

Making 2019 Better Together



MESSAGE FROM
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AND GENERAL MANAGER DARRYL SCHRIVER**

A BRAND-NEW YEAR IS UPON US, AND JUST as many of our members might, we at Tri-County Electric Cooperative have a few resolutions. In our ongoing quest to provide reliable electric service and responsive and timely customer service, we'd like to redouble our efforts to solicit feedback from our membership. Your comments, questions and concerns are always welcome and often serve as a springboard for new and better services. If we don't get a sense

nity outreach efforts and projects. These contributions, whether through the Susan G. Komen More than Pink Walk or Salvation Army, get to the core of who we are and articulate our enduring Concern for Community. We resolve to keep doing our part to uplift our community across a broad spectrum of charitable endeavors. 800594784

As a complement to our resolutions, here are a few we'd like to propose to you to get the most out of your co-op membership.

Make a point of attending Tri-County EC's annual meeting. There simply is no better, more direct or immediate method for making your voice heard: You can vote in important elections to determine your cooperative's leadership, pose questions to your general manager, air concerns and maybe even win a prize! In conjunction with time spent gathering with fellow co-op members, it adds up to a worthwhile investment of a few hours each year.

Another resolution to consider is evaluating your personal stewardship of electricity. We all can find small or large ways to conserve more energy, increase efficiency and simply waste less. In the market for a new appliance this year? Buy one that is Energy Star-

rated. Or make this the year when you commit to weatherizing your house to seal leaks and gaps where air gets through. A fresh start always provides a meaningful opportunity to take stock of our surroundings and goals and make changes accordingly. 38918001

One last resolution to set, in concert with your cooperative, is renewing your commitment to serve our community. Whether by volunteering individually or donating to whatever organization strikes a chord with you, this is perhaps the most rewarding and beneficial resolution of all.

With thoughtful attention to these resolutions, together we can make this year one of our best yet.



STEVE DEBENPORT | ISTOCK.COM

from those we serve of what we're doing right and which areas need improvement, we're neglecting an important tool for positive change.

Another goal we continually work toward is striving to secure sustainable power agreements at competitive rates for the long-term value of Tri-County EC's membership. By keeping an eye on the power market's horizon and emerging sources like renewables, we can negotiate the best rates and ensure that our members always have access to safe and reliable power. We resolve this year to uphold this commitment as staunchly as ever.

Finally, we expect to maintain our involvement in commu-

Technology Brings Greater Efficiency

OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, THE AVERAGE HOME HAS INCREASED IN SIZE BY 30 PERCENT.

Despite this fact, newer homes only consume 2 percent more energy, largely due to improved energy efficiency. More efficient appliances, better building materials and advances in residential technologies help homeowners save energy, and many of these technologies can trace their roots to the U.S. Department of Energy.

Here is a list of what the DOE says are the top four contributors to holding the line on home energy costs.

1. Loose-fill fiberglass insulation. Hidden in walls, attics and floors, insulation helps keep homes comfortable. Today, nearly 75 percent of homes use this type of improved loose-fill fiberglass insulation, and researchers estimate it has helped consumers in cold climates save 5–10 percent on heating costs.

The DOE is working on a project that uses nanotechnology to develop cost-effective, environmentally friendly and even more efficient foam insulation. If successful, the technology could save U.S. homeowners \$8 billion a year in heating and cooling costs.

2. Electric heat pump water heaters. The growing demand for more efficient water heaters spurred by the Energy

Star program laid the groundwork for the electric heat pump water heater market.

Electric heat pump water heaters can provide substantial savings for homeowners.

3. Energy-efficient refrigerator compressors. Over the years, refrigerators have changed dramatically—from a box cooled by an ice block to a Wi-Fi-connected smart appliance. But even though today's fridges are bigger and pack more features, they use about 25 percent less energy than those built in 1975.

Today, more than 100 million refrigerators in homes across the country use an energy-saving advanced compressor. 800714301

4. Beyond double-pane windows. The creation of low-emissivity coatings—a technology applied to glazing layers that allows visible light to pass through a window while trapping heat—substantially increased the effectiveness of double-pane windows. Today, the majority of residential windows sold in the U.S. have low-e coatings, saving consumers billions of dollars in energy costs.

More efficient (and more costly) triple-pane windows are now available. They use an insulating gas between two window panes and an additional glazing layer with low-e coating. They provide added savings, reduce noise and add security.



"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."

—C.S. Lewis,
British writer and theologian

We wish you and yours a happy, healthy and joy-filled 2019.

Tri-County EC will be closed Tuesday, January 1, in observance of the holiday.

Happy New Year





AMI: What's in It for Me?

SINCE JULY, TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE HAS TALKED about the advanced metering infrastructure that will replace our current automatic meter reading system at your cooperative. We have discussed how the AMR system is approaching the end of its life, the process your cooperative employees have experienced and the benefits of the new AMI system. But what does that really mean for you, the member-owner? Here are just a few benefits that will make your electricity experience even better.

Usage and Member Values

The new AMI system will allow you, the member-owner, to view near real-time readings of kilowatt-hour usage. With readings throughout the day, you can better manage usage through our mobile member app or online in the membership portal. With the current AMR system, member-owners only can see monthly usage. 800770891

With the advanced meters, the cooperative can offer rates designed around peak hours and flexible billing. The ability to remotely connect and disconnect meters from the cooperative will allow us to start and end service more efficiently, saving you time and money. These added features will improve the member services experience for you, the member-owner.

Outages and System Maintenance

The new AMI system will notify system operations during a power outage as opposed to the previous system, which

WHY AMI?

- ▶ Current AMR system is approaching the end of its life.
- ▶ Near real-time readings of kilowatt-hour usage.
- ▶ Allows for rate design around peak hours.
- ▶ More efficient and flexible billing.
- ▶ Improved member service experience.
- ▶ Automated outage notifications instead of member-owners notifying the cooperative.
- ▶ Faster outage restoration.
- ▶ Increased efficiency of connections and disconnections.
- ▶ Improved system reliability.
- ▶ Improved power delivery.
- ▶ Preventive maintenance.

required member-owners to report outages to the cooperative. Having meters that automatically report outages will make finding the cause of outages easier for cooperative employees, and knowing when you lose power will allow us to provide faster restorations. Meters reporting outages will make finding the cause of outage easier for cooperative employees.

Tri-County EC's focus in 2019 is to improve our electric system and member services. The new AMI system will allow us to do just that for our more than 88,000 member-owners.

Diverse Portfolio Nets Economical Power

WE WORK EVERY DAY TO PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS WITH SAFE, RELIABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY responsible power, and we're able to fulfill that promise because we rely on many types of fuel for electricity. Power supply diversity helps us control costs should one type of fuel spike in price or be short in supply.

How these resources work together to power your homes and businesses is important, and long-term planning plays a vital role in meeting your needs.

You occasionally may hear about baseload and nonbaseload power sources. In Texas, baseload power plants typically are fueled by coal and natural gas. These generation plants operate nearly 24 hours a day, seven days a week and provide a consistent and steady amount of power. They're typically long-term assets that last for several decades.

We supplement baseload power with intermittent resources, such as wind and solar. These are considered nonbaseload power because we have limited control over their power generating ability. For example, on a sunny day, solar panels can reach their maximum output. However, during cloudy days and at night, we can't rely on solar power. Because of the unpredictability of nonbaseload sources, we use them in tandem with baseload plants to ensure that when our members flip a switch, they can count on a reliable and adequate power supply to meet their needs. 800658975

Baseload power sources are the backbone of our system, in part because energy cannot yet be efficiently stored. Advances in energy storage, such as batteries, have come a long way, but the technology still is not economically feasible or reliable enough to meet our members' needs.

As a member of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, you may be thinking, why is all of this important to me? Having a balanced and diverse energy portfolio is similar to having a diversified personal financial plan. When it comes to savings, it's not prudent to put all of your eggs into one basket. The same is true with power generation sources. To achieve the best mix of reliability, affordability, environmental responsibility and safety, we have to rely on multiple sources.



Tri-County Electric Cooperative

600 NW Parkway, Azle 76020

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Contact Us

CALL US

(817) 444-3201

FIND US ON THE WEB

tcectexas.com

EMAIL US

pr@tcectexas.com

COOPERATIVE OFFICES

Central Headquarters

600 NW Parkway, Azle, TX 76020
(817) 444-3201

Southwest District Office

1623 Weatherford Highway, Granbury 76048
(817) 279-7010

Northeast District Office

4900 Keller Hicks Road, Fort Worth 76244
(817) 431-1541

B-K District Office

419 N. Main, Seymour 76380
(940) 888-3441

IT PAYS TO STAY INFORMED!

Find your account number in pages 18–25 of *Texas Co-op Power*, and you will receive a \$20 credit on your TCEC electric bill. Simply contact one of the offices listed above and make them aware of your discovery!



facebook.com/TCECTexas

SNOW AND ICE AREN'T Always Nice

Although much of the state is unaccustomed to snow and ice, temperatures can fall below freezing even in South Texas, potentially causing power outages. To keep safe and comfortable during a winter power outage:

Report any outages.

Turn off electrical appliances that were operating at the time the power went off. Leave one light on so you'll know when service has been restored.

Keep warm by closing off rooms you don't need and use only safe sources of heat, like a wood stove. Do not burn charcoal indoors. If you operate lanterns or fuel-fired cook stoves or heaters, make sure that you have adequate ventilation.

Don't drive unless absolutely necessary until conditions improve. If you must drive, go slowly.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative encourages you to always practice safety.



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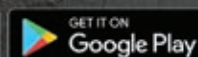
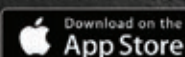
Power Tip

Close the doors to your home and refrigerator quickly. Your heating system won't have to work as hard to maintain a constant temperature, and your appliances will use less energy to do their jobs.

There's An App For That!



Download the new
Tri-County EC
Member app today!





One Trip, Three Perspectives

BY ANNIE MCGINNIS

THE GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION YOUTH TOUR IS DESCRIBED AS A trip of a lifetime. As someone who has been blessed to experience the trip numerous years, I can attest that each Youth Tour feels like one in a million. From my first experience as a participant, to documenting six tours behind the lens, to bringing the opportunity back to Tri-County Electric Cooperative youth members, I can say Youth Tour is truly one of my passions.

As a Participant

In 2011, I attended my first Youth Tour at the age of 15. It was my first time to leave the state without my family, and I did not know a soul. Little did I know, I would make 102 new friends. I left for Youth Tour with one expectation: to see our nation's capital.

The trip started out fast and furious with no time to waste. Within 24 hours, we were admiring the National Cathedral. I had never seen anything so beautiful. As the days went on, we visited monument after monument and museum after museum. I saw things before me I had only read about in history books or watched on television.

One of the most memorable experiences was Arlington National Cemetery, more than 620 acres of land covered in white headstones laid out in perfect rows. Four representatives of the Texas delegation are chosen each year to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Coming from a family who does not have a military background, I was amazed. I walked out of Arlington National Cemetery with a new appreciation for our military, and it was only my second day in D.C.

My favorite day of Youth Tour was Capitol Hill day. We were able to tour the Capitol, Library of Congress and Supreme Court, and we met with our representatives in Congress. Capitol Hill day dates back to the inception of Youth Tour and affected me on a deep level by igniting interest in our government.

As a Chaperone

I began my chaperone phase in 2012 as a Texas Youth Tour photographer, which lasted until 2017. As an alumna returning on the trip, I knew what I would see in Washington. The people I would meet, however, far exceeded my expectations. I met some of my best friends on these trips, some of whom I still talk to today.

Over the course of six amazing trips, I was able to see how the trip affected young adults just like me. I saw how relationships between complete strangers were formed. On the first day, the participants were somewhat guarded and shy. By the last day, goodbyes were hardly without tears.

I saw participants return with a sense of pride and understanding. Youth Tour participants would come back to Texas with a new appreciation for their cooperative, their community, their state and our great nation.

Most importantly, I saw participants grow into leaders. Thanks to social media, I keep up with most of the kids I met and see how they take what they learned back into their schools and communities. 800802512

As a Coordinator

As a coordinator, I get to work with the youths in our area to represent our cooperative in our nation's capital. We have amazing young people in our communities that will represent Tri-County EC while enriching their lives.

If I could give one piece of advice, I would say to expect the unexpected. Step out of your comfort zone and come with an open mind—because you never know what will happen on this trip of a lifetime.

I would not be the individual I am today without the Government-in-Action Youth Tour. I recommend this experience and encourage all our youths to apply. If you have any interest at all, please apply.

A New Year of Safety

IN KEEPING WITH THIS SEASON'S

customary resolution making, here are a few ways to avoid potential household hazards, minimize energy usage and save a bit of money in the new year.

Many of us will prepare more meals at home this year in an effort to eat more healthfully. But bear in mind that cooking hazards are the No. 1 cause of home fires, according to Electrical Safety Foundation International. It may seem like obvious advice, but with distractions rampant in a busy household, stay in the kitchen at all times when you're cooking. When you're done, double-check to be sure that the oven and all burners and appliances are off. Make this a regular step in your cooking routine.

Heating pads and electric blankets cause hundreds of fires each year, according to ESFI, with electric blankets more than 10 years old being the main culprit. If a heating pad or electric blanket is old or worn, has any dark or frayed spots, or has a cracked or frayed electric cord, replace it. Don't allow anything to cover the surface of an electric blanket or heating pad while it is in use, including other blankets or pets, as this could cause the appliance to overheat and potentially start a fire. Although tempting, never use a heating pad or electric blanket while sleeping. Instead, use the devices to warm your bed before you get in it. Turn them off once you're snuggled up.

Despite the fact that poisonous carbon monoxide is virtually undetectable without the use of a CO detector, around 70 percent of U.S. homes lack this lifesaving device. Installing a CO detector in your home and testing it regularly in conjunction with your smoke alarms is one of the most important and simplest things you can do to protect your family.

Portable generators are one of the leading contributors to carbon monoxide poisoning. Never operate a generator inside your home or in other enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. Opening doors and windows or operating fans to attempt to ventilate a generator will not prevent carbon monoxide buildup. Even with a working CO alarm, you never should use a gasoline-powered generator inside your home or garage. Position the generator outside the home and away from doors, win-



dows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.

Automobiles present another CO risk. Never leave a vehicle running in your garage, even if the garage door is open. Remove the vehicle immediately after starting it and turn it off as soon as you park. Decreasing your car's idling time also reduces emissions. 146800101

If your heating system isn't keeping pace with chilly winter temperatures and you're looking for supplemental heat, exercise caution with fireplaces and space heaters. Although a fireplace is generally not an efficient way to heat your home, if you are using it, use a fireplace screen to keep sparks from flying out. Never leave a burning fire unattended, and make sure the fire is completely out before going to bed.

A space heater can be more effective than the fireplace, but it's essential that you read the instructions on the unit before you use it. If your space heater requires venting, make sure you have vented it to the outdoors. Always allow at least 3 feet of empty area around space heaters, particularly staying clear of anything flammable.

Never use your stove or oven to heat your home.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative encourages you to prioritize staying safe as highly as staying warm this winter.

Overnight Omega Breakfast Pudding

DRS. REBEKAH & DEREK BRUNER | OPTIMIZED LIVING INSTITUTE OF KELLER

6 tablespoons chia seeds
2 cups unsweetened coconut milk, almond milk or cashew milk
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
⅓-¼ cup golden raisins

1. Combine chia seeds, milk, vanilla and golden raisins.
 2. Let sit 6 hours or overnight, covered, in the refrigerator. In the morning, stir vigorously. Add toppings of your choice, such as blueberries, strawberries, coconut flakes or walnuts. Enjoy!
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Tri-County EC Member Recipe Submission Form

NAME

CITY

EMAIL or PHONE NUMBER

RECIPE NAME

Please return to:

Email: Please include the above information with your recipe and send to pr@tcectexas.com.

Mail: Please detach and submit this form with your recipe and mail to:

Tri-County Electric Cooperative
Attn: Recipe Submission
600 NW Parkway
Azle, TX 76020