

What Is the Customer Charge?



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

A COMMON QUESTION I RECEIVE IS; WHAT IS this item on my bill, called Customer Charge? The simple answer is it is a part of the fee you pay to have electricity available. For this reason, some have called it the Service Availability Charge.

Other than the line with Previous and Present meter readings, residential members will have two charge items on their electric bill and a Total Amount Due. The first charge is for the

included in the total cost of operating your co-op.

The Customer Charge is applied equally to everyone who receives electric service. Even if you use zero kWh in a month, it still costs the co-op the same amount to maintain power lines, read meters and mail bills. You may not realize it, but the transformer at your house uses a lot of electricity just sitting there humming, even though your meter never turns.

There are many deer camps, barns and camper locations that are only used occasionally or during deer season. These meters are on the same distribution line as other members who use electricity year-round. They each pay the same monthly Customer Charge even if no electricity goes through the meter. Crews spend just as much time maintaining the power lines and clearing the right-of-way going to the seldom used meters as to the full time resident on the same distribution line. By paying the same monthly Customer Charge, each member helps provide the revenue needed to make sure the power is on when the switch is flipped

We think applying this charge equally to all members is the fairest way to ensure everyone pays a share for building and maintaining the electric system—even during the months when no electricity goes thru the meter. Some have asked me if we could lower the Customer Charge to around \$6. The answer is “we could.” But, in order to get enough money to maintain the electric lines and equipment, we would have to increase the kWh energy charge to make up for the reduction in the Customer Charge.

For example; reducing the Customer Charge from \$12.50 to \$6 for about 10,000 accounts would reduce revenue by \$780,000 per year. The offset would be to increase kWh energy by about 4/10 of a cent for these same people. Sure the deer camps, barns, summer homes and camper spots would save \$6.50 per month but full time residents would pay around \$8 MORE per month for electrical energy and even more during those high usage months. Reducing the Customer Charge by \$6.50 and then adding \$8 or more back would not make sense to most folks. The folks with deer camps, barns or other seldom used buildings would like having their bill subsidized by others but it would not be right.

As it is, the locations that seldom use power will pay their fair share of maintaining the electrical system, even during months of little or no kWh usage on their meter.



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amount of electricity used in kWh, and the label is ENERGY CHARGE. The second charge label is CUSTOMER CHARGE. This charge stays the same whether you use zero electricity or hundreds of kilowatt-hours (kWh). For most accounts the Customer Charge is \$12.50, whereas a large industrial customer with three transformers instead of one, the charge will be \$50.

The Customer Charge is just a part of the rate and helps generate the revenue we need to operate. If there were no customer charge, we would have to add the same amount to something else on your bill. It is true this charge helps pay for the basic infrastructure needed to deliver electricity. This includes the wires that carry power to your house; cost of transformers, labor to build and maintain lines that make our co-op run, as well as taxes, insurance, and all the other costs to keep the lights on.

The Customer Charge has no direct connection to a prior ice storm or the cost to read your meter. While these are certainly part of the cost of delivering power, they are simply



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Government-in-Action Youth Tour Applications Open



EVERY YEAR, LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SELECTS TWO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO attend an all-expense-paid tour of Washington, D.C., which includes visiting the U.S. Capitol and meeting members of Congress.

To be eligible, students must be in 10th, 11th or 12th grade and live full time in a residence served by Lamar Electric Cooperative, or attend one of the four high schools served by the co-op: Prairiland, Roxton, Detroit and Faith Christian. Home-schooled students served by Lamar Electric are also eligible.

Applications must be completed, along with a three-page, typed essay titled, *How has electricity improved life in the area where I live?* and submitted to Lamar Electric no later than **5 p.m. on February 9, 2018.**

The application is available online at lamarelectric.coop. Submit by email to detrip@lamarelectric.coop, or in person at 1485 N. Main St. in Paris. It's that easy!

Learn more about the Government-in-Action Youth Tour at lamarelectric.coop. Look for Youth Tour after clicking on the Youth tab.

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2018 YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 9

NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL _____

LAMAR ELECTRIC ACCOUNT NO. _____

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

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____



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

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Jerry D. Williams

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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.

CONTACT US

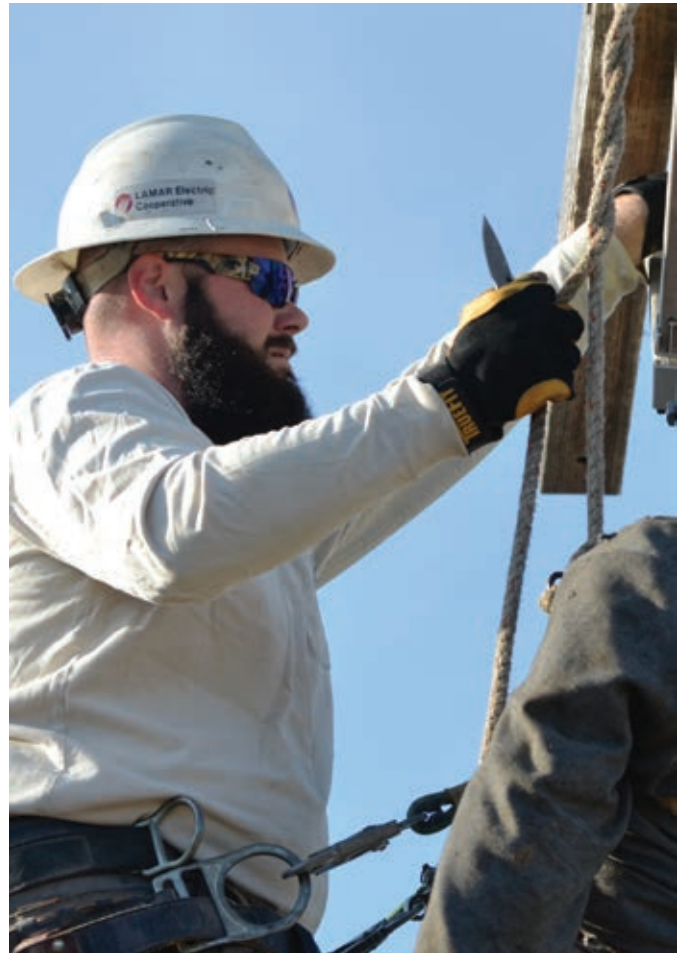
CALL US

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1-800-782-9010 toll-free

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www.lamarelectric.coop





Linemen Train for Pole-Top Rescue

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONDUCTED POLE-TOP AND bucket rescue training recently to prepare our linemen to rescue a person who has been shocked or otherwise injured while at the top of a pole or in the bucket of a bucket truck. The linemen practiced their rescues using a 175-pound dummy at our substation in Reno.

The co-op's goal is to have all our linemen trained to perform a rescue and take an injured individual down from a pole as quickly as possible, so their fellow employees can begin administering CPR or first aid immediately, before medical professionals arrive.

Linemen work with thousands of volts high atop power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to keep electricity flowing. Linemen often act as first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety heroes. In the unlikely event that a lineman is on a pole or in the bucket of a truck and has a major medical emergency (such as an electrical shock or heart attack), his fellow linemen are the first responders. It is not a part of their

typical day to rescue a man from the top of a pole or a bucket; however, it is vital that they keep the rescue procedures fresh in their minds just in case.

Scott Corley, a Loss Control specialist for Texas Electric Cooperatives, assisted with the training. "This is not a new training for most of these linemen. The majority of these guys are experienced and have been through this training a number of times," Corley said. "This is something we train for and hope we never have to use. This training provides the steps required to keep an injured man and the rescuer safe."

The goal is to complete the rescue in less than four minutes in order to avoid any brain damage due to lack of oxygen to the injured individual. All Lamar Electric linemen completed rescues in 2 minutes and 53 seconds or less. "In the 27 years that I've been at Lamar Electric, we have not had to do a rescue like this," Operations Manager Scott Sansom said. "I hope we can go another 27 years without an incident."

In addition to being trained for pole-top and bucket rescues, all of our linemen are trained in first aid, CPR and AED use.

Deck the Halls With LEDs



REMEMBER OLD-SCHOOL CHRISTMAS LIGHTS? WHEN ONE WENT OUT, THEY ALL DID.

But not anymore, if you use LEDs for holiday decorating. These hardy, energy-saving bulbs give you one less thing to worry about during the holidays.

Why are LED holiday lights better than traditional ones?

► The look of LED lighting is now on par with that of traditional bulbs. LEDs come in warm, inviting colors with a variety of light beam patterns and dimming levels.

► LEDs have an operational life span of about 20,000 hours—enough to last for 40 holiday seasons.

► LED bulbs don't have glass or filaments, making them durable and resistant to breaking.

► An outage in an individual LED bulb generally doesn't darken the whole strand.

► LEDs use less energy. Running LEDs on a 6-foot Christmas tree 12 hours a day for 40 days can save about 90 percent of the cost of using traditional lights.

► Because they use less energy, it's safer to connect multiple LED strands end-to-end without overloading the wall socket. Also, they're cool to the touch, reducing the risk of fire.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



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Banana Crunch Muffins

- 3 cups flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, melted
- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup whole milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup mashed bananas
- 1 cup diced bananas
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup granola
- 1 cup sweetened, flaked coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Apply nonstick cooking spray to muffin tins.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and soda, and salt. Add butter and mix thoroughly.
3. In a medium bowl, combine eggs, milk, vanilla and mashed bananas, stirring until combined. Add to dry ingredients and mix until smooth. Fold in diced bananas, pecans, granola and coconut.
4. Spoon into muffin tins. Sprinkle tops with extra granola or flaked coconut, if desired. Bake 25–30 minutes.

Makes 18 muffins.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

