



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO BRYAN STORY

You're Not Alone in the Dark

ELECTRICITY POWERS OUR LIVES. We depend on it for nearly everything we do, so your electric cooperative understands how frustrating it can be when you're left in the dark.

Power outages are never convenient for anyone.

It takes a lot of hands to keep your power on and even more hands to get it back up and running after an outage. We appreciate the patience and consideration that our members show to line crews and other co-op employees during these inconvenient and often frustrating times.

At Lamar Electric Cooperative, we work hard to restore your electric service when outages occur, and there's a method to our process that ensures

High-voltage transmission stations feed power to distribution substations, which serve thousands of members. Lamar Electric only owns a very short run of transmission lines, and the majority of the lines in our service territory belong to Oncor.

If there's no damage done to transmission infrastructure, then substations are checked next. If the issue is isolated and can be resolved at the substation level, that means thousands of people can get their power restored at once.

Sometimes the issue can't be isolated to a substation. If that's the case, crews inspect supply lines between substations and the meters they serve. If the lines can be repaired, power can be restored to homes and businesses served by those lines, as long as there's no damage to tap lines.

Tap lines carry power to transformers connected to poles outside of homes and other buildings. Our line crews identify which damaged lines to work on first, based on which lines will restore power to the greatest number of members.

Many times, the issue is resolved once the tap lines are repaired.

But have you ever lost power, only to look next door and see the lights still blazing from your neighbor's window? When this happens, it typically means that the service line between your home and the nearby transformer has been damaged. If this happens, be sure to let us know so we can send a crew to your home.

Power restoration can be a tricky business, so if you lose service in your home, please remember the following:

- ▶ Report the outage to us as soon as possible.

- ▶ Stay clear of downed power lines. Contact with these lines could be life-threatening.

- ▶ Make sure to inform us immediately if loss of power to your home affects life-support systems or could cause any additional threat to the health and safety of anyone in your home.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation whenever an outage occurs. ■



COURTESY WOOD COUNTY EC

power is restored to the majority of members as quickly—and safely—as possible.

After a major storm, line crews must first identify which poles and lines have incurred damage. In the case of a major storm, transmission towers can be damaged in addition to co-op facilities. If that's the case, tens of thousands of people could be affected, making repairs to transmission lines the top priority for the transmission operators.



CHEAP SHOTS COST A LOT

It doesn't take a crack shot to hit an electric insulator or transformer. Careless shooters can cause major problems for your electric cooperative—and their neighbors.

Shooting electrical infrastructure is a serious crime with serious consequences.

It could even be a matter of life and death to someone on a life-support system or who is hit by a stray shot.

Damage to electrical equipment is very expensive to repair. Lines may be cut or weakened from a shot, and they may sag or break, becoming a serious hazard for anyone who comes into contact with the line.

Broken insulators can cause power outages that are hard—and expensive—for co-op employees to locate.

Enjoy your sport but be a responsible hunter.

Lamar Electric encourages you to always practice safety.

PHOTO: GENO ESPONDA



5225 US Hwy. 82 E, Blossom, TX 75416

P.O. Box 68, Blossom, TX 75416

Phone (903) 784-4303

Web lamarelectric.coop

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For information and to report outages, please call us.

(903) 784-4303

MEMBER BENEFITS

- Level billing
- Automated meter reading
- Free bank draft service
- E-Bill
- Visa and Mastercard accepted
- Prepaid metering

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Lamar Electric provides *Texas Co-op Power* and TexasCoopPower.com to give you information about events, safety, special programs and other activities of your cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the co-op office.

VISIT US ONLINE

lamarelectric.coop



Check us out at

TexasCoopPower.com/lamar



FOCUSED ON YOUR STREET. NOT WALL STREET.

Think of your not-for-profit electric cooperative as your very own local energy adviser. After all, we're owned by you and the other members in our community, which means you'll always have a say in how your co-op runs.

To learn more, visit lamarelectric.coop.

YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.



Dial 811 Before You Plant a Tree

Arbor Day in Texas is November 1

SPRING MIGHT SEEM like the optimal time of year to create a landscape masterpiece, but in Texas, Arbor Day is celebrated the first Friday in November. Planting trees and shrubs in early fall gives the plants a head start at establishing roots in the season's cool, moist soil.

Maybe you're planning to build a new deck to enjoy those cool autumn evenings instead. If any of your fall projects require digging—such as planting trees or shrubs or setting posts—remember to dial 811 first.

Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water, electric or communications lines, can be a shovel's thrust away from turning a fall project into a disaster.

Play it safe by dialing 811 a few days before digging to find out where utility lines run on your property. Your call will be routed to a local call center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, and the affected local utilities will be notified.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes and cables. These areas will be marked with flags or paint so you'll know what's below. Then the safe digging can begin.

Although many homeowners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are aware of 811 services, most don't take advantage. A national survey showed that only 50% of homeowners called to have their lines marked before they started digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance. CGA data also shows that an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes, on average, in the U.S. because someone decided to dig without first dialing 811.

Even simple tasks such as installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines, which can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm diggers and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Never assume you know the location or depth of underground utility lines. There's no need: The 811 service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury.

For more information about local services, visit texas811.org. ■



DARIA KULKOVA | ISTOCK.COM

Sweater Weather: A Good Time To Save Energy at Home

IT'S BEEN WEEKS since you needed to turn on the air conditioner, but it's not quite time to crank up the heat. In fact, autumn is one of the best times of the year to save energy.

Here are some ideas to get you started.

Layer your clothing. A sweater and a pair of socks can keep you warm enough without turning on the heat, probably for longer than you would expect.

Throw extra blankets on the bed.

Open the curtains during the day when the sun is up and close them at dusk to keep cold air outside where it belongs.

Stop drafts by caulking around windows, doors and holes in exterior walls for cable and phone lines.

Set a date for turning on the heat for the first time, like Veterans Day or Thanksgiving, so you don't flip it on at the first cool spell. But if you need to wear gloves and a ski cap to stay warm while you watch TV, it might be time to activate the thermostat no matter the date. ■



Cast-Iron Skillet Giveaway Contest

To celebrate TCP's 80th year, we're giving away 80 heirloom-quality No. 12 skillets from Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co.

80
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TCP Enter Today
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DID YOU KNOW

Americans will eat more than 46 million turkeys and 50 million pumpkin pies this Thanksgiving.

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Let's Talk Turkey

ARE YOU ONE of the more than 46 million Americans who are preparing a turkey for your holiday meal? Whether you're cooking a whole bird or part of one, you should take special care.

Follow these steps to safely handle and cook your turkey.

Store Turkey Properly

Frozen raw turkey should be stored in the freezer at 0 degrees until you're ready to thaw it.

Fresh whole turkey can be stored in the refrigerator until its use-by date.

Thaw Turkey Safely

Use one of these methods to thaw your turkey:

Refrigerator. Keep your turkey in its original wrapping and place it breast side up in a container to prevent the turkey's juice from dripping onto other food in the fridge. Allow about 24 hours of thawing for every 4–5 pounds of bird.

A turkey thawed can remain in the fridge for 1–2 days before cooking.

Sink. Be sure your bird is in a leak-proof plastic bag before you place it in the sink, breast side down. Fully cover the turkey with cold tap water, and change the water every 30 minutes.

Allow about 30 minutes of thawing for each pound of bird. A turkey thawed in cold water must be cooked immediately after thawing.

Never thaw your turkey by leaving it out on the counter. When a turkey stays out at room temperature for more than 2 hours, it becomes unsafe, even if the center is still frozen.

Turkey Handling

Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after handling uncooked turkey.

Use a separate cutting board for raw meat.

Never place cooked food or produce on a plate, cutting board or other surface that touched raw turkey.

Wash cutting boards, utensils, dishes and countertops with hot soapy water after preparing raw turkey and before you prepare the next item.

Don't wash or rinse raw turkey.

Cook Turkey Fully

To roast a turkey in your oven, set the oven temperature to at least 325 degrees. Place the completely thawed turkey in a roasting pan

that's 2–3 inches deep. Cooking times depend on the weight of the bird and whether it's stuffed.

Use a food thermometer to make sure the turkey has reached a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees. Check by inserting a food thermometer into the thickest part of the breast, thigh and wing. Even if your turkey has a pop-up timer, you should still use a food thermometer to check that it's safely cooked.

Let the turkey stand 20 minutes before carving. This will make it easier to carve.

If you're planning to fry or smoke your bird, make sure you carefully research and follow cooking guidelines.

Take Care With Leftovers

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours of serving to prevent food poisoning. Slice or divide big cuts of meat into small quantities for refrigeration so they can cool quickly. Reheat leftovers to at least 165 degrees before serving.

Cooked turkey and dishes made with turkey, such as a casserole, can be stored in the fridge for 3–4 days or can be frozen to store longer. ■

Even Your Washing Machine Needs Washing

IT'S NECESSARY TO clean all of your appliances at least once a year, even those that use water to clean other things. Your washing machine deals with the dirtiest of the dirty: grass-stained denim, food stains and worse.

Your clothes emerge spotless, but they leave some of that gunk behind. Laundry detergents can build up in the tub, pump and hoses. That build-up can make your washing machine less efficient and also can harm your clothes.

So clean it out. Here's how.

Supplies

▶ 1 quart bleach (you can skip this step if you're concerned about using harsh agents in your laundry)

▶ 1 quart white vinegar

Caution: Do not mix bleach and vinegar at any point in the process.

Steps

1. Fill the empty washer with hot water, as if you're doing a large load of laundry.
2. Add the quart of bleach, and let the full machine run for one minute to mix up the bleach with the water.
3. Open the top of the machine, and let it sit for an hour.
4. At the end of the hour, shut the cover and let the machine run a complete cycle.
5. When it's done, start again. This time, when you fill the washer with hot water, add the quart of white vinegar to the water and down the bleach channel.
6. Let the machine run for a minute to agitate the water and vinegar. After that minute, open the top of the machine and again let the hot water sit in the basin for an hour before you let the cycle complete.
7. After cleaning the basin, spray the gaskets, dispensers and exterior of the machine with a solution of equal parts vinegar and water. Wipe everything down with a clean cloth.

For front-loading washers, there are tablets that simplify the process. ■



LARISA STEFANIUK | ISTOCK.COM

Happy Thanksgiving

from Lamar Electric Cooperative

Wishing you and yours a holiday filled with blessings, memorable moments, love and happiness.

Our offices will be closed Thursday, November 28, and Friday, November 29, for the holiday. As always, crews will be on standby in the event of any emergencies.



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