

Appreciating Electricity, One Penny at a Time

You can still get value for just a penny's worth of electricity



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

I recently ran across a column written by Curtis Condon, editor of Ruralite magazine in Hillsboro, Oregon. His points were so enlightening, I thought I'd share them with you this month.

SOME OF US ARE OLD ENOUGH to remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. But what does a penny buy these days? Not much. The government can't even make a penny for a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one.

About the only thing of value that you can still get for a penny is electricity. I'm not kidding.

Let's pretend the average rate for a kilowatt-hour of electricity is 10 cents. That's 60 minutes of 1,000 watts of electricity for a dime, so a penny of electricity equates to 100 watts. It's enough to power a 9-watt LED lightbulb—the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb—for 11 hours, all for only a penny.

The value is just as evident when powering things besides lighting. Take, for instance, your smartphone. Using the same 10 cents per kWh price, one penny's worth of electricity allows you to fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times. You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total.

We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it. We tend to forget that.

Electricity is not expensive. The expense is due to our using it for so many different things: lighting, heating, cooking, cooling, refrigeration, cleaning, washing, pumping, entertainment, communications—even transportation these days.

Unfortunately, we don't always appreciate it. When our monthly electric bill comes, we open it and might complain about the cost.

It's a knee-jerk reaction ingrained in us as consumers. We don't stop to think about the value we receive for the money.

In 1940, when many co-ops were built, a penny had as much buying power as 17 cents today. This means the residential price of electricity—which now averages 12 cents a kWh nationally—is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940. And it won't rot your teeth.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH



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Taco Soup

- 1 pound ground beef, turkey or venison
- 1 package taco seasoning
- 1 can (11 ounces) tomatoes with green chiles
- 1 can (14 ounces) ranch-style beans
- 1 can (14 ounces) hominy
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 cups grated cheddar cheese, divided use
- 4 cups tortilla chips
- 1 cup sour cream

1. Brown the meat, drain off fat and stir in taco seasoning.
2. Put meat mixture, tomatoes, beans, hominy, onion and garlic together into a large pot. Simmer over medium heat for 30 minutes.
3. Stir in 1 cup cheese during final 5 minutes. Serve in individual bowls or pour into an insulated bottle for lunchtime.
4. Top a serving with chips, a dollop of sour cream and a generous sprinkle of remaining cheese.

This recipe was a winner in the August 2013 recipe contest. Submit your best soup recipes to *Texas Co-op Power* by August 10 for a chance to win our *Nourishing Soups* recipe contest. Visit texascooppower.com/contests for rules and details.

NIKOLA BILIC | ISTOCK.COM

Find this and more delicious recipes online at
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

Notice of 2016 Capital Credits Allocations

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE recently allocated 2016 capital credits to members' accounts.

As a nonprofit organization, after the end of every fiscal year, the cooperative must determine what margins were made during the year and allocate these margins to the members' equity accounts. The margin is revenue received in excess of all operating costs.

These margins will be returned to members as approved by the board in the future and when doing so will not weaken the financial condition of the cooperative. At this time, all margins 1938–1969 and about half of 1970–1975 have been returned to the members. Eventually, all margins will be paid to members.

In the meantime, the funds are used to construct new lines or make other capital improvements to the electrical system, even though the amount is credited to every member's equity account. For this reason, we often refer to these margins as "capital credits." Capital credits cannot be used to pay your electric bill.

These capital credits remain allocated to a member's account even if the member is no longer receiving service from Lamar Electric. It is very important that departing members keep the cooperative informed of their current mailing addresses in the future so they can receive capital credits when they are returned.

Capital credits for every member in 2016 were calculated by multiplying each member's bill by 0.0351871683. For example: If your total billing for 2016 from the cooperative (consisting of energy billing and power cost adjustment) was \$2,000, simply multiply that amount by 0.0351871683. The product is \$70.38. In calculating your total bill, include any security light charge but do not include any tax, service or miscellaneous charges.

If you have any questions concerning these calculations, please contact Lamar Electric at 1-800-782-9010.

This article is intended to serve as an official notice of the capital credits allocation for 2016.



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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.

Power Tip

Let the sun work for you! Solar cells convert sunlight into electricity that can be stored in a battery and tapped at night to make light. Consider solar lights for outdoor lighting.



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Government-in-Action Youth Tour Winners Return from Washington

SARAH TEUBNER AND KYLEA BASDEN were the winners of our 2017 Government-in-Action Youth Tour essay contest. They were among 147 students sponsored by cooperatives in Texas who made the trip to the nation's capital June 7-16 for a tour of its many historic sites.

Teubner is a home-schooled senior and the daughter of Rebekah and the late Mike Teubner of Novice. Basden recently completed her junior year at North Lamar High School. She is the daughter of John and Patricia Basden of Powderly.

Contestants submitted an essay addressing the topic, "How will electrical needs be met in the future?"

The Youth Tour was born from a speech given at the 1957 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting by then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson. He was an advocate of electric co-ops, having lobbied for the creation of Pedernales Electric Cooperative in 1937 as a young politician in Texas. "If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents the future," Johnson said.

With that encouragement, Texas electric co-ops began sending summer interns to work in the senator's Washington, D.C., office. In 1964, an electric co-op in Iowa sponsored the first group of 34 young people on a weeklong study tour of the nation's capital. Later that same year, another busload went to Washington from Illinois.

The idea grew, and other states sent busloads of students

throughout the summer. By 1965, 130 students were sponsored by electric co-ops to visit Washington and see their government in action. The program has steadily grown in popularity since its beginning 52 years ago.

This year, the tour originated in Austin for Texas' participants. From there, the group flew to Washington, where they met with approximately 1,500 other students from across the nation. Once in Washington, the tour participants got to see and tour many historic places such as Mount Vernon and the U.S. Capitol, where Lamar Electric participants visited with Rep. John Ratcliffe and toured the House and Senate chambers.

Also included on the tour were historic sites such as the National Cathedral, Ford's Theatre and the Smithsonian museums, the Washington Monument, FDR Memorial, Kennedy Center, John F. Kennedy's grave, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery and Mount Vernon, as well as the Jefferson, Lincoln, Korean War Veterans and Vietnam Veterans memorials.

Lamar Electric sponsors area students on this trip every year.

To be eligible for the Youth Tour contest next year, a student must be a sophomore, junior or senior in high school and live in a home served by Lamar Electric or attend one of the four high schools served by Lamar: Detroit, Prairiland, Roxton and Faith Christian Academy. Home-schooled students in homes served by Lamar Electric also are eligible.

Keep Food Safe

Before, During and After a Power Outage

Unfortunately, power outages do occur from time to time. It's important to know how to keep your food safe during an outage. Use these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of illness.

Before power outage



Keep refrigerator at **40° or below**. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately. Keep freezer set to **0° or below**. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

During power outage

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!

If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 hours**.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for **four hours**.

After power outage

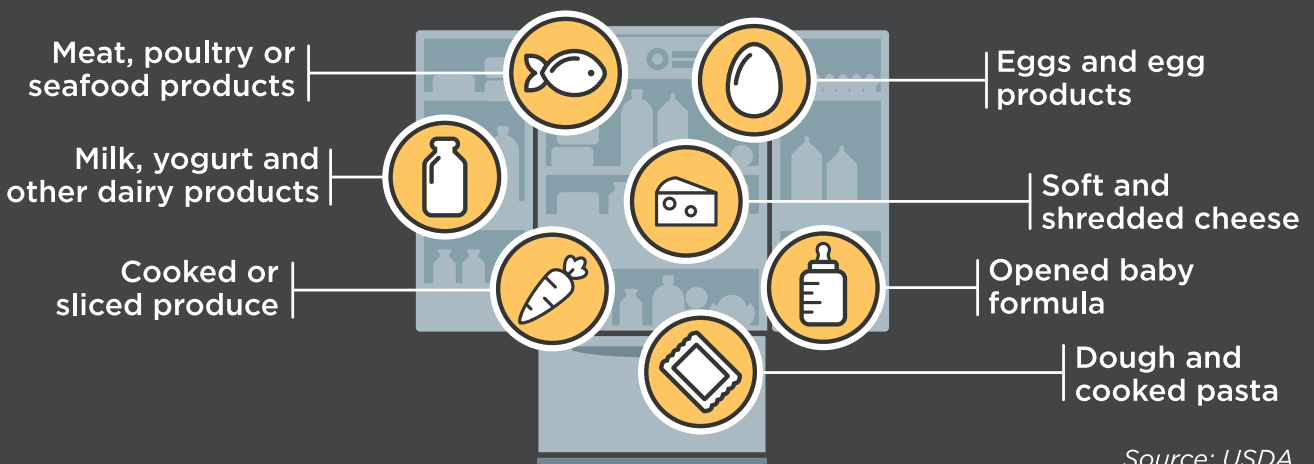


Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer.



If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

Foods that should be thrown out after an extended power outage:



Source: USDA