



MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER

CODY
LASATER

We Love Lineworkers

HAMILTON COUNTY Electric Cooperative lineworkers don't work alone on our power lines. Whether they're climbing poles, restoring power or clearing tree limbs to prevent outages, they're never far from the hearts of the people who love them.

At this time of year, stores are flooded with hearts, candy and cards professing true love. But to be honest, those sentiments pale in comparison to the love we see every time a storm sweeps through our area.

When the lights go out, our lineworkers are sent from their loved ones out into the elements. When other electric cooperatives are in trouble after devastating hurricanes, tornadoes, fires or floods, our lineworkers travel to get the lights back on for complete strangers.

Each time these brave men and women leave home to help those in need, their families are left behind, praying for a safe return.

Working with high-voltage electricity, lineworkers find themselves in life-or-death situations on a regular basis. That's why Hamilton County EC focuses on safety first. Our safety program includes daily briefings, monthly meetings and ongoing training to ensure that our team performs its job safely.

We know the folks who love our lineworkers appreciate the time we take to make sure our employees get home safe every night.

Marrying into this profession isn't easy. Lineworkers are often on call and must be ready to respond at a moment's notice when our community needs them. This makes children's sporting events and family get-togethers hard to pull off sometimes.

But the crews who keep your power flowing do so because they know that without their commitment, many of the things we've come to expect—hot meals, lights, heat—wouldn't be possible. By devoting their lives to working on utility lines, they connect all of us to a better way of life.

This Valentine's Day, we'd like to take a moment to thank the families who support and love our team of lineworkers who brave the elements and work long hours to keep power flowing to our homes each and every day.

Thank you for putting your love on the line. We're committed to making sure the lineworkers you love return home safely. ■



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Help Kids Stay Warm and Safe in the Cold

MOST OF US LIKE to huddle inside a toasty, heated house when it's cold outdoors. But most kids love to play outside no matter the temperature, seemingly unaware of the cold. Keep your child safe and protected by following these winter safety tips.

Dress kids in layers. As they warm up, they can remove layers to stay comfortable.

Kids should wear hats when playing out in the cold; they lose more of their body heat through the head than adults do.

Warm and waterproof gloves or mittens are a must for reducing the risk of cold fingers or frostbite.

Remove clothing as soon as it gets wet. Beware of kids breaking a sweat in cold temperatures, as the body's natural way of cooling itself can soon make them too cold as sweat evaporates.

Apply sunscreen. Even on cold days, the sun's rays can still cause sunburn, especially when they reflect off snow. Sunglasses and ski masks can protect the eyes from dangerous rays.

Remember to have children drink water or other hydrating beverages while playing outside, even if they don't feel thirsty. Lure your kids inside for frequent breaks that include warm drinks and healthy snacks. ■



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Hamilton County EC Offers Scholarships

WILL YOUR 2025 HIGH SCHOOL graduate need money for college? Hamilton County Electric Cooperative will award \$1,000 scholarships for the 2025–26 school year (\$500 per fall and spring semester).

Eligible recipients must:

- ▶ Be a senior attending a high school within the HCEC service area and graduating in May 2025.
- ▶ Be a dependent of an active HCEC member.
- ▶ Reside full time in the home of a parent or guardian who is a full-time resident in HCEC's service area.
- ▶ Have applied for admission as a full-time student in a technical school, college or university.

Winners must use the scholarship within one year of issuance.

Applications are now available and will be accepted until March 31.

Scholarship winners will be chosen by a committee independent of the cooperative.

For more information and an application, contact Keela McDonald at (254) 386-9428 or keela.mcdonald@hamiltonelectric.coop. ■

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

CONTACT US

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P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531

Local (254) 386-3123

Web hamiltonelectric.coop

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Cody Lasater

Board of Directors

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Dusty Duncan, Vice President, District 5

Brandon Haile, Secretary-Treasurer, District 2

Jack Caldwell, District 1

Sam Campbell, District 6

Ervin Koerth, District 3

John Priddy, District 7

24/7

Outage Hotline Numbers

For information and to report outages, please call us.

TOLL-FREE

1-855-955-3183

ABOUT HAMILTON COUNTY EC

HCEC owns and maintains more than 4,000 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 13,000 members in Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills and San Saba counties.

PAYMENT OPTIONS AND LOCATIONS

Online at hamiltonelectric.coop

Call 1-855-955-3183 to pay using our automated phone system (credit/debit card or check).

Bank draft can be set up or bill payments can be charged to a debit or credit card monthly.

Hamilton County EC Office

112 E. Gentry St., Hamilton

Fort Gates Water Corp.

103 Gateway Circle, Gatesville

Head Insurance

1006 Fourth St., Goldthwaite

Kempner Water Supply

11986 E. Highway 190, Kempner

Lometa City Hall

109 W. San Saba St., Lometa

VISIT US ONLINE

hamiltonelectric.coop



Check us out at

TexasCoopPower.com/hamilton



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Stock Up for Emergencies

DISASTERS CAN TAKE US by surprise. Basic services that we’ve come to take for granted—electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment and phones—can be cut off, as most of the state learned during the winter storm in 2021.

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative recommends keeping an emergency kit with food, water and supplies to help you and your family stay safe, healthy and comfortable during these outages. **A basic emergency supply kit should include the following items.**

Water

- ▶ Store 1 gallon of water per person per day (keep at least three days’ worth).
- ▶ Remember to stock additional water for pets.

Food

- ▶ Keep handy at least a three-day supply per person of nonperishable food such as canned foods, dry mixes and other staples that don’t require refrigeration or cooking.
- ▶ Be sure to include a manual can opener, paper towels, plastic cups, plates and utensils.
- ▶ If necessary include formula and food for infants and any other special dietary needs within your household, including those of pets.

First Aid Kit

- ▶ Two pairs of latex or other sterile gloves
- ▶ Saline solution or soap and antibiotic towelettes
- ▶ Antibiotic ointment and burn ointment
- ▶ Sterile dressings and adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- ▶ Thermometer, scissors and tweezers
- ▶ Daily prescription medications and equipment
- ▶ Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment
- ▶ Pain relievers, antidiarrheal medication, antacids and laxatives

Other Items

- ▶ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ▶ Battery-powered radio and weather radio, plus extra batteries
- ▶ Whistle to signal for help
- ▶ Dust mask to help filter air, plastic sheeting and duct tape to seal off a space
- ▶ Moist towelettes, garbage bags

and plastic ties for personal sanitation

- ▶ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ▶ Cellphone with a charger, inverter or solar charger

Optional Supplies

Once you have gathered the supplies for a basic emergency kit, you may want to consider adding the following items:

- ▶ Prescription glasses, contact lens supplies, denture supplies
- ▶ Diapers, bottles, diaper rash ointment
- ▶ Cash or travelers’ checks, copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records
- ▶ Sleeping bags and warm blankets
- ▶ Complete change of clothing including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes
- ▶ Fire extinguisher
- ▶ Matches in a waterproof container
- ▶ Toilet paper, feminine and personal hygiene supplies
- ▶ Paper and pencil, books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children. ■

Is It a Power Strip or a Surge Protector?

AS THE PROLIFERATION of electronics impacts our daily lives, we realize there simply aren't enough outlets in our homes. This is particularly true for older homes. As a result, we end up with a number of "outlet expanders," more commonly known as power strips.

Power strips are generic and fulfill a very simple function—letting you plug in more things. They're inexpensive, and the quality is often on par with the price.

Keeping this in mind, let's look at factors to consider when purchasing a power strip or a surge protector, the power strip's more talented cousin.

Purchasing a Power Strip

Look for power strips with a built-in circuit breaker. If you connect too many electronics and devices, the strip will kick out its circuit breaker rather than causing the breaker in your electric panel to trip.

Pay attention to the orientation of the outlets. The typical design is along the length of the strip, facing the bottom or end of the strip. Power strips with the outlets perpendicular to the length of the strip can provide more convenient access.

Get a smart strip. With smart strips, one outlet serves as a master, receiving power all the time. The other outlets do not receive power until the master device is turned on. This is ideal for home entertainment setups as it allows you to quickly turn off power to multiple electronics with the flip of a single switch.

Purchasing a Surge Protector

If you're connecting expensive electronics, you may want to consider a surge protector. Here, price is even more important because a cheap surge protector can be worse than none at all. A cheap protector still will provide power even if its protective components fail—without any indication that its protective side is gone.

Here are some key factors to consider when buying a surge protector.

An appropriate joule (pronounced "jewel") rating. This is a measure of how much energy it can withstand.

Cable and internet connection protection. You may want to consider this for your entertainment and computing needs as surges can enter via any wired connection.

Indicator light that shows if protection has burned out.
A perpendicular outlet orientation and smart capabilities (as with power strips).

Power strips and surge protectors are worth the investment. Don't get burned by purchasing cheap, inefficient strips and protectors.

Even so, power strips and protectors aren't magical: Make sure you know the amperage rating of the outlet into which you're connecting the strip and other equipment. A residential circuit can overload if you're not careful. Adding outlets doesn't add amperage. ■



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Community Calendar

The following community event information was gathered in late December. Please contact event sources directly to confirm event dates and details.

Comanche

Black History Month, February, Comanche County Museum, 402 Moorman Road.

Buffalo Soldiers video to be shown. For more information, call (325) 356-5115 or email comanchecountytxmuseum@gmail.com.

Texas Independence Day Celebration, March 2, 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Comanche County Museum, 402 Moorman Road.

Chili and Comanche stew lunch. For more information, call (325) 356-5115 or email comanchecountytxmuseum@gmail.com.

For more information about Comanche County events, contact the Comanche Chamber of Commerce at (325) 356-3233 or comanchechamberinfo@gmail.com.

Copperas Cove

Fishing in the Park, March 1, Copperas Cove City Park, 1206 W. Avenue B. Enjoy a relaxing day of fishing with family and friends

at the City Park Pond. Sponsored by the City of Copperas Cove Parks and Recreation. For information, contact Ashley Wilson at awilson@copperascovetx.gov or (254) 542-2719.

For information on Copperas Cove events, call (254) 547-7571 or email chamber@copperascove.com.

Gatesville

Powerlift Meet, February 15, Gatesville Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop. For information, contact Morgan Smart at (254) 499-0102 or msmart@gatesvilletx.com.

Cotton Belt Depot Foundation \$10K Giveaway, March 1, 5 p.m., Gatesville Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop. Workers needed.

Trade Days, March 8, 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Cotton Belt Depot parking lot.

Micro Wrestling, March 8, Gatesville Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop. For information, contact Morgan Smart at (254) 499-0102 or msmart@gatesvilletx.com.

Golf Tournament, March 15, Gatesville Country Club, 1308 Golf Course Road.

Men's Conference, March 21–22, Gatesville Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop. For information, contact Morgan Smart at (254) 499-0102 or msmart@gatesvilletx.com.

For information about Gatesville events, see visitgatesvilletx.com or email gatesvillecoc@gmail.com.

Goldthwaite

Mills County Historical Museum, Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., 1119 Fisher St. Free.

Goldthwaite Theatre, 1206 Fisher St. For information on upcoming events, call (325) 451-1811 or visit goldthwaitetheatre.org.

For more information about Goldthwaite events, visit goldthwaiteareachamber.com, call the Goldthwaite Area Chamber of Commerce at (325) 648-3619 or email gcc@centex.net.

Hamilton

Circle T Arena, 4007 W. Highway 36.

For information on upcoming events, visit circletarena.net/events or call (254) 386-3559.

For more information about Hamilton events, visit Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center at hamiltontexaschamberofcommerce.com or All Things Hamilton on Facebook, call (254) 386-3216, or email hamiltonchambertx@gmail.com.



Fishing in the Park
March 1
COPPERAS COVE

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Hico

For more information about Hico events, contact the Hico Chamber of Commerce at (254) 434-1249 or chamberhicoctx@gmail.com.

Lampasas

Polar Bear Plunge, February 1, 11 a.m.–1 p.m., Hancock Pool, 1406 U.S. Route 281. Hosted by the Boys & Girls Club of Lampasas.

Wild West Casino Night, February 15, 5:30 p.m., Lampasas County Livestock Association Show Barn, 283 N. U.S. Highway 183. Dinner, gaming, and a night filled with fun and prizes. BYOB. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit lampasaschamber.org.

For more information about Lampasas County events, contact the Lampasas County Chamber of Commerce at (512) 556-5172 or admin@lampasaschamber.org or visit lampasaschamber.org.

Lometa

Yoga and Mimosas, March 1, 10–11 a.m., Fiesta Winery at Bend, 18727 W. FM 580. For more information, call (325) 628-3433 or email info@fiestawinery.com.

Fiesta Winery Pick Up Party, February 8, 11 a.m.–6 p.m., Fiesta Winery at Bend, 18727 W. FM 580. For more information, call (325) 628-3433 or email info@fiestawinery.com.

Diamondback Jubilee and Rodeo, March 28–29, 7:30 p.m., Lometa Regional Park.

Pearl

Pearl Bluegrass, February 1, doors at 7 a.m., Pearl Community Center, 6301 FM 183. Free admission. Come join others to pick or just to listen. Jam rooms for all levels. Open mic

opportunities begin at 10 a.m. Sign up upon arrival. The kitchen opens at 11 a.m., home cooking and desserts, cash only. Proceeds benefit the Pearl Community Center. For RV spaces, call Connie at (254) 223-0621. For more information, follow us on Facebook at Pearl Community Center Texas or visit pearlbluegrassjam.org.

Pearl Book Cottage; February 1, March 1; 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Junk-in-your-trunk and farmers market outside of the book cottage. Vendor booths are \$5. Books and resale items will be available inside the building. For information, call Kay Pruett at (254) 865-5864 or Linda Ray at (254) 865-9282.

San Saba

San Saba Reunion Sheep Dog Trials, February 27–March 3, 510 State Highway 16. Kim and Regan Kirk are hosting the Texas Sheep Dog Association San Saba Reunion Sheep Dog Trial at their ranch. Spectators are welcome. Bring your lawn chairs and dress for the weather. Please leave your pet dogs at home. Admission is free. TSDA is excited to be returning to its roots in San Saba, and we hope to see you all there!

Night at the Museum, March 1, 4–7 p.m., San Saba County Historical Museum, 271 S. Thomas Stewart Drive. Celebrating Texas Independence Day with live demonstrations, speakers, campfire cooking and more. Proceeds benefit the museum.

For more information about San Saba events, contact the San Saba County Chamber of Commerce at (325) 372-5141 or visit sansabachamber.org or sansabatexas.com.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

National Cheddar Day
Thursday, February 13

Valentine's Day
Friday, February 14

Presidents Day
Monday, February 17

World Spay Day
Tuesday, February 25

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative welcomes your local event submissions.

If you have any events that you would like listed in the Community Calendar, please contact Donna Harris. Information must be submitted two months in advance for the magazine. The calendar will be published monthly, and it will contain events scheduled in the month of publication and the following month. HCEC reserves the right to edit and exclude events based on space available and other considerations. We do not certify the accuracy or reliability of any information posted in any listing in this Community Calendar. Please contact the event source directly to confirm event details. Email donna.harris@hamiltonelectric.coop, write to HCEC at P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531, or call 1-800-595-3401.