include troubleshooting any problems so a unit failure won't leave you sweating in the hot days to come.



If your system is more than 10 years old, it might be time to consider replacing it.



HIT THE ROAD AND SAVE.

GET BIG SAVINGS ON HOTELS, RENTAL CARS AND OTHER TRAVEL NEEDS—AS WELL AS ONLINE SHOPPING AND MORE—FROM A WIDE RANGE OF NATIONAL RETAILERS WITH YOUR CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD. ANOTHER MEMBER BENEFIT BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.

FIND ALL THE WAYS TO SAVE AT **CONNECTIONS.COOP**

