

Hot Days Ahead



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

In Texas, some people joke, there are only two seasons: summer and the rest of the year. For a few more weeks, we can enjoy the last bit of temperate weather before the nearly unbearable heat of a Texas summer settles in.

And if this summer is like the past few we've had, it's going to get pretty hot around here. That means most of you will be running your air conditioners, and your electric bills will reflect how much work those units have to do to keep you comfortable.

Although there are steps you can take to increase your home's efficiency, such as sealing air leaks, changing air-conditioner filters regularly and adding insulation, the amount of electricity you use for cooling may still give you a big bill.

If you discover that one month you can't afford your electricity bill, the worst thing you can do is not pay it and not contact us. If we don't hear from you or receive payment, your account will be subject to disconnection. If it is disconnected for non-payment, Lamar Electric charges \$75 as a reconnection fee, plus you will still owe the amount of the original bill.

Please, if you are faced with a high bill that you can't pay, contact Lamar Electric at (903) 784-4303, and we will try to work with you to find a way through. We want



you to use as much electricity as you can afford, but please try to conserve as much as you can. If you happen to have a very high bill, we will try to work with you to pay it out of the next couple of months.

Some folks get themselves in a jam making payments on last month's bill and continue to use just as much electricity resulting in a second high bill. That will really put a person in a bind. We will try to work with you, but the key is to back down on usage to a level you can afford. The other key is to never promise to pay an amount and not

make the payment. Be realistic when making arrangements and only commit to doing something that you are willing to do.

The co-op has another plan that may help take the sting out of those high summer bills. If you qualify, you can sign up for our level billing plan. We calculate an average for the past 12 months, and that is the amount you pay. Your bill will be calculated each month using your actual usage. This will be shown on the bill, but you will be asked to pay the agreed upon level amount.

The bill will show each month if you have accumulated a credit or debit balance. Once each year, we calculate a new level amount to make the amount you are paying work out to be the same as your actual average bill.

You may also be eligible for bill assistance, depending on your income, from a local social services agency. We try to keep an updated list of agencies to contact, on our web page. Go to lamarelectric.coop and look for Financial Assistance under Member Info Tab. This temporary help could get you through a crisis.

Please remember that Lamar Electric, as a member-owned cooperative utility, does not make a profit on the sale of electricity, which is sold to you as close to cost as possible. However, the co-op cannot afford to carry unpaid bills on our books.

Give us a call, and we'll do everything in our power to help.

Do You Know These People?

Lamar Electric is attempting to locate former members who have unclaimed checks that were issued in 2011-13 that have not been cashed.

The checks are final bill refunds, deposits and membership fees that were due to the member after their electricity was disconnected. A lot of people did not give us a forwarding address, and their checks were returned by the post office. We are only allowed to hold your funds for a certain amount of time. After that, we are required to report the money to the State of Texas. You will then have to file a claim with the state to receive your refund.

If your name appears on the list, or if you are the legal heir to the estate of an account whose name is on the list, please contact our office at (903) 784-4303 to claim your refund.

A list of names is available at our office at 1485 N. Main St. in Paris or on our website: lamarelectric.coop.

Johan G. Braun	\$272.95
Vineta K. Cleburn	\$5.00
Allen Dickerson	\$5.00
Dorothy S. Dillow	\$25.00
Unika L. Ellis	\$71.20
James H. Gordon	126.96
Teresa K. Graber	\$28.97
Sam Groves	\$8.53
Roy E. Gunderson	\$190.85
Joshua M. Haivala	\$145.30
Jeffery F. Joplin	\$17.08
Dorothy L. McMath	\$179.37
David S. Miller Jr.	\$53.87
Chad M. Newberry	\$16.36
Susan M. Okon	\$22.53
John Patrick	\$173.51
Joseph H. Roberts Jr.	\$93.19
Kerry G. Storey	\$23.99
Travis B. Thomas	\$111.83
Stepahnie R. Watts	\$8.19
Joe E. Wooten	\$26.50



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

**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*

Ron E. Tippit, *Clarksville*

George M. Wood, *Blossom*

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

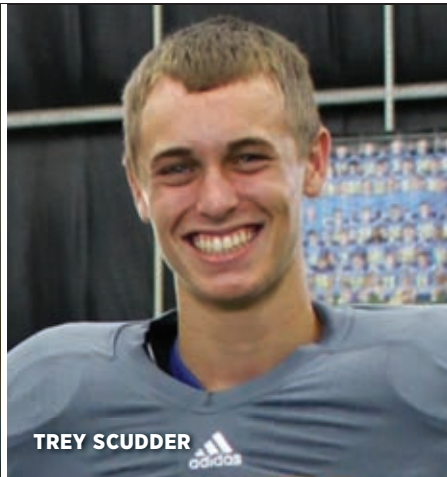
CALL US

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

FIND US ON THE WEB
lamarelectric.coop



MIRANDA MCNABB



TREY SCUDDER



Lamar EC Government-in-Action Youth Tour essay contest winners Miranda McNabb and Trey Scudder will visit Washington, D.C., on this year's trip.

Meet the 2014 Government-in-Action Youth Tour Winners

Commitment to Community: It's one of the seven principles by which cooperatives are guided, and the two 2014 Youth Tour winners are shining examples of Lamar Electric's commitment to community.

MIRANDA MCNABB and **TREY SCUDDER** will represent Lamar Electric Cooperative as they travel to Washington, D.C., this summer with more than 100 other teens from across Texas. The annual Youth Tour trip will take place June 12-20 and will consist of stops at the nation's most prestigious and well-known locales.

Miranda is the daughter of Lamar Electric Cooperative members Michael and Glynese McNabb of Paris and attends North Lamar High School. Trey is the son of Scott and Tracy Scudder of Powderly and attends North Lamar High School.

The students were selected on the basis of their short essays. Now, they prepare for what is sure to be the trip of a lifetime.

In addition to touring places including Mount Vernon, the Smithsonian museums, the World War II Memorial and the Pentagon, the students will attend a congressional summit where they can speak with Texas' elected officials. They will also take a cruise down the Potomac River, all while making a host of new friends.

We wish them all the best time in Washington, D.C., and have great hopes for their futures.

Electrical Safety During and After Storms

Severe storms and natural disasters can cause a variety of electrical safety hazards in and around our homes. Lightning, downed power lines and floods are just a few of the serious safety concerns associated with storms.

Unfortunately, many of these electrical safety hazards remain long after the storm itself has passed. Here are some tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International to help you and your loved ones stay safe during and after storms.

Lightning

Though you may feel that you are miles away from lightning, it can strike anywhere, and it is always looking for a path to the



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

ground. You should take precautions to ensure that lightning's path does not pass through a human body to get to the ground. There is not always warning before lightning strikes, so be prepared at all times.

If you are outside during a lightning storm:

- ▶ Move to a low point. Lightning often strikes the tallest available object.

- ▶ Stay away from trees.
- ▶ Avoid metal and water; don't hold on to metal bats, golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets, fences, sheds, poles, etc. Stay away from anything damp, including grass.

- ▶ Don't stand near other people. Spread out.

If you are driving when a lightning storm strikes:

- ▶ Slow down and use extra caution; pull off the road into a safe area if possible.

- ▶ Do not leave your vehicle and do not use electronic devices while in the vehicle.

If you are inside your home during a lightning storm:

- ▶ Stay away from windows and doors.

- ▶ If possible, unplug electronic equipment before the storm arrives; avoid contact with electrical equipment during storms.

- ▶ Avoid contact with water and plumbing, including sinks, baths, and faucets.

- ▶ Use only cordless or cellphones; corded telephones should be used only for emergencies.

Downed Power Lines

These pose severe and possibly lethal threats. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, and if you see a power line down, remain at least 10 feet away from the line and anything touching it. The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times.

- ▶ If you see a person in contact with the downed power line, call 911 immediately. Do not touch the person, or you could be the next victim.

- ▶ Do not attempt to move or drive over a downed power line, stay in the car and warn others to stay away from the vehicle and call for help.

- ▶ If your vehicle is on fire, jump out of the car with both feet together and shuffle away as directed above.

Flooded Areas

Standing water should always be approached with extreme caution. Submerged outlets or electrical cords in a flooded basement can energize the water and pose a lethal trap.

- ▶ Do not use electrical appliances that have been wet until a qualified service repair dealer has examined them.

- ▶ Electrical items such as circuit breakers, fuses, ground-fault circuit interrupters can malfunction when water and silt get inside. Discard them if they have been submerged.

May Is Electrical Safety Month

Folks who work with electricity are acutely aware of the need for safety at all times, but the general public may not have that same level of awareness. That is the impetus behind May being Electrical Safety Month.

Lamar Electric Cooperative urges you to be aware of the dangers of electricity and to use the greatest care and safety when working with or near electricity.

▶ When trimming trees or working on your home, we all need to know where the electric wires and equipment are and how we can work safely around them. Don't take unnecessary risks. If necessary, call a licensed contractor or electrician.

▶ Teach children to stay away from such electric facilities as substations, transmission towers and transformers.

▶ Remember that electricity can move through conductive materials, i.e., water, metal, wood, aluminum, string and plastics.

▶ Put childproof covers on all outlets that children or pets can reach. Any outlets located outdoors, or in moisture-containing areas such as the kitchen, bathroom or garage, should have ground-fault circuit interrupters.

▶ Check extension cords for wear and tear and replace any that are cut or frayed. Use extension cords that are rated for the type of work you will be doing. (You can rub extension cords with a bar of soap to prevent pets from chewing on them.)

May is National Electrical Safety Month, but the focus on electrical safety should continue year-round.



J. ANTHONY MARTINEZ | ISTOCK | THINKSTOCK

Country Corner Events

May 2-4

John Chisum Western Days, 4-8 p.m. Friday

May 2-4

55th Annual Paris Rodeo & Horse Club Rodeo, 8 p.m. May 2 and 3; 2:30 p.m. May 4

May 3

Uncle Jesse's 28th Annual Big Bass Classic, 6 a.m.-6 p.m., Sanders Cove at Pat Mayse Lake. Tournament proceeds are designated for various Lamar County children's charities. For more information, call the Lamar County Chamber of Commerce at (903) 784-2501.

May 10

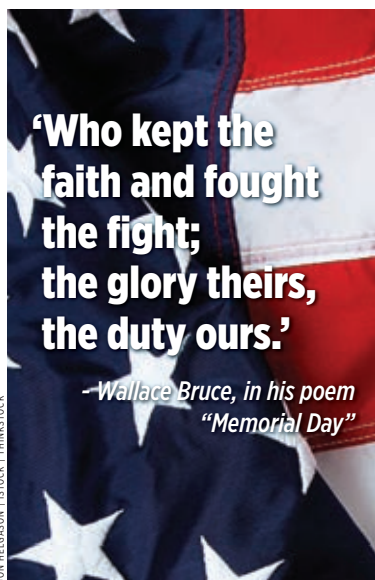
Paris Art Fair and Kids Safe Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Love Civic Center, 2025 SW Collegiate Drive, Paris. Two events are combined for one day of art, entertainment and food. For more information, call Russell Thrasher at (903) 640-3834.

May 17

Red River County Barbecue Smoke-Off at Langford Lake, noon-7 p.m. Come enjoy great food and entertainment, and don't forget to bring lawn chairs.

If you have any events that you would like listed for Delta, Lamar or Red River counties, please contact Dena Beason.

We need the information two months in advance for the magazine. Email dena@lamarelectric.coop or call (903) 783-4949.



Lamar Electric Cooperative salutes the men and women who have paid the ultimate price to secure the freedoms we enjoy today.



Our offices will be closed Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day.

As always, personnel are on standby in case of an outage.