

BELFALLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

P.O. Box 598 • Rosebud, TX 76570 • Phone (254) 583-7955

What's Good for the Members Is Good for the Co-op

From time to time, we like to let you know what's on the minds of other co-op general managers around the state. This was written by Rick Norton, general manager of Victoria Electric Cooperative.

The uniqueness of the electric cooperative model as a service organization speaks to its effectiveness and vitality. One of the amazing facts about electric co-ops is that they have operated in the United States for more than 65 years, and during that time the basic model hasn't changed.

Members and co-op staff don't want to miss a single opportunity to keep the cost of power to a minimum. For us, that goal involves minimizing expenses and maintaining a quality system that delivers the kind of service members expect and deserve.

The co-op focuses on minimizing expenses without compromising service, and members can also play a role. The most effective way to lower your monthly bill is through energy conservation.

Factors that affect the level of your energy consumption at home include the energy efficiency of your home, the number and type of electric appliances used, and your household's lifestyle. As a conscientious co-op member, you may want to look at these three areas to find ways to minimize your consumption.

1. Energy Efficiency

The type of home you live in represents a decision to consume a certain range of electricity each month. The energy efficiency of a structure plays a major role in determining how much electricity is actually used. With less-than-required insulation, inefficient heating and cooling systems, inefficient appliances, and leaky doors and windows, a smaller home may use more energy than a larger, energy-efficient home. Weather stripping and caulking are inexpensive ways to stop air infiltration, and are something you can do yourself in some situations.

2. Quantity and Type of Electric Appliances

It's especially important to make sure that appliances—including air-cooling and heating systems—have good energy-efficiency ratings. As computers and other electronic appliances have become a greater part of household life, their presence adds to the demand for energy. Without really thinking about the additional energy use, families might add TV sets, stereos and computers to the home; over time, the sum total of those additions can drive up the demand

for power. The newest technologies and devices may make our lives easier, but keep in mind that part of the cost involves the electricity necessary to keep them running.

This time of year, when air-conditioning units are delivering comfort during the sometimes torrid Texas heat, it's particularly important to have your cooling system serviced by a qualified professional to make sure it's in top working order. And don't forget to change the filters at least monthly while the system's in use.

3. Lifestyle and Energy Use

If you're "hot natured," you may prefer to run the air conditioner more often than other people. If that's the case, be aware that your choice has an impact on your electric bill. Similarly, having a lot of people running in and out of the house, leaving doors open, taking long, hot showers or baths, leaving lights or appliances on when not in use—all these actions can drive up the demand for kilowatt-hours. Even with our low cost per kWh, consuming more power means creating a higher electric bill.

It's the law of supply and demand. Hot summer afternoons from 3 to 6 p.m. are when most residents get home and turn up the A/C, turn on appliances, and prepare dinner. This demand peak directly relates to our cost of power. If you have the opportunity to delay using all your electrical appliances (especially air conditioning) until after 6 p.m., you'll be doing your part to reduce the cost of power and help lower your electric bill.

IN EMERGENCIES

During regular business hours, call:
(254) 583-7955

These are telephone numbers to call to report outages after business hours and on weekends and holidays.

Kenneth Fikes(254) 583-4556
Larry Koslosky(254) 583-4555
Doug Matous(254) 583-2957
Bobby Skala(254) 583-7219
Jeremy Tepe(254) 583-2557
Jake Willis(254) 583-0191
Ernest Martin(254) 583-2219
Joe W. Marek(254) 583-4016
James Campbell(254) 583-2786

EXCERPTS FROM BELFALLS EC BYLAWS

ARTICLE IV—BOARD MEMBERS

SECTION 1. General Powers. The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a Board of seven members as directors, at least one of whom must be a representative of the minority group, which board shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such as are by law, the articles of incorporation or these bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members; and that the Board of Directors shall immediately appoint at least one member of the minority group to act and serve as director of the Cooperative until the next annual meeting of the Cooperative, and that the nominating committee include at least one member of the minority group for election of the Board of Directors at its next annual meeting and for each succeeding year.

SECTION 2. Election and Tenure of Office. The persons presently serving as directors shall compose the Board until their successors shall have been elected as hereinafter provided; and shall have qualified. At the annual meeting to be held in the year 1975, two Board members shall be elected, to serve until the annual meeting to be held in the year 1978, or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified.

At the annual meeting to be held in the year 1977, three Board members shall be elected to serve until the annual meeting to be held in the year 1979, or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. At the annual meeting to be held in the year 1977, three Board members shall be elected to serve until the annual meeting to be held in the year 1980, or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. Board members elected during and after 1975 shall be elected to represent a particular district for a 3-year term to fill vacancies caused by expiration of the incumbents' terms of office, or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. If an election of directors shall not be held on the day designated

herein for the annual meeting or at any adjournment thereof, a special meeting of the members shall be held for the purpose of electing directors within a reasonable time thereafter. Directors may be elected by a plurality vote of the members.

SECTION 3. Qualifications. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who:

(A) Is not a member and bona fide resident of the district he or she represents in the area served or to be served by the Cooperative; or,

(B) Is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy, or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the Cooperative.

Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding the office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the board shall remove such director from office.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board.

SECTION 4. Representation Districts. The territory served or to be served by the Cooperative shall be divided into three districts, which shall cause each director to represent as nearly as possible the same number of members. Each district shall be represented by the following number of directors:

District No. 1 - two directors

District No. 2 - two directors

District No. 3 - two directors

At-Large - one director

The three districts shall be located, defined and bounded as follows: District No.1 shall include all members in Bell and Falls Counties between Highway 190 and Highway 77, District No.2 shall include all members in Falls and Milam Counties east of Highway 77, and north of Little River. District No.3 shall include all the members in the

remainder of Milam County, Texas.

Not less than 60 days before any meeting of the members at which Board members are to be elected, the Board shall review the composition of the several districts, and, if it shall find inequalities in representation, which could be corrected by an increase or decrease in number of directors or districts, or by, a re-delineation of districts, the Board shall adjust the number of directors or districts, or reconstitute the districts so that each director shall represent, as nearly as possible, the same number of members.

SECTION 5. Nominations. It shall be the duty of the Board to appoint, not less than thirty days nor more than sixty days before the date of a meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of not less than five nor more than eight members who shall be selected from different districts so as to insure equitable representation. No member of the board may serve on such committee. The committee, keeping in mind the principle of equitable representation by and among the districts, shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least twenty days before the meeting a list of nominations for directors. The Secretary shall be responsible for mailing with the notice of the meeting or separately, but at least ten days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates nominated by the committee on nominations. Any fifteen or more members from the same district, acting together may make other nominations by petition and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. Nominations made by petition, if any, received at least five days before the meeting shall be included on the official ballot. Later nominations by petition shall be treated as nominations from the floor. The chairman shall call for additional nominations from the floor.

ATTIC INSULATION: A MUST FOR ANY SEASON

The insulation in your attic not only keeps winter's icy fingers from reaching into your attic, it also keeps hot air out during summer.

A poorly insulated attic wastes energy, which can raise your utility bills. If the insulation in your attic is less than 6 inches thick or has an R value of less than 20, consider adding more. An ideal amount: between 12 and 20 inches (R-35 to R-50).

Before installing it yourself, repair any leaks in the roof, which can let in water that will damage your home and

your insulation.

Likewise, seal any air leaks—common near chimneys, light fixtures and pipes—to minimize heat gain in the summer and heat loss in the winter.

In addition, the wiring in your attic should be modern and plastic coated. Hire a licensed electrician to update old wiring, as it's a fire hazard.

Construct a barrier around the opening to your attic so insulation doesn't fall into your home when you open it—especially if you use loose-fill insulation.

BELFALLS EC NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO MEET

The nominating committee will meet on Thursday, June 23, at Belfalls Electric Cooperative to nominate two directors to be elected at the annual meeting: one from District 1 and one from District 3.