

# Use Generators Safely

*Our linemen's lives are on the line*



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

**AS I WRITE THIS, THE LOCAL PAPER REMINDS** me of the deadly tornado that hit the Paris area in 1982. Every spring time we are reminded the area we call home can be ground zero for some really bad weather. Many of you can vividly remember the St. Patrick's Day storm of 2016 that broke over 90 Lamar Electric poles and put several communities in the dark for a couple days. We need to be prepared in the event a destructive storm comes our way. You can be sure Lamar Electric will do everything we can to restore power but repairs can take a while if the destruction is bad enough.

During an extended outage, some folks rely on a portable generator while power is being restored. If you use a generator, do you know enough about it to operate it safely?

The safety of our members and our employees is a top priority at Lamar Electric Cooperative, especially during dangerous times. When storms hit our area, we rush to restore power as soon as conditions allow.

Our line crews take necessary precautions before they work on downed power lines, taking care to ensure that a line is de-energized before working on it. But even after these measures, an improperly connected generator can put our workers' lives at risk.

Lamar Electric is proud of our outstanding safety record, but sometimes, no matter how many steps we take to keep everyone safe, the very people we are there to help unknowingly put our lives—and their own—in danger. Portable generators can prove fatal to linemen when used improperly.

Of course, no one would ever purposely cause the death of a lineman. Nevertheless, a generator connected to a home's wiring or plugged into a regular household outlet can cause back feeding along power lines and electrocute anyone who comes in contact with them—even if the line seems dead.

Lamar Electric employees are not the only ones in danger when a portable generator is used improperly. Those who operate a generator improperly can risk being electrocuted,

starting fires, damaging property or being poisoned by carbon monoxide. Portable generators can be very helpful during outages, but it is imperative that you follow these safety guidelines when using one:

- ▶ Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use, which includes having a transfer switch installed by a qualified electrical contractor. The transfer switch will disconnect your home from the power grid. Connecting the generator to a house's wiring without such a switch can cause current to flow out of your home's circuitry and along power lines. Your house transformer will increase the household voltage of 120 volts to 14,000 volts. This situation can hurt or kill anyone coming in contact with the lines.

- ▶ Homes without a transfer switch should always plug appliances directly into generators using only heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords. Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.

- ▶ Ensure that your generator is properly grounded.

- ▶ Never overload a generator. A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.

- ▶ Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.

- ▶ Only operate a generator on a dry surface under an open structure if possible, but always away from windows or doors leading into your home.

- ▶ Always have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby.

- ▶ Never fuel a generator while it is operating.

- ▶ Read and adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Never cut corners when it comes to safety.

We encourage you to protect the well-being and safety of your family during outages and safeguard those who come to your aid during emergency situations. When we work together for safety and the good of our communities, we all benefit.

# Capital Credits Allocated

**LAMAR ELECTRIC RECENTLY ALLOCATED 2017 CAPITAL CREDITS TO EACH MEMBER'S** account. As a nonprofit organization, after the end of each fiscal year, the cooperative must determine what margins were made during the year and allocate these margins to members' equity accounts. Margins are 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 from 1938 through 1969 have been returned to members. Most of the capital credits from 1970 through 1975 have been returned, too.

Eventually, all margins will be paid to each member. 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 each 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 even if the member is no longer receiving service from Lamar Electric. That's why it's very important that departing members keep the cooperative informed of their current mailing addresses. So they can receive capital credits refunds when they are paid, even if they move.

Capital credits for each member for 2017 were calculated by multiplying each member's bill by 0.0210092. For example:

If your total billing for 2017 from the cooperative (consisting of energy billing and power cost adjustment) was \$2,000, simply multiply that amount by 0.0210092. The product is \$42.02. In calculating your total bill, include any security light charges but do not include any tax, service or miscellaneous charges.

If you have any questions concerning these calculations, please contact the Lamar Electric Cooperative office.

*This article is intended to serve as an official notice of the capital credit allocation for 2017.*



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## GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO

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

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

### FIND US ON THE WEB

**www.lamarelectric.coop**



Memorial Day | Lamar Electric will be closed Monday, May 28, in observance of the holiday.

# Safety Above All Else



BY KATIE MORRIS

**“SAFETY” IS A WORD MENTIONED OFTEN AND USED**

loosely. Communities large and small, as well as companies across all industries are committed to safety. Sports leagues at every level take safety seriously, too. Unfortunately, when it really counts, steps to keep the public, workers, athletes and loved ones safe are often ignored in the interest of expediency or convenience.

Safety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. For Lamar Electric, it’s the No. 1 priority.

This is not empty talk. Over time, we have created a culture of safety by putting our employees’ safety and that of the community above all else. At the end of the day, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our members, but equally important, we want to return our workers home safely to their loved ones. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

Working with electricity is a dangerous job—one that our lineworkers carry out every day. We establish and follow safety protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We require our lineworkers to wear specialized gear when working near or on power lines. Our lineworkers must follow specific protocols when dealing with electricity. Lamar Electric linemen have regular meetings where they discuss upcoming projects from a safety perspective. They monitor and track near-misses of accidents in order to understand them, share lessons learned and improve in the future.

We encourage all of our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety rather than defaulting to a blame game. We examine the information and data collected from near-misses and accident reports to discern patterns and use safety statistics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short. As appropriate, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their engagement.

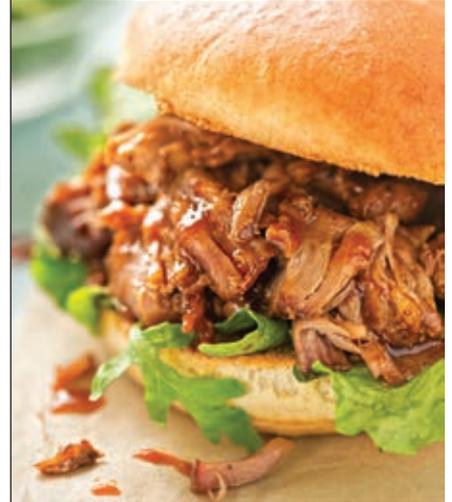
Because we live and work in the community we serve, we care about our neighbors. Lamar Electric conducts electrical safety demonstrations in schools. We also post electrical safety tips on our website and social media accounts along with energy efficiency tips and outage updates. Like our Facebook page by clicking “Like” at [facebook.com/lamarelectriccoop](https://facebook.com/lamarelectriccoop).

May is National Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted each year as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. There are many things you can do to keep yourself and your community safe around electricity.

Don’t attempt do-it-yourself electrical projects or overload your outlets. Report downed power lines as well as unlocked substations or padmount transformers that look suspicious. Cover your electrical outlets if you have small children in your home.

Visit our website at [lamarelectric.coop](http://lamarelectric.coop) for additional electrical safety tips. If you would like us to provide a safety demonstration at your school, please contact me, Katie Morris, at [katie@lamarelectric.coop](mailto:katie@lamarelectric.coop). Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety. Pause and take the extra time to plug in to safety today.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH



BARTOSZ LUCZAK | ISTOCK.COM

### Dr Pepper Pulled Pork Sandwiches

- 3-4 pounds pork loin
- Pork seasonings (seasoned salt, cracked black pepper, garlic powder, mustard powder or cayenne)
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 sweet onions, thinly sliced
- ¾ cup barbecue sauce
- 12-20 ounces Dr Pepper

For this recipe, you can season the pork loin simply, with salt and pepper, or use your favorite seasoning salt or mix of spices and herbs.

1. Coat a slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray or brush with oil.
2. Season the pork loin generously (can be done the night before), coat with garlic and place it in the slow cooker.
3. Top the pork with onion slices and barbecue sauce, then pour in enough Dr Pepper to cover.
4. Cook on low heat about 8 hours or on high 4 hours.
5. Shred the meat with two forks, allowing the mixture to soak up the sauce. Serve on buns with extra sauce, sliced onions and pickles.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at [TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM](http://TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM)

# SEVERE WEATHER Are You Ready?

**Some years, lightning strikes kill more Americans than tornadoes or hurricanes. Don't take chances with this deadly force of nature.**

**Go inside** a building and stay away from windows and doors.

**Avoid** electric appliances and metal plumbing and stay off the phone.

**Do not seek** shelter under a tree—they are easy targets.

**Move** to low ground and avoid open fields.

**Whether** at the beach or in a swimming pool, get out of the water immediately.

**Do not touch** metal objects, such as golf clubs or bicycles.

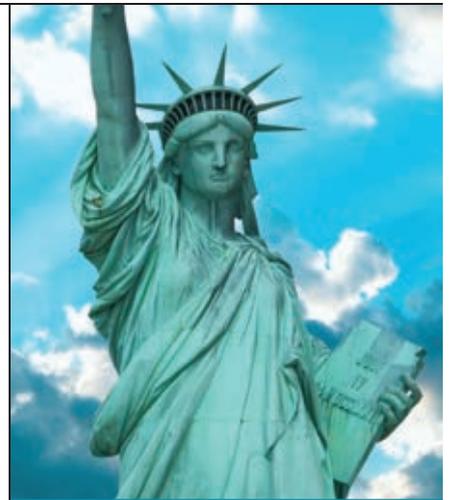
**Inside a car** is relatively safe, but do not touch interior metal.

**If your hair** stands on end, you may be a target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and keep your knees and hands off the ground.

**Lamar Electric encourages you to always practice safety.**



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## Did You Know?

The first successful electric car was built in 1890 by American inventor William Morrison, and in 1897 electric taxis hit the streets of New York City.



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## Power Tip

Test refrigerator door seals for energy efficiency by closing the door over a piece of paper (so that it's half in and half out). If you can easily pull the piece of paper out, you may need to replace the seal or adjust the latch.