

Telling the Story of Your Cooperative for 75 Years



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

IF YOUR MAILBOX IS ANYTHING LIKE MINE, IT seems to fill up nearly every day with unwelcome deliveries. We're bombarded with magazines, advertisements and credit card offers, most of which go straight into the trash can. For some reason they must know my age. Lately there has been a rash of electric wheel chair and hearing aid offers. Then, invariably, come the bills—those sometimes unpleasant but unavoidable pieces of mail.

Sometimes, however, that mix of creased and crumpled papers includes an item we actually welcome. Hopefully the magazine you're reading right now is one such item—I know it is for me and the employees of Lamar Electric Cooperative. But we're not the only ones. Since the first issue in 1944, generations of rural electric cooperative members have found value within the pages of *Texas Co-op Power*. And this month, as the magazine celebrates its 75th anniversary, I invite you to join me in recognizing the invaluable role it has played as a trusted voice for Texas electric cooperatives.

Many folks don't realize that *Texas Co-op Power* is published every month and mailed to almost every rural electric cooperative member in the state of Texas. That is over 2 million accounts, spread over 241 Texas counties. That is more subscribers than the *Dallas Morning News*, *Houston Chronicle* and *San Antonio Express* – all put together. What makes it even more special is that every story, advertisement, recipe and community calendar is specifically done for the rural Co-op people of Texas.

Every month, *Texas Co-op Power* is delivered to your mailbox to entertain, enlighten and, most importantly, educate you and your family. In fact, this magazine is one of the primary vehicles through which Lamar Electric Cooperative fulfills Cooperative Principle No. 5, Education, Training and Information. Through these pages, our web page and Facebook—we communicate directly with you, our members, about matters that are important for the cooperative, such as director elections and contractors that will be working around electric lines on your property. We also share tips on maximizing the energy efficiency of your home and offer safety information that may

even save your life. Most of the time my article is the result of questions many of you have asked me and I figured would be of interest to others.

As technology continues to advance at a sometimes overwhelming pace, we use this magazine to help you understand how Lamar Electric is using new technologies to give you better service. But the magazine offers so much more than that. It's also a key component in our efforts to enrich members' lives and uplift our communities. Were it not for this magazine, you might not be aware of all the local charitable work the co-op supports or how your children can apply for scholarships and educational trips. Through reading stories about history, nature and the outdoors, travel destinations and more, our members become more informed about our extraordinary state.

Throughout the years, *Texas Co-op Power* has connected co-op members near and far. A contest-winning recipe by a member in one part of the state has the power to bring a family together at a dinner table hundreds of miles away. A letter to the editor from a reader in the Panhandle may spur a response from another on the Gulf Coast, and a conversation begins.

A feature about the work of a Southwest Texas woman to raise awareness about a serious health condition can—as we've seen—inspire others from across the state to pitch in, and a movement is formed. A story about a local couple that started a Christmas Tree farm helps many other members know that locally grown Christmas Trees will soon be available.

Of course, through the internet, we have access to countless sources of information and ways to connect. But there's nothing quite like holding this magazine in your hands and knowing that it's made especially for you—our co-op members—and with your best interests in mind.

As *Texas Co-op Power* reflects on 75 years of empowering rural Texans, know that you, too, are a part of that history. And with each new issue you read, you carry the story of the magazine—and the Cooperative message that it imparts—into the future.

Capital Credits Allocated to Member Accounts

LAMAR ELECTRIC RECENTLY ALLOCATED 2018 CAPITAL CREDITS TO MEMBER ACCOUNTS.

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

These margins will be returned to members as approved by the board in the future, 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 also. 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 allocated even after members leave Lamar Electric and are no longer receiving service from the cooperative. It is very important that departing members keep the cooperative informed of their current and future mailing addresses so they can receive capital credits retirements when they are paid.

Capital credits for each member in 2018 were calculated by multiplying each member's bill by 0.0720678. For example, if your total billing for 2018 from the cooperative (consisting of energy billing and power cost adjustment) was \$2,000, simply multiply that amount by 0.0720678. The product is \$144.14. In calculating your total bill, include any security light charge, if applicable, but do not include any tax, service or miscellaneous charges.

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

This article is intended to serve as an official notice of the capital credits allocation for 2018.



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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.

A young girl with dark hair in two pigtails, wearing a pink polo shirt, is holding a small white handheld fan. She is smiling slightly. The background is a solid orange color.

Power Tip

When temperatures rise, there are things you can do to save energy and trim your electric bill. Raise your thermostat a couple of degrees—78 is the most efficient setting. And ceiling fans are a great way to move air and keep you cooler.

TOM WANG | ISTOCK.COM

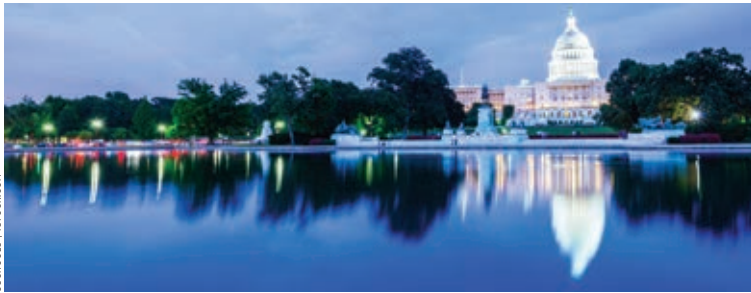
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Youth Tour Winners Return From Washington



JAYMEE BLOUNT AND DAMON HALL WON LAMAR ELECTRIC'S 2019 Government-in-Action Youth Tour essay contest. For their winning essays about circumstances in which they demonstrated leadership skills, Blount and Hall were selected to join more than 150 other students from electric cooperatives across Texas for the trip to Austin and Washington, DC., June 12–21.

Blount is the daughter of co-op members Rodney and Robyn Blount of Bogata and recently graduated from home-school. Hall is the son of members Dana and Jeff Mayes of Reno and just completed his junior year at Chisum High School.

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 a longtime 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,” Johnson said. With that encouragement, Texas electric co-ops began sending summer interns to work in the senator’s Washington office.

In 1958, an electric co-op in Iowa sponsored the first group of 34 young people on a weeklong tour of the nation’s capital. Later that same year, another busload was sent to

Washington from Illinois. The idea grew, and other states sent busloads of students throughout the summer. By 1959, electric co-ops had sponsored 130 students to visit Washington to see their government in action. The program has steadily grown in popularity since its beginning more than 50 years ago.

This year, as it has for years, the tour began in Austin for Texas participants. From there, the group flew to Washington, to be among some 1,800 students from across the U.S.

Once in Washington, participants got to visit many important and historic places, such as Mount Vernon and the U.S. Capitol, where they toured the House and Senate chambers, and Lamar Electric’s winners met with U.S. Rep. John Ratcliffe. Also included on the tour were stops at Ford’s Theatre, the Smithsonian Institution museums, the Washington Monument, Kennedy Center, John F. Kennedy’s gravesite and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, and the Jefferson, Lincoln, FDR, 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 schools served by the co-op, which include Detroit, Prairiland and Faith Christian Academy. Home-schooled students in homes served by Lamar Electric are also eligible.



Stay Back and Stay Safe

WORKING WITH ELECTRICITY CAN BE A DANGEROUS JOB, ESPECIALLY for lineworkers. In fact, *USA Today* lists line repairers and installers among the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. That's why, for Lamar Electric, safety is our No. 1 priority. This is not an empty slogan: Over time, we have created a culture of putting our crews' safety and that of the community above all else.

Yes, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to you, but more important, we want our employees to return home safely to their loved ones. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, vigilance—and your help!

Distractions Can Be Deadly

While we appreciate your kindness and interest in the work of our crews, we ask that you stay back and let them focus on their task at hand. Even routine work has the potential to be dangerous, and it takes their full attention and that of their colleagues, who are also responsible for the team's safety. Distractions can have deadly consequences. If a lineworker is on or near your property during a power outage, for vegetation management or for routine maintenance, please allow them ample room to work. These small accommodations help protect our crews—and you.

If you have a dog, try to keep it indoors while lineworkers are on or near your property. While most dogs are friendly, some are defensive of their territory and can't distinguish between a burglar and a utility worker. Our crews work best without a pet "supervising" the job.

We recognize that for your family's safety, you want to make sure only authorized workers are on or near your property. You will recognize Lamar Electric employees by their uni-

forms and the co-op's logo on our service trucks. You may also recognize our lineworkers because they live right here in our community.

Slow Down and Move Over

In addition to giving lineworkers space while they are near your property, we also ask that you move over or slow down when approaching a utility vehicle on the side of the road. One work zone crash occurs every 5.4 minutes, on average, across the U.S., and 70 of those each day result in injuries. There is one fatality each week from these accidents. The lineworkers' focus is on the work at hand, not on the road, so we need you to watch out for them.

Also, never text and drive—around work crews or at any other time. That message can wait, and the momentary distraction can change lives forever.

Keep Poles Clear and Safe

Nails, staples and other attachments to utility poles not only get in lineworkers' way when they are trying to climb poles, but these foreign objects can also damage the workers' safety gear, exposing them to possible shock or electrocution. Never post signs or attach anything to utility poles.

Guy wires may occasionally be inconveniently located, but please leave them alone. The wires provide support for poles, and removing or modifying them can weaken the system, causing poles, power lines and possibly lineworkers to come crashing to the ground.

Lamar Electric's employees are looking out for you. Help them stay safe by returning the favor.