

# Downed Power Lines Are Dangerous—Stay Away!

**DOWNED POWER LINES ARE DANGEROUS!** You always should assume that a fallen power line is energized. Move at least 10 feet away from it and any nearby object it is touching, such as a building, fence or a tree limb. Electricity can travel through tree limbs and other objects.

Contact Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative immediately to report downed power lines. These lines can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or even death.

High-voltage electricity can jump to anyone who gets too close. Electricity tends to move from a high-voltage zone to a low-voltage zone—and it could make that journey through your body.

Warn others to stay away from the downed line, and keep children and pets a safe distance away. Avoid touching anything, such as a car or equipment, that is in contact with the fallen line. Do not attempt to rescue anyone who is in contact with a fallen power line. You could be the next victim. Call 911 immediately.

Avoid driving your vehicle over a downed power line. If a line comes in contact with your car, stay inside. The ground around your vehicle may be energized. Sound the horn, roll down your window and call for help. Wait until the police or fire department or co-op workers tell you it is safe to exit your vehicle.

If you must leave your vehicle because of fire or other danger, remove loose clothing, keep your hands at your sides and jump clear of the vehicle so that you do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Land with your feet together and shuffle away, keeping your feet together and on the ground. This will minimize the potential for an electric shock.

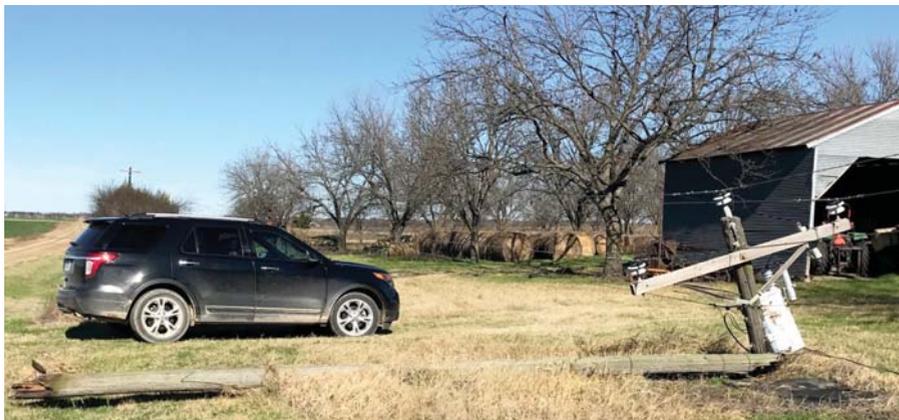
Stay safe around power lines, whether they're in the air or on the ground.

- ▶ Look up before lifting a ladder or other long-handled tools to avoid contact with electric lines.

- ▶ Stay away from fallen or dangling power lines. Do not touch!

- ▶ Contact us at 1-800-840-2957 to report tree branches or limbs growing near power lines. Never attempt to do the trimming yourself. Our tree-trimming crews are qualified to work around high-voltage lines and can cut the limbs for you. Also, report poles that are leaning or damaged and in need of replacing.

**What's wrong with this picture? The vehicle is parked too close to the downed power line. All downed or low-hanging power lines should be considered energized and dangerous. Call the electric co-op immediately and keep everyone away from the area.**



**Hire a professional to get your HVAC system ready for summer.**

## How Does Your HVAC Flow?

**YOUR HVAC SYSTEM** plays a key role in your comfort, so keeping it in tiptop shape is important.

The connections at vents and registers in your heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system are common spots for air leaks and disconnected ductwork. Make sure these areas are well sealed where they meet floors, walls and the ceiling.

Sealing and insulating ducts can help with common comfort problems, such as rooms that are too hot in the summer or too cold in the winter.

Leaky ducts can reduce heating and cooling system efficiency by as much as 20 percent. Sealing and insulating ducts increases efficiency, lowers your energy bills and can often pay for itself in electricity savings.

Clean the area around the outdoor components of your HVAC system.

As the seasons change, it's a good idea to have a professional inspect and tune up the HVAC system.

Don't forget to change air filters regularly. Dirty filters lower efficiency and increase the cost of operating your HVAC system.

# Copper Crooks Threaten Lives

**WOULD YOU RISK BEING HIT BY LIGHTNING FOR \$100?** It's a bit ludicrous, but that's about what metal theft amounts to. It's hard to understand why anyone would put their life on the line for a few dollars—to take such a huge risk for such a small return—but it happens.

Thefts of copper (and sometimes aluminum and bronze) are still an unfortunate fact at abandoned commercial buildings, empty homes and—most dangerously—power substations near neighborhoods. We need your help to keep our equipment safe, prevent outages and save lives.

Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative uses copper to ground equipment, protecting it from electrical surges and lightning by giving electricity a safe path to ground. We use a lot of copper wire in our substations, where we step

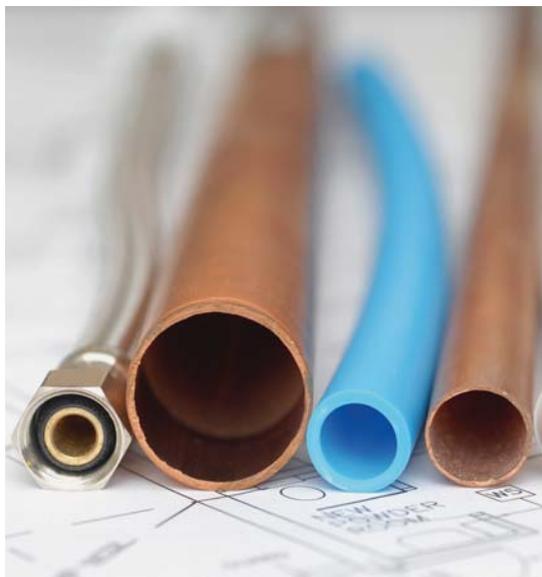
down high-voltage electricity arriving from distant power plants before it travels to your neighborhood. Then another transformer near your home—either mounted on a utility pole or in a big box on the ground—lowers the voltage again so you can use the power at home. Copper is an essential component every step of the way.

Metal thieves can collect a couple hundred dollars' worth of wire from a substation, but they leave behind a repair bill in the hundreds of thousands—or even millions, if the theft causes a fire. Fire in a substation can destroy regulators, switches, transformers and other expensive equipment. Thousands of co-op members are temporarily left in the dark after these incidents, even though co-ops move quickly to reroute power to affected areas.

Even without the damage done to co-op systems, the toll packs a big punch because other equipment can be ruined without the protection that copper wires provide. There's also the potential for loss of life.

Our linemen are highly trained professionals who understand the dangers of working with electricity and take proper safety precautions. To protect the public, we surround our substations with secure fencing and post warning signs. But some thieves will not be deterred.

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual, such as an open substation gate, unprotected equipment or hanging wire, call Heart of Texas EC immediately at 1-800-840-2957. If you see anyone other than our utility personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities, call the police.



**Copper theft is on the rise, and co-op members can help. Call your co-op if you see anything unusual.**



## Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative

Operating in Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Hamilton, McLennan and Milam counties

### CEO AND GENERAL MANAGER

Rick Haile

### DIRECTORS

Garland Cook, District 1  
DeWayne Draeger, District 6  
Kermit Dreyer, District 7  
Paul Edge, District 2  
Dan Foster, District 9  
Kenneth Hollas, District 3  
Bobby Nawara, District 4  
Allen Shows, District 5  
Larry Stock, District 8



## Contact Us

### McGREGOR OFFICE

**(254) 840-2871** local

**1-800-840-2957** toll-free

1111 S. Johnson Drive • P.O. Box 357  
McGregor, TX 76657

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Drive-thru 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

### ROSEBUD OFFICE

**(254) 231-0444** local

**1-800-840-2957** toll-free

159 Loop 265 • P.O. Box 598  
Rosebud, TX 76570

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

### CREDIT/DEBIT CARD PAYMENTS

Online at [hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop)

By phone at 1-855-399-2688

### FIND US ON THE WEB

[hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop)



# Put Money Back in Your Pocket With **HOTEC REBATES**



Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative is proud to offer the Energy-Efficiency Rebate Program to our members. This program is designed to encourage cooperative members to select cost-effective, energy-efficient measures to reduce the cost of power in their home or business.

If you took advantage of the rebates in 2016, don't miss out in 2017. Members wanting to redeem rebates must provide proof of service or repair made after January 31.

The following rebates are available to Heart of Texas EC members:

#### **LED LIGHTBULBS**

**Receive two free LED bulbs** per membership

Pick up at either the Rosebud or McGregor offices

#### **HOME ENERGY AUDIT – HVAC TUNEUP**

**Up to \$75 rebate** on a HVAC audit and tuneup

Proof of the audit and completed work required

#### **CEILING INSULATION UPGRADE**

**\$275 rebate** with upgrade from R0–R8 to R38+ (AC and resistance heating)

Existing homes only

#### **HEAT PUMP REBATE**

**\$100 rebate** for 15-SEER heat pump and

**\$200 rebate** for 16-SEER heat pump (total electric only)

New or existing homes

#### **HIGH-EFFICIENCY WATER HEATER**

**\$75 rebate** on the purchase of water heater with a .92 EF or greater

For installation in a residence or business using HOTEC services

#### **COMMERCIAL LIGHTING—FIXTURE UPGRADE**

T-8 Bulb Replacement: 32–28 watts, **\$1 rebate** per bulb

T-8 Bulb Replacement: 32–25 watts, **\$1.50 rebate** per bulb

Maximum rebate on commercial lighting: \$2,500 per BOD

#### **SOLAR INSTALLATION**

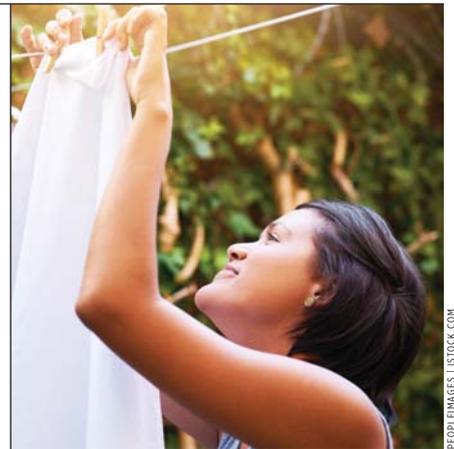
**\$0.10 rebate** per watt on solar installation

Maximum reimbursement per member: \$1,000

**Contact Ron Poston for more information at [ron@hotec.coop](mailto:ron@hotec.coop) or 1-800-840-2957.**



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**Dry your clothes outside to save on your electric bill.**

## **Saving Energy Just as Green as Solar Panels**

**MOST OF OUR ELECTRICITY COMES** from centralized power plants capable of producing many megawatts for consumers across a widespread area, but concern over the environment has prompted an interest in personal power supplies.

Known as distributed generation, or DG, these on-site power sources include wind turbines and solar arrays that can sometimes lower power costs.

Not everyone is interested in or can afford to install DG equipment. Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative reminds members that reducing electric consumption can be just as green as installing DG.

Options for energy conservation can include simple techniques such as wrapping your water heater with a thermal cover or using a solar clothes dryer (aka a clothesline). More extensive procedures include upgrading home insulation and adding roof vents. For more ways to conserve electricity, visit [hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop).

If you decide to install DG, be sure to contact your cooperative first for installation requirements for generation equipment connected to the electric grid.

Please be aware that there are scammers and dishonest installers hoping to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers. Before signing a contract, please call Heart of Texas EC at 1-800-840-2957 to verify the legitimacy of vendors and installers.

# Give Your Electric Bill a Vacation, Too

**TAKING SOME MUCH-NEEDED TIME AWAY** during spring break can be expensive. A great way to save money is to give your electric bills a vacation, too. There are several steps you can take to trim your electricity usage while you're away:

**Unplug some of your household appliances.** Your house has many items that always use electricity when they're plugged in, even when turned off. Unplugging these items not only saves energy but also can prevent fires during your absence. Some of the more common items are:

TVs, DVD players, cable TV boxes, microwave ovens, toasters and other small kitchen appliances.

**Adjust the refrigerator control to a warmer setting.** The fridge can be set as high as 40 degrees without spoiling food; the freezer can be set at 5 degrees. On these settings, you can conserve up to 40 percent of the refrigerator's electric usage.

If you are going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off entirely. Remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew.

**Set the thermostat higher (or lower) than the typical comfort level.** In warmer weather, you can shut off the air conditioner during your absence, or at least consider setting it to a higher-than-normal temperature, 80 degrees or above.

If it's still cold out, you should consider lowering your thermostat but to no lower than 55 degrees. Typically, you can save 10–30 percent on heating costs by doing this. A programmable thermostat can make these adjustments automatically.

**Turn down the water heater.** A large percentage of the cost of running a water heater comes from just keeping the water at the selected temperature. If you are going on a lengthy trip, turn down the temperature to the lowest setting. This can save you up to \$10 a month.

**Consider using timers to turn lights on and off every night.** Timers can save energy and also give an appearance that someone is home. For the lights that will be on the longest—inside and outside—use CFL or LED bulbs. These use at least 75 percent less power than traditional bulbs and last longer.

Follow these tips while you're away for spring break and put your mind at ease about electric bills. Then you can enjoy that vacation even more!



**Going on vacation? Adjust your thermostat to give your electric bill a break.**



## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

begins at 2 a.m. Sunday, March 12. Remember to spring forward—set your clocks an hour ahead.



## Power Tip

### The seasons are changing!

Call a heating, ventilation and air-conditioning tech to inspect your HVAC system before switching over from winter heating to spring and summer cooling.

# Meter Tampering Is Illegal, Dangerous

HEART OF TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE works hard to provide our members with reliable and safe electric service at the lowest possible cost. When someone tampers with the electric meter or lines, they are stealing from our members and from the co-op, and adding to the cost of providing electricity.

## What Is Meter Tampering?

Meter tampering is when someone illegally hooks up to a power supply, self-connects a meter that has been disconnected, or tampers with a meter so that it does not accurately record electricity usage.

Some of the signs of meter tampering include a damaged or missing meter cover or seal, and/or extra wires attached in or around the meter.

Deliberate meter tampering or attempts to divert service with intent to not pay constitutes theft of energy. This type of activity is a crime that can lead to a fine and/or a prison sentence. Most importantly, it can cause harm to innocent people.

Those who tamper with meters may think that the worst thing that can happen is that their service will be disconnected, but that is not true. They can expect a visit from the local law enforcement agency, and the co-op may pursue any criminal complaint procedure available under the law.

Before reconnection of any service disconnected for meter tampering, current diversion, or unauthorized reconnection of service, the consumer will be required to pay for damages to the cooperative's equipment resulting from the tampering, provide sufficient deposit to cover future tampering or damage, and pay an amount estimated to cover service used or service received.

## Safety Concern

However, meter tampering and electricity theft is more than just a crime. It is also a safety concern.

Heart of Texas EC seals all of its meters for a reason—the same reason you have locks on your doors. This seal is meant to protect the customer, the general public and employees.



“It is very important that all meters remain sealed and secure,” cautions Member Services Manager Ron Poston. “When seals, meters or other equipment are tampered with, it is not only illegal, but extremely dangerous.”

The seal keeps out people who have no business opening the meter—and no one has any business opening it except employees of Heart of Texas EC and electrical contractors with co-op permission.

Improperly sealed meters can cause fire at the meter or inside the house or electrical shock to anyone who comes in contact with it.

Electricity thieves also can unknowingly feed energy back into the power line, making it dangerous for linemen who may assume that the power line they are working on is de-energized.

Heart of Texas EC offers a \$250 reward for reporting verified meter tampering. If you learn that a neighbor or acquaintance is tampering with an electric meter, or are concerned that a meter has been tampered with, report it immediately by calling 1-800-840-2957. You could save someone's life.



## Don't Be Shocked: Counterfeiters Are on the Rise

**THE CHEAPEST PRODUCT** isn't always the best deal. Sometimes, it's counterfeit. That means one company has packaged a product to look like it was made by a reputable company. You buy it and take it home, and it might not operate as it should. Worse, it might be unsafe.

That's often the case with counterfeit electrical products, which can shock you or start a fire. Over the past decade, these products have become more common in the U.S.

### Here's how to keep counterfeit electrical products from shocking you:

- ▶ Be suspicious of electrical cords, circuit breakers and appliances from discount stores that are way less expensive than similar products.
- ▶ Never buy electrical products over the internet from unfamiliar vendors.
- ▶ Learn how to recognize certification marks from Underwriters Laboratories and other safety testing labs. Carefully inspect the electrical products you buy for authentication marks.
- ▶ Shy away from products in shoddy packaging. The product inside won't be much better.
- ▶ Read labels carefully. Counterfeiters often change a letter in a brand name: Nike knock-offs, for example, might show up with a label that says "Mike."

# Fidelity Express Pay Locations



You have several payment options with Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative. Payment of bills may be made through the mail, in person at either our Rosebud or McGregor office, online or at any location listed below (there is a \$1.50 charge for Fidelity payments). Please report any payments made at these locations to your local office.

**AF Food Mart #3 LLC**

401 E. Adams Ave.  
Temple, TX 76701  
(254) 899-1156

**Amigo Food Mart**

2023 Speight Ave.  
Waco, TX 76706  
(254) 755-6324

**Bellmead Food Mart**

3612 Bellmead Drive  
Waco, TX 76705  
(254) 799-8274

**Big Willy's**

707 E. Jefferson Ave.  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-1223

**Bosque Mini Mart**

365 Hwy. 22  
Clifton, TX 76634  
(254) 622-3474

**Brookshire Brothers**

305 NE Fourth St.  
Hubbard, TX 76648  
(254) 576-2005

**Brookshire Brothers**

1810 Ave. D  
Moody, TX 76557  
(254) 853-9072

**Brookshire Brothers**

9263 U.S. Hwy. 6  
Meridian, TX 76665  
(254) 435-2507

**Brookshire Bros. Express**

303 N. Fourth St.  
Valley Mills, TX 76689  
(254) 932-5349

**Buzzy Bee #7**

1116 W. Waco Drive  
Waco, TX 76701  
(254) 235-3598

**Cameron Cleaners**

101 N. Houston Ave.  
Cameron, TX 76520  
(254) 697-8393

**Canyon Food Mart**

1710 Canyon Creek Drive  
Temple, TX 76502  
(254) 771-2222

**Chapman C.C.**

1121 W. Waco Drive  
Waco, TX 76701  
(254) 754-2003

**Chathams**

10820 State Hwy. 317  
Temple, TX 76513  
(254) 780-9406

**Chesalon**

3401 N. 19th St.  
Waco, TX 76708  
(254) 714-1451

**Clifton Fast Stop**

102 S. Ave. G  
Clifton, TX 76634  
(254) 675-6111

**Cowboy Mart**

102 E. Veterans Memorial Blvd.  
Harker Heights, TX 76548  
(254) 690-7373

**Crawford Coffee Stop**

6659 N. Lone Star Pkwy.  
Crawford, TX 76638  
(254) 486-2561

**David's #104**

803 S. Bosque St.  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-2277

**David's #105**

614 S. Ave. G  
Clifton, TX 76634  
(254) 675-6345

**David's Express #102**

5307 FM 933  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-1261

**EZ Mart**

2128 Bosque Blvd.  
Waco, TX 76707  
(254) 757-0855

**Food Mart**

1624 W. Waco Drive  
Waco, TX 76701  
(254) 754-8800

**Fresh & Fast Stop**

2020 N. 25th St.  
Waco, TX 76708  
(254) 296-3600

**Gem Pawn Shop**

1305 W. Adams Ave.  
Temple, TX 76504  
(254) 773-4708

**Hap's Ice House**

1905 N. 39th St.  
Waco, TX 76707  
(254) 754-5810

**Hewitt Food Mart**

318 N. Hewitt Drive  
Hewitt, TX 76643  
(254) 420-1971

**Huggie Bear Food Mart**

2924 Gholson Road  
Waco, TX 76704  
(254) 412-0144

**J Food Mart**

801 S. 30th St.  
Temple, TX 76501  
(254) 899-2300

**Josie's Drive In**

305 S. Ellis St.  
Groesbeck, TX 76642  
(254) 729-3257

**Lacy Lakeview Food Mart**

1019 E. Craven Ave.  
Lacy Lakeview, TX 76705  
(254) 867-1519

**Legend of Troy**

1 E. Main St.  
Troy, TX 76579  
(254) 938-2261

**Marlin Exxon**

101 Craik St.  
Marlin, TX 76661  
(254) 883-2688

**McGregor Fast Stop**

307 W. McGregor Drive  
McGregor, TX 76657  
(254) 840-4046

**Mickey's Pit Stop #2**

311 S. Robinson Drive  
Robinson, TX 76706  
(254) 662-2775

**Midway Food Mart**

621 Hewitt Drive  
Hewitt, TX 76643  
(254) 666-3967

**Midway Grocery**

446 Murray Ave.  
Rockdale, TX 76567  
(512) 446-5462

**Mungi's Grocery Store**

701 S. MLK Drive  
Temple, TX 76504  
(254) 778-9000

**Mungi's Grocery #2**

315 E. Central Ave.  
Temple, TX 76501  
(254) 239-5566

**Uncle Mike's Mini Mart**

1724 Richter Ave.  
Waco, TX 76711  
(254) 754-7223

**Newman's Quick Stop**

1500 State Hwy. 317  
Moody, TX 76557  
(254) 853-2022

**Nomads**

2502 Lake Road  
Belton, TX 76513  
(254) 933-2401

**Pit Stop Express #2**

209 N. Bosque St.  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-6011

**Pit Stop Express**

1072 FM 1713  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-9557

**Pools Quick Stop**

1720 S. First St.  
Temple, TX 76504  
(254) 773-8812

**Quick N**

526 Live Oak St.  
Marlin, TX 76661  
(254) 883-5326

**Quick Pick Food Mart**

810 W. Ave. D.  
Belton, TX 76513  
(254) 939-8086

**Raina Food Mart**

1600 N. Roy Reynolds Drive  
Killeen, TX 76543  
(254) 699-2967

**RIDA Corner Store**

1825 Alexander Ave.  
Waco, TX 76708  
(254) 296-0101

**RIDA Corner Store #2**

2232 Air Base Road  
Lacy Lakeview, TX 76705  
(254) 799-5177

**Rogers Food Mart**

120 W. Mesquite Ave.  
Rogers, TX 76569  
(254) 642-9300

**S & A Express**

1579 State Hwy. 22  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-0221

**Select Food Mart**

93 E. Elms Road  
Killeen, TX 76542  
(254) 432-7153

**Sidra Food Mart**

2603 E. Main St.  
Gatesville, TX 76528  
(254) 865-5963

**Speedy Pac #2**

2705 Zephyr Road  
Killeen, TX 76543  
(254) 699-0567

**Stop N Save**

3202 Westcliff Road #200  
Killeen, TX 76543  
(254) 554-3717

**Sunny's Food Mart**

1300 W. Cameron Ave.  
Rockdale, TX 76567  
(512) 446-2652

**Super Quick Food Mart #3**

3101 W. Stan Schlueter Loop  
Killeen, TX 76549  
(254) 634-5003

**Temple Star Food Mart**

3804 S. Fifth St.  
Temple, TX 76702  
(254) 774-7262

**Texan Mart**

3000 Lake Road  
Killeen, TX 76543  
(254) 768-0114

**Tigermart**

211 N. Bosque St.  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-6639

**Tigermart #85**

1020 S. Fifth St.  
Waco, TX 76706  
(254) 752-4221

**Valero Food Mart**

1201 E. Henderson St.  
Cleburne, TX 76031  
(817) 641-2222

**Waco Food Stop**

1900 E. Crest Drive  
Lacy Lakeview, TX 76705  
(254) 799-1851

**Fidelity Bank of Texas**

1901 Lake Shore Drive  
Waco, TX 76708  
(254) 755-6555

**Fidelity Bank of Texas**

410 S. Robinson Drive  
Waco, TX 76706  
(254) 662-3931

**First National Bank of Bosque County**

418 Ave. C  
Valley Mills, TX 76689  
(254) 932-5345

**Hwy. 6 & Riverside**

Chilton, TX 76634  
(254) 675-6570

**First National Bank of Moody**

7th & Ave. D  
(254) 853-2115