

# Appreciating Electricity, One Penny at a Time

*You can still get value for just a penny's worth of electricity*



## MESSAGE FROM CEO AND GENERAL MANAGER RICK HAILE

*I recently ran across a column written by Curtis Condon, editor of Ruralite magazine in Hillsboro, Oregon. His points were so enlightening, I thought I'd share them with you this month.*

**SOME OF US ARE OLD ENOUGH** to remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. But what does a penny buy these days? Not much. The government can't even make a penny *for* a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one.

About the only thing of value that you can still get for a penny is electricity. I'm not kidding.

Let's pretend the average rate for a kilowatt-hour of electricity is 10 cents. That's 60 minutes of 1,000 watts of electricity for a dime, so a penny of electricity equates to 100 watts. It's enough to power a 9-watt LED lightbulb—the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb—for 11 hours, all for only a penny.

The value is just as evident when powering things besides lighting. Take, for instance, your smartphone. Using the same 10 cents per kWh price, one penny's worth of electricity allows you to fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times. You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total.

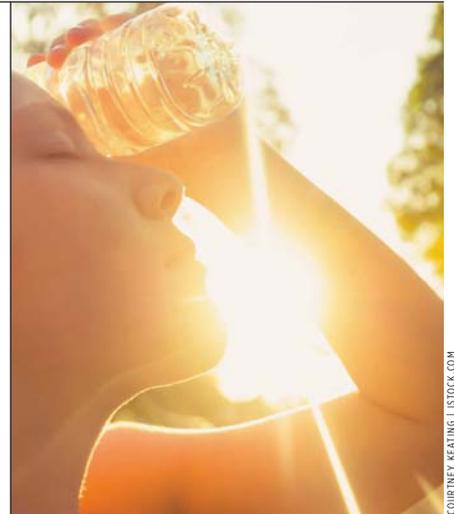
We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it. We tend to forget that.

Electricity is not expensive. The expense is due to our using it for so many different things: lighting, heating, cooking, cooling, refrigeration, cleaning, washing, pumping, entertainment, communications—even transportation these days.

Unfortunately, we don't always appreciate it. When our monthly electric bill comes, we open it and might complain about the cost. It's

a knee-jerk reaction ingrained in us as consumers. We don't stop to think about the value we receive for the money.

In 1940, when many co-ops were built, a penny had as much buying power as 17 cents today. This means the residential price of electricity—which now averages 12 cents a kWh nationally—is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940. And it won't rot your teeth.



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**As the temperature rises, so does the risk of an electrical fire.**

## Avoid Summer Overload

**SUMMER IS A DIFFICULT TIME** for electrical systems. When temperatures rise, they must work hard to power air conditioners. Old or damaged home electrical systems can cause shocks and start fires when put under the stress of summer electricity use.

Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative urges its members to take steps to keep homes and loved ones safe.

Older homes may have a difficult time providing electricity to all the electronics and appliances of a modern household. An electrician can tell you whether your home's electrical system is appropriate for the electronics you are using and what improvements are necessary.

Some signs that your electrical system is overloaded are flickering lights; frequently tripped circuits; cords or wall plates that are warm to the touch; or crackling, popping or sizzling sounds coming from outlets. These can present a serious fire risk.

No matter the season or age of a home, residents should check regularly for electrical hazards such as cracked or fraying cords, overloaded outlets and circuits, and improper wattage of lightbulbs. Also, make sure smoke alarms are placed and functioning properly.

NIKOLA BRILIC | ISTOCK.COM

# EOAC Receives \$5,000 Donation From HOTEK and CoBank



Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative Administrative Services Manager Brandon Young presents a \$5,000 check to Economic Opportunities Advancement Corp. from Heart of Texas EC and CoBank. EOAC's Sylvia Flores accepts the donation.

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES ADVANCEMENT CORP.**, a local charity serving those in need, received a \$5,000 donation from Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative and CoBank, a cooperative bank serving vital industries throughout rural America.

Heart of Texas EC Administrative Services Manager Brandon Young presented the check to EOAC's Sylvia Flores.

HOTEK's donation was matched by CoBank through its Sharing Success program.

First launched in 2012 to celebrate the United Nations' International Year of the Cooperative, Sharing Success has matched contributions to hundreds of charitable organizations in all 50 states over the past five years. Together, CoBank and its customers have contributed more than \$25 million to support the efforts of these organizations, the majority of which are located in rural communities.

"Sharing Success has had a broader and deeper impact than we ever imagined," said Tom Halverson, CoBank's president and CEO. "We are delighted with the growing participation in the program by our customers and deeply grateful to them for their assistance in identifying worthy charitable causes deserving of our support."

CoBank is a cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America by providing loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states. The bank also provides wholesale loans and other financial services to affiliated Farm Credit associations serving farmers, ranchers and other rural borrowers in 23 states around the country.

For more information about CoBank, visit the bank's website at [cobank.com](http://cobank.com).

## 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  
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## Contact Us

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By phone at 1-855-399-2688

### FIND US ON THE WEB

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



# Operation Round Up



Operation Round Up applications are being accepted until August 21 for the next quarter. For more information and to download an application, visit [hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop).

*Neighbors Helping Neighbors*



Preservation Rosebud members attending the Operation Round Up check presentation include Les and Fran Heugatter, Greg and Marla Wallace, James Protho, and Joe and Sharon Saunders. Operation Round Up Board Member Mike Garrett (fifth from left) presented the check. Funds will be used to make the museum handicapped-accessible.



LaVern Cockerham and Madison Wideman with Old Settlers and Veterans Association of Falls County accept an Operation Round Up check from Operation Round Up Board Member Mike Garrett. Funds will be used to replace water lines at the campground.



Operation Round Up Board Member Charlie Boyd presents an Operation Round Up check to Moffat Community Center President Jim Wingo and MCC board members Carol Wingo and Edgar Bounds.



Operation Round Up Board Member Charlie Boyd presents an Operation Round Up check for the Moody Community Library to Ellie Fowler.



Eddie Silva and Red Carson accept an Operation Round Up check from board member Mike Garrett to benefit the Lott Volunteer Fire Department. Funds will be used to purchase firefighters' personal protective gear.



Operation Round Up Board Member Charlie Boyd presents Operation Round Up checks to the McGregor Junior High Band, McGregor Band Boosters and McGregor High School Band Color Guard. Accepting the checks were Rebecca Reed and Tim Grace.



Operation Round Up Board Member Charlie Boyd presents an Operation Round Up check to Kermit Brock for the Military Order of the World Wars.



Operation Round Up Board Member Mike Garrett, center, is surrounded by members of Falls County 4-H Shooting Sports. Members on hand to accept the donation include, left to right, Taylor Bosse, Kasey Aleman, Whitney Aleman, William Utz, club president Deanna Utz, Evan Maxey, Alyssa Tamez, Hunter Glenn, Hudson Glenn, Annaleisa Tamez, Colton Bosse and Avery Bosse.

# Operation Round Up Grants Benefit Area Youth

**HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED** where Operation Round Up donations go? Well, the funds are donated to worthy organizations in the communities that Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative serves.

Youth groups are just one type of organization that benefits from Operation Round Up funds. Falls County 4-H Shooting Sports is one of the groups receiving a grant this quarter. The group plans to use this donation to purchase several rifles for Olympic-style three-position shooting, as well as other equipment.

The shooting sports program was formed shortly after the Chilton 4-H Club was rechartered in 2013.

“Our participants shoot rifle and pistol with air, .22 and black powder [ammunition],” says Joel Utz, project leader. “We have also started an archery program in the past year. Participants also can learn and compete in the hunting skills portion of the program.”

Participants in the shooting program must be active 4-H members and in third through 12th grade to be eligible to

compete in the program.

Clover members (ages 5 through second grade) can participate in the program with a parent but cannot compete until they are in the third grade.

“Our members compete in several matches throughout the year, primarily in the spring and summer,” explains Utz. “We go as far south as San Antonio and up to Abilene.”

Two participants traveled to Grand Island, Nebraska, to represent Texas at the National 4-H Championships in June, and three members participated in the Texas 4-H State Championships in Manor in July.

“We have had a successful few years in this project in 4-H and are growing every year,” added Utz.

In Falls County, parents or kids who want to get involved may contact the 4-H office in Marlin at (254) 883-1410.

If you want to be a part of Operation Round Up or know of a nonprofit group that would benefit from a grant, call the office at 1-800-840-2957 or visit our website at [hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop). Applications can be downloaded or mailed upon request.

## OPERATION ROUND UP FUNDS ALLOTTED THIS QUARTER

Lott Volunteer Fire Department	<b>\$2,500</b>
Turnersville Volunteer Fire Department	<b>\$2,500</b>
Preservation Rosebud	<b>\$1,500</b>
Falls County 4-H Shooting Sports	<b>\$1,500</b>
Moffat Community Center	<b>\$1,250</b>
Old Settlers and Veterans Assoc. of Falls County	<b>\$1,250</b>
Moody Community Library	<b>\$1,200</b>

Military Order of the World Wars	<b>\$500</b>
McGregor High School Band Color Guard	<b>\$150</b>
McGregor Junior High School Band	<b>\$150</b>
McGregor Band Boosters	<b>\$150</b>

Nonprofit organizations interested in applying for funds should visit [hotec.coop](http://hotec.coop), then go to Programs and select Operation Round Up, or call the office 1-800-840-2957. Applications are being accepted until August 21 for the next quarter.

# Meter Tampering: Dangerous and Illegal

**TAMPERING WITH AN ELECTRIC METER IS THEFT.** In Texas, stealing more than \$1,500 worth of electricity is a felony. Stealing less is a Class A misdemeanor. Anyone trying to cause a meter to stop, under-register or be bypassed is stealing electricity.

Not only is meter tampering illegal, it is also extremely dangerous.

People have been killed while tampering with their meters. Others have been injured, and some have set their houses on fire.

A meter that's been tampered with poses the risk of electrocution to anyone who unknowingly touches the damaged device. That includes cooperative lineworkers and meter readers. It also includes your children.

All electric meters are sealed for a reason—the same reason you have locks on your doors. The seal keeps out people who have no business opening the meter. And nobody has any business opening it except employees of Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative and electrical contractors with the co-op's permission.

Electricity theft costs you and other honest consumers billions of dollars every year. You have to pay for what thieves steal.

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, report it immediately to Heart of Texas EC. To report a suspected case of meter tampering, call the co-op at 1-800-840-2957. You'll help whittle that multibillion-dollar price tag down to size, and you could save someone's life.



## PLX Meter Installation Continues

**HEART OF TEXAS** Electric Cooperative's state-of-the-art advanced meter-reading system upgrade is nearing completion. Our service crew has been busy replacing old meters with new PLX meters.

The four-year AMR deployment is on schedule, with meter deployment about 70 percent complete. The expected completion date is sometime before the end of the first quarter of next year.

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

This system upgrade will give the co-op the ability to perform several functions remotely, such as reading meters more efficiently, monitoring voltage, and reconnecting and disconnecting power at some locations. More accurate information concerning outages and restoration times will allow for shorter response times and ultimately lead to fewer outages. More efficient power distribution and improved power quality as well as better detection of power theft will help keep costs down for members.

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.

## There's an App for That

*New app proves popular with HOTEK members*



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

The Heart of Texas Electric app makes it convenient for our members to pay their electric bill using a smartphone through eBiz. Members can manage their accounts and access other useful options and information. Additional features are expected to be added to the app in the near future.

To download the app, visit the App Store (IOS) or Google Play (Android) and search for Heart of Texas Electric. Then follow the directions to download to your phone.

It's quick, it's easy, and it's right at your fingertips.



## SAVE THE DATE!

HEART OF TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

## Why You Should Attend Your Co-op's Annual Meeting

**BEFORE YOU KNOW IT**, it will be annual meeting time. On behalf of Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative, we'd like to personally invite you to join us Tuesday, October 17, at the Frank W. Mayborn Convention Center in Temple. We will be celebrating our 80th anniversary! We look forward to gathering with you—the members of our co-op community—to catch up, hear what you have to say and enjoy some refreshments and fellowship.

This event is not only a chance to visit with members of our co-op community, but it's also a great opportunity to learn about programs offered by Heart of Texas EC and get to know your co-op staff. Our annual meeting makes it possible for us to gather feedback from you by providing a forum where you can let us know how we can better serve you and your family.

This is an occasion to discuss and learn more about the issues affecting our local communities. It's also an opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest rights of being a member of an electric co-op: voting for the upcoming year's board of directors.

Your cooperative is not owned by faraway investors, and it is not run by a board of directors appointed by investors. We are run by a democratically elected board of directors—a board given the privilege to serve because of your vote.

Our directors are members of the local community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them, too. And don't forget: They are co-op members, just like you.

A democratic and open election is one of the many elements that distinguishes our electric cooperative from other utilities. Having a voice in who makes the major decisions that directly affect your life and your family is a right we all share as Americans. We all vote for our state and federal congressional representatives, but not every American has the right to vote for those who represent community interests within their electric utility. You have that right, so why not exercise it?

Rest assured, no matter what happens, we remain dedicated to providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electric service—but we also encourage you to take part in helping us improve how we deliver that service. So make it a point to join us October 17 at our annual meeting. We plan to make it worth your while!



## Lightning Safety

**IT ONLY TAKES ONE STRIKE** of lightning to change a person's life forever. Lightning can cause serious injuries and death. Unfortunately, lightning can be unpredictable. It does not have to be raining for lightning to strike, and you can be injured even if you are inside.

Lightning can strike up to 10 miles away from a thunderstorm. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. It is best to plan ahead so you are not caught outside in a storm. However, if you cannot take shelter in a building, you can follow these tips to lessen the chances of a lightning accident:

- ▶ Take shelter in a vehicle with a solid metal roof. Close windows and avoid contact with electrical-conducting paths, such as the steering wheel, gearshift or radio.
- ▶ Avoid water, high ground and open spaces.
- ▶ Do not seek safety in open-frame shelters or vehicles, such as golf carts.
- ▶ Do not stand near poles, metal fences or bleachers, trees or even other people. Groups of people should spread out at least 20 feet apart.
- ▶ Wait until 30 minutes has passed without lightning or thunder until you return outside.

Even indoors, lightning requires safety precautions. If lightning strikes your home, it can travel through electronics and plumbing. It is safest to stay away from electronics, outlets and plumbing during storms.