

Liberty and a Better Life for All



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

Every July, we take time to reflect on our country's history and remember how the actions of a few helped shape the way we live today. The Rural Electric Cooperative movement also has a rich history. Our Coop history is about how small groups of determined rural folks were able to improve the quality of life for themselves and their descendants.

Every day, Lamar Electric Cooperative members and employees build on the legacy of our Cooperative founders. Because we are part of a Rural Electric Cooperative, we know we have the power to shape our present and the future, just like those who came before us.

By 1934 the entire United States was struggling from the effects of the Great Depression. The rural areas were some of

found labor saving thing called electricity.

Under the urging of Franklin Roosevelt, congress passed the Rural Electrification Act of 1935 to provide low interest loans used to fund power lines in the rural areas. The investor-owned power companies refused the loans because they could not make enough money for their stockholders. The message from the big power companies was that rural people should move to town if they want electricity.

In rural communities all over this nation, local folks wanted to create a better way of life for their families and neighbors. They formed their own nonprofit Rural Electric Cooperative and set the pattern of neighbors helping neighbors bring light to a dark countryside.

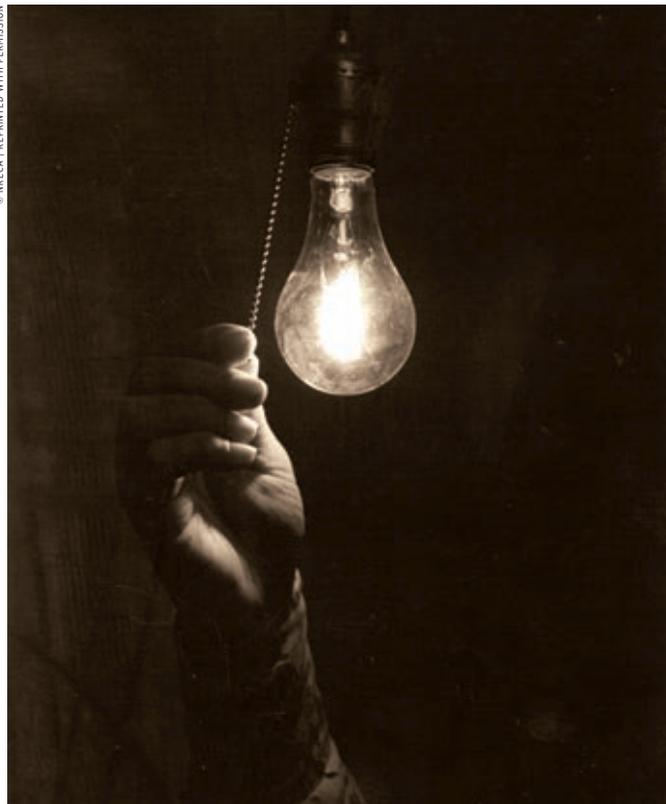
We work together, partnering with other Coops, local businesses and community leaders to achieve economic development goals. We help create better opportunities and increase the quality of life for our families and communities—just as our founding Coop members did.

We understand that the decisions we make today could greatly affect how future generations will live. We invest in equipment that is efficient and reliable to protect our future generations while still providing high-quality, affordable electric power.

Our commitment to communities in our area is more than poles and wire. Each year we hand out \$6,000 in scholarships to the children of our members. These scholarships are good for vocational schools as well as traditional colleges. We help build the next generation of leadership through our Government-in-Action Youth Tour program. Each year two high school students receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. They meet with lawmakers and get a close-up view of how our government functions. Youth Tour participants have said they leave our nation's capital feeling energized and inspired to make a difference in their communities.

All of our employees live in this area and know that helping their community also helps their children and grandchildren live a more satisfied and successful life. We are not strangers that drive in for a job. This is our home. You see us at the store, coaching ball teams, building wheelchair ramps, handing out food and leading in church services. Most Coop employees believe they are called to help deliver this miracle of electricity provided so generously by God. This is our mission field.

These things, plus so much more, are what make up the Cooperative Difference. This Fourth of July, we think about the future of Rural Electric Cooperatives and how we will continue to shape our country. We at Lamar Electric still remember what it took to bring power to our communities and will let the determination of those who came before us guide us.



For many homes, it began with a single lightbulb. Today, Lamar EC continues to improve the quality of life of our members—following in the footsteps of co-op founders.

the hardest hit areas. Although the big cities already had electrical power, 90% of all the rural farms were without electricity. The power companies were unwilling to invest in miles of wires that would only connect a handful of farms to this new



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

Lamar Electric Pays \$155,000 in Capital Credits

Lamar Electric is now writing checks to former members for capital credits. Capital credits are the difference between Lamar Electric Cooperative's operating costs and revenue. Because we are a nonprofit cooperative, any revenues left over after expenses are returned to you, our member-owners.

Last June, the board of directors authorized applications for retirement of capital credits to the estates of deceased members. Since June of last year, Lamar EC has received more than 100 applications and the board of directors have approved payment of more than \$155,000 to spouses or heirs of deceased members.

The only addresses we have for most of these accounts do not comply with the current postal address regulations because they were before 911 addresses were implemented. Should we mail a capital credit check to an address that is not valid, it will most likely be returned by the postmaster and will trigger required compliance with unclaimed property laws.

Retiring capital credits to the "estate of" has allowed Lamar Electric to give money back to the spouse, heirs or legal representatives that would typically be turned over to the state of Texas as unclaimed property. At the same time, it has allowed us to update our records, change the name on active accounts still in the name of the deceased and update addresses for future retirement of capital credits.

Lamar EC continues to accept applications for retirement of capital credits to the estates of deceased members. If you are the surviving spouse of a member or the heir to a deceased member, you can come by the office or call to request an application packet to be mailed. Once completed, these applications will be presented to the board each month for approval and checks will be issued in the order they are received, as funds are available.

Eventually, all capital credits will be paid to each member. If a member no longer has electric service with Lamar, it is important that they inform the cooperative of their current address so that future retirements can be properly mailed.

As a locally owned business, Lamar Electric is committed to the people and communities it serves. Enjoy the benefits of personalized and reliable electric service from your cooperative today and look forward to a return on your investment in the future.



ISTOCKPHOTO | THINKSTOCK

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





Save ENERGY • Save MONEY

Replacing your conventional power strips with advanced power strips can help reduce the electricity wasted when electronic devices are idle. These power strips, which reduce the "vampire" energy that appliances use even when they're turned off, are a convenient and low-cost way to save.

Source: Department of Energy

What's Happening at Lamar



DENA BEASON
Director of Communications

It's hotter than ever outside, and there is no sign of cooling down! We have a lot going on at the co-op, from line upgrades to clearing rights-of-way to making plans for installation of a new metering system.

Right-of-Way Clearing

Keeping the right-of-way clear around electrical lines helps prevent outages and blinks (a minor disruption in service lasting only a few seconds) by reducing the possibility of trees or limbs coming into contact with our electrical lines. Not only do downed lines cause outages, but they can also result in severe injury or death.

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

Lamar 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. Crews and their contracted work areas are as follows:

- ▶ Jehu Tree Service is working in the Reno area, clearing rights-of-way and removing trees that are growing into the power lines. This crew includes rope climbers and can work in backyards where bucket trucks cannot be used.
- ▶ Trees, Inc., is currently clearing 34 miles of right-of-way in the Cooper/Enloe area. This crew will be working in this area for the next couple of months.
- ▶ Nelson Tree Co. is clearing 50 miles of line in the Ben Franklin and Enloe areas, 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 Clearance will clear approximately 13 miles of 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 is currently working along Highway 79 northwest of Paris. They began clearing ROW near Loop 286 and will work their way to CR 32200.
- ▶ ABC Professional Tree Service is in the process of completing 45 miles of ROW in the Marvin, Jennings, Viewpoint, Beardstown and Glory areas.
- ▶ Two Lamar Electric employees will continue with foliar spraying using the Polaris Ranger and a spray rig.

Upgrades and Conversions

The electric loads continue to grow in our service territory. In order for Lamar to maintain proper voltage on these hot summer days, we must continue to upgrade our power lines. We also are always looking for ways we can feed lines from two different sources.

Lamar EC awarded several bid jobs to contractors to upgrade the power lines. Each contractor can be identified by the logos on their truck and hard hats. They are as follows:

- ▶ Echo Powerline, Inc., is in the process of upgrading the lines in the Reno area along Airport Road and Highway 271. They will have to change out about 121 transformers and upgrade the lines from 14,400 to 24,900 kV to accommodate the voltage conversion.
- ▶ Texoma Powerline is currently changing out approximately 10 miles of wire and replacing poles in the Forrest Hill community. They will be working along CR 36010, CR 35010 and Highway 82 for the next couple of months.

Metering System

Lamar Electric will be installing new meters over the next 18 months to increase the efficiency and reliability of our metering system. The new meters will give us more daily usage information.

We will continue to inform you of the implementation process in future Texas Co-op Power articles.



This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.

—Elmer Davis

Our offices will be closed Friday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day.

Help Lamar Electric Battle Copper Crime

Soaring metal prices have been blamed for an increase in thefts of copper and aluminum, primary components of electric distribution lines. Recent thefts of copper wire and equipment from electric utilities have been responsible for power outages, additional maintenance and expenses, diminished service reliability and, in some cases, serious injury or death.

Copper in wire is appealing to thieves who want to sell the metal for scrap. Burglars will often climb power poles, scale fences and break into buildings to steal the precious metal.

In Oklahoma, members of one electric co-op are facing an estimated \$1 million repair bill because copper thieves wrecked a substation for just \$100 worth of the metal last year. In New Mexico, a man was found dead beneath a power pole, electrocuted while trying to cut copper wiring from a live transformer. A Texas man lost his life when he cut into a live power line while trying to steal copper. Similar accidents have been reported across the country.

“To a would-be thief, stealing copper may seem like a quick way to make a buck,” says Dena Beason, director of communications at Lamar Electric. “But it’s illegal, it’s costly, and it’s not worth a life. Working with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, even for trained employees using proper equipment.”

Some electric cooperatives stamp copper and aluminum wire with an ID number to deter theft. At Lamar Electric, we use copper-plated steal wire to deter theft. Stolen wire is commonly brought to recycling centers and traded for cash. Although many state laws require recycling centers to keep records of transactions, enforcement can be difficult. Without identifying marks, stolen wire is hard to track and is rarely recovered.

Thieves may not understand that they are risking their lives by taking copper from substations, where high transmission voltage is stepped down to a lower current for distribution lines. All power lines carry a potentially deadly charge.

Lamar Electric urges you to follow these guidelines to guard against electrical dangers and prevent copper theft:

- ▶ Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation. Stay away from power lines and anything touching a power line.
- ▶ If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, unattended equipment or hanging wire, contact Lamar Electric Co-op immediately.
- ▶ If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than co-op personnel or contractors, call the police.
- ▶ Install motion-sensor lights on the outside of your house and business to deter possible thieves.
- ▶ Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while you are away.
- ▶ If you work in construction, do not leave any wires or plumbing unattended or leave loose wire at the job site, especially overnight.
- ▶ Help spread the word about the deadly consequences that can result from trying to steal copper or aluminum.

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual around substations or electric facilities, call the sheriff’s department immediately.



THINKSTOCK

Country Corner Events

July 2

Fireworks Show Doors open at 5:30 p.m.; fireworks start at 8:45 p.m. Clarksville Nursing Center. Music, food, vendors, kiddie corner and more.

July 4

Celebrate America Parade

10 a.m.-noon. Parade starts at Lamar County Courthouse parking lot.

July 11

Municipal Band Concert

8:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Band performs on the Peristyle in Bywaters Park located on South Main Street. Bring a chair or a blanket and enjoy the evening.

July 18

Paris Municipal Band Concert and Crowning of the Paris Crape Myrtle Queen

8:30-10 p.m.

Paris Junior High School Auditorium

July 19

30th Annual “Tour de Paris”

Bicycle Rally

6 a.m.-noon. Love Civic Center. This is a great event for bicycle riders of all ages. There is a route for everyone. Breakfast will be served at 6 a.m. and an after-party will feature great food as the riders return to the civic center. For more information, email judy@paristexas.com or visit tourdeparis.org.

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.