

# Looking Ahead to New Cooperative Opportunities



## MESSAGE FROM CEO AND GENERAL MANAGER RICK HAILE

**CO-OPS ARE COOL**, and that bodes well for our future. That's not only our sentiment at Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative; it's also shared by Mel Coleman, outgoing president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

"We may be 75 years old, but we're the center of activity like never before," Coleman said during an address at the 2017 NRECA Annual Meeting. "Our challenges might be difficult, but our choice should be very easy because there's never been a better time to be part of the electric cooperative movement."

We couldn't agree more.

**FUEL OF THE FUTURE:** Working from its firm foundation in the past, the cooperative model fits neatly with the forward-looking spirit of the times. An accelerated drive to develop and expand technology—and to put it to use for the benefit of co-op communities—places electric cooperatives in the vanguard of the industry.



Co-ops continue to lead in community service.

Co-ops are positioned to take advantage of technological developments that could mean an even bigger role for electricity—"the fuel of the future"—in people's lives. "It's possible, maybe even probable, that in our lifetimes, electricity will be the energy source for the vast majority of our vehicles, heating systems, and other home, farm and business needs," Coleman said.

**COOL FOR THE COMMUNITY:** This timely outlook extends beyond electricity and technology to community-minded uses of resources and collaboration.

At an uncertain moment of division in the country, for example, disaffected Americans are relying on co-ops to fulfill their needs. Millennials are using co-ops as a tool for social media organizing and social service programs. Cooperatives continue to help vulnerable groups including members who are seniors, disabled people, veterans and families in need, plus the organizations that assist them.

"The concern for the people we serve gives us an ideal platform to influence energy policy in ways that put our communities, consumer and our members first," Coleman said. "Put simply: Co-ops are cool."

**GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND:** Cooperatives face an unprecedented opportunity to take advantage of the high-profile position that we now occupy. We look forward to going above and beyond our longstanding commitment to safe and reliable service at a reasonable price, providing greater benefits for our members by capitalizing on the progressive thinking that has always animated the co-op movement.

As Coleman said, "Now that we're in the spotlight, we must be great."



Never cover or block access to transformers.

## Safety Notice About Underground Utilities

**BEAUTIFYING OUR HOMES** is important to many of us. If your home is served by an underground electric cable, you may be tempted to hide the accompanying transformer cabinet from sight by planting shrubs or flowers around it. Please refrain from doing so.

Aside from the possibility of damage from overheating, it also is important that you avoid covering or blocking the cabinet to ensure that electric cooperative employees can easily access it for maintenance and repairs.

Digging or working close to the unit can be dangerous and life-threatening. These cabinets contain high-voltage lines that should be avoided. We ask that you emphasize the dangers of these units to your children and family members, and keep them away.

For the safety of your family and ours, please abide by our underground equipment policy. Give transformer cabinets a wide berth and keep them free from debris and coverings.

For questions or concerns, please contact the Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative office.

Co-ops continue to lead in community service.

### CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

Heart of Texas EC

Office (254) 840-2871

Toll-free 1-800-840-2957



Meter installation continues across the Heart of Texas EC service area. The new meter-reading system has many advantages over the old system, including improved power quality and quicker responses to outages.

# Meter Upgrade

*New PLX meter installation continues on schedule*

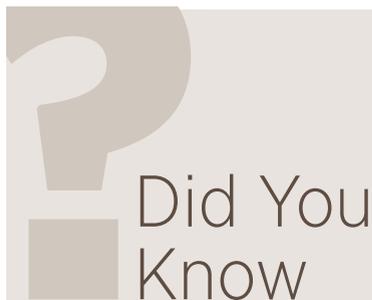
**HEART OF TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S** state-of-the-art advanced meter reading system upgrade is continuing on schedule. All substations have been commissioned, and meter deployment is completed in seven of the 21 substations. More than 12,800 PLX meters have been installed since the upgrade began in late 2014.

The new meters are being installed in the Midway and Moffat service areas. Lineworkers will leave a door hanger when they visit, advising that the meter was changed out and listing what the readings are.

Members can expect to lose power for a few minutes on the day of installation. The following bill will show two meter readings: one from the old meter and one from the new meter.

This system upgrade will enable the cooperative to perform several functions remotely, such as reading meters more efficiently, monitoring voltage, and reconnecting or disconnecting power at some locations. In addition, these meters will provide more accurate information about outages and restoration times, allow for shorter response times to outages, and ultimately lead to fewer outages. Improved power quality and more efficient power distribution will help keep costs down for members. Better detection of power theft will be an additional benefit.

If you have any questions, contact the office at the following numbers: McGregor, (254) 840-2871; Rosebud, (254) 231-0444; or toll free, 1-800-840-2957.



LED lightbulbs produce about 70 percent less heat than incandescent bulbs. Swapping them in can keep your home cooler and save energy at the same time.



## 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)



# Heart of Texas EC Awards Scholarships

*Congratulations to our winners!*



**JAMES D. BUTLER**  
Texas A&M University



**SAVANA JONES**  
Lorena High School



**GRACE JUNGSMANN**  
Rogers High School



**TAYLOR KRCHA**  
Rogers High School



**EMILEE PENNEY**  
Clifton High School



**LUCAS STEINKAMP**  
Crawford High School

**EACH YEAR, HEART OF TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** awards five \$1,000 scholarships to area students whose parents or guardians are members of the co-op, and one \$1,000 scholarship to an employee's child.

HOTEC is pleased to announce this year's winners:

Congratulations go to James D. Butler, who is attending Texas A&M University; Savana Jones from Lorena High School; Grace Jungmann and Taylor Krcha from Rogers High School; Emilee Penney from Clifton High School; and Lucas Steinkamp from Crawford High School.

**James D. Butler** is the son of Tim and Kathy Butler of Robinson and attends Texas A&M University, where he is studying renewable resources.

**Savana Jones** is the daughter of Gene and Laurie Jones of Lorena. She plans to pursue a master's degree in elementary education at University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

**Grace Jungmann** is the daughter of Ronald and Cristi Jungmann of Rogers. She plans to attend Tarleton State University

and pursue a nursing degree.

**Taylor Krcha** is the daughter of Tommy Krcha of Temple. She plans to attend Tarleton State University and Texas A&M University to major in kinesiology.

**Emilee Penney** is the daughter of Wanda and Donnie Penney of Clifton. She plans to attend Texas Tech University and pursue a degree in nursing.

**Lucas Steinkamp** is the son of Ricky and Angela Steinkamp of Crawford. He plans to attend college at Howard Payne University and study to become a civil engineer.

These recipients were chosen from area schools to receive a \$1,000 scholarship to be used at any two-year or four-year accredited college or technical school of their choice.

To qualify for a HOTEC scholarship, an applicant must graduate high school within two years of the application deadline and reside in the household of a Heart of Texas EC member. Scholarship applications and qualifications are available online at [hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop).

Happy  
Father's Day  
from Heart of Texas EC  
Sunday, June 18



ANDRES | ISTOCK.COM

# New App Proves Popular

*Members can pay bills using smartphone*



**HEART OF TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** recently added another service feature that allows members quick and easy access to their electric accounts, and it's proving to be popular.

The new, free mobile app allows members to pay their bills using their smartphones through eBiz. More than 100 members downloaded the new app within the first few days after it was launched.

This new app makes it convenient for members to make payments, and provides other useful options and information.

“Our goal is to make it as easy and secure as possible for our members to access their accounts and conduct business,” said Brandon Young, administrative services manager. “We plan to add additional features to the app which will be of value in the near future.”

To download the app, visit the App Store (iOS) or Google Play (Android). Search for Heart of Texas Electric, then follow the directions to download the app to your phone.



Loads of fun can be found in Buckholts during the 30th annual Cotton Festival.

## Cotton Festival Time in Buckholts

**THE 30TH ANNUAL** Buckholts Cotton Festival will be held Friday and Saturday, June 2-3, in the small Milam County community of Buckholts.

The CTBA-sanctioned barbecue cook-off begins Friday. Two jackpot categories, exotic and margarita contests, will be judged that night. A DJ and live music with Michael Carubelli will entertain throughout the night.

Saturday's events begin at 9 a.m. on Main Street with a parade and musical entertainment. Bands performing will include the Praha Brothers, DJ Luis, Justin Cole and M.A.D. Band.

Barbecue brisket, ribs, chicken and beans will be judged throughout the day.

There will be a volleyball tournament, washer tournament, horseshoe-pitching tournament and a 42 dominoes tournament during the day.

Baked goods and souvenirs will be for sale in the community center. A mechanical bull, bouncy house for the kids, food vendors and crafts vendors will be lined up along Main Street in the downtown area. There also will be historical displays.

Come out and have join the community for a cotton-pickin' good time!

## Ride 2 Recovery



Heart of Texas Electric's Sam Hoerster, Brandon Young, Joey Montgomery and Ron Poston joined dozens of other volunteers and provided assistance with the ninth annual United Healthcare Ride 2 Recovery Texas Challenge when it stopped in Waco. Our volunteers helped unload luggage and set up bike stations for the riders. The bike tour began in San Antonio and had stops in several cities including Waco before finishing in Houston. The annual event benefits Project Hero, challenges veterans suffering from a variety of disabilities and aims to increase awareness of post-traumatic stress disorder.

# What Do You Do If The Power Goes Out?

Check the following before you call *HOTEC*

## Meter Base



## Disconnect Box

### 1. Check the Meter:

- ▶ On the older-style “turtle” meter, there should be a red light.
- ▶ On the new PLX meter, the power display will show a reading.

### 2. Check Breakers:

- ▶ In disconnect box below the meter base
- ▶ In breaker box

**IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT**, check your breaker box and meter first. For members with older meters, there should be a red light on the “turtle” transmitter in the meter.

For members with the new PLX meter, the power display should be on. Because the new meters are electronic, the power display automatically will cycle through three displays of numbers. If the display is on, the meter is receiving power. If the power display is blank, skip the next two checks and call the co-op at 1-800-840-2957.

Your next step is to check the breakers in the disconnect box located below the meter. (Some older installations may not have this.) If the breakers are not tripped, then check the breakers in the breaker box located inside your house, apartment, etc.

If this does not restore your power, please contact HOTEC to report your outage by calling 1-800-840-2957.

Before calling, and to help make sure service crews are sent to the correct location, please have the following information ready:

- ▶ Account number,
- ▶ Map location (available on your bill statement),
- ▶ Meter number (if you have multiple meters at the same map location), and
- ▶ Combination or a key location if you have a locked or coded gate.

It is helpful if you give any additional information at this time, such as if you saw a lightning strike nearby or heard a loud noise before losing power. Even though your neighbor may have called to report that their power is out, you need to call in and report your outage, as well. The outage number is **1-800-840-2957**.



Attaching objects to a utility pole is against the law.

## Not on a Utility Pole!

**UTILITY POLES ARE FOR** electric power lines—not signs or objects. Putting signs or other items on utility poles creates serious safety concerns.

Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs, and the signs themselves, pose dangers to Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative lineworkers who must climb poles when restoring power after storms or performing routine maintenance.

“Anything attached to utility poles can create serious hazards for our lineworkers,” said Operation Manager Bryan Chandler. “Posting signs or attaching objects to utility poles is against the law.”

Utility poles are not billboards. These poles may seem like convenient places to post “Garage Sale” or “For Sale” signs, but don’t.

Linemen risk injury to themselves and damage to their equipment, rubber gloves, boots and protective clothing when items are carelessly posted on utility poles. A tear in clothing or gloves may seem like a minor inconvenience to most people, but to a lineman working with a power line carrying thousands of volts of electricity, it can cause a serious accident.

The next time you consider attaching something to a utility pole, think about the lineman who may have to climb that pole in the dark or during a storm.

Help keep our linemen safe. Working together, we can keep our dedicated HOTEC workers safe and working efficiently.



# Switch to Safety

*Don't take these warning signs lightly*

**SOME LIGHT SWITCHES IN A HOME** get used dozens of times a day, and their state can tell you a lot about the health of the overall electrical system. Be on the lookout for the following symptoms and address them immediately.

## Potential Problems

If any of these symptoms sounds familiar for any of the lighting control points in your home, have the electrical system inspected by a qualified electrician as soon as possible:

- ▶ The home is more than 40 years old and has aluminum wiring but has not recently undergone a safety inspection by an electrician
- ▶ A wall plate is hot to the touch.
- ▶ There is discoloration on or around a switch plate.
- ▶ You hear crackling, popping or buzzing from an outlet or switch.
- ▶ Lights dim and/or flicker without cause.
- ▶ Breakers trip or fuses blow often when a switch is turned on.
- ▶ You detect an odor—especially of chemicals or burning—when a switch is used.
- ▶ A switch leans to one side or feels loose when operating.
- ▶ You often experience a shock when operating a switch.
- ▶ Lights get dimmer or brighter when other appliances switch on or off.

## Safe Solutions

Cracked, broken or missing cover plates should be replaced immediately to prevent accidental contact with wiring.

All switches and lighting equipment should bear the mark of a nationally recognized safety testing laboratory such as UL, Intertek or CSA.

There are numerous ways to update your light switches and make them safer. Upgraded features also can be used to achieve different effects. Dimmers set lighting at desired levels and can extend the life of lightbulbs. Timers provide added security and improve safety. Motion sensors enhance security, add convenience and can save energy. Remote controls and smart panels offer flexibility and control over your lighting, sometimes remotely via smartphone.

If you want to switch up your lighting controls or improve their safety, contact a qualified electrician.



## Saving in the Laundry Room

**HOMEOWNERS TYPICALLY SPEND** about \$2,000 every year on energy bills. These tips can help you save energy and money while doing laundry.

### Look for the Energy Star rating when replacing your clothes washer and dryer.

- ▶ Clothes washers that have earned Energy Star approval use about 45 percent less water and 25 percent less energy than a standard model, saving you about \$45 a year on utility bills.
- ▶ Replacing your old dryer with an Energy Star-certified model can save you \$245 over its lifetime.

### Set appliances to the most energy-efficient settings.

- ▶ Washing clothes in cold water only will save about \$66 per year.
- ▶ Use the lowest water setting to save more than 1,200 gallons of water per year.

### Use these simple methods to save when doing your next load of laundry.

- ▶ Always wait for a full load to run the wash. Reducing the total number of loads each year by 25 percent could save you 3,227 gallons of water.
- ▶ Clean the lint trap between loads. This improves air circulation and increases the efficiency of the dryer.
- ▶ Air-dry clothes outside during warmer months or on an inside drying rack to save energy by not using a dryer.