



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER CODY LASATER

Resolve To Save Energy in 2025

THE START OF THE new year always seems to bring about lists for improving one’s life. You know: lose weight, stop smoking, exercise more—conserve electricity.

That last one might not be on your list, but it can be just as important as any personal health goals, both to your financial bottom line and the overall health of our cooperative and the state’s electricity system.

When temperatures are moderate, there’s an adequate supply of electricity to serve Texas’ needs, according to the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, the grid operator for 85% of the state. However, as the vicious winter storm of 2021 demon-

But you’ll likely find, after a few repetitions of a new behavior, you eventually won’t even have to think about it. You’ll turn off lights automatically.

Here are other energy-saving resolutions that you might consider for 2025.

▶ Unplug computers, TVs and phone chargers, plus the coffee maker and other kitchen countertop appliances, when you’re through using them. These items draw electricity as long as they’re plugged in, even if they’re turned off. Collectively, their energy use adds up.

▶ If any of the overhead fixtures, table lamps or outdoor lights around your house still have those old, inefficient incandescent light bulbs, change

them to LEDs, which use significantly less power.

▶ Explore LED fixtures. The light is built into the fixture—for all kinds of decorative and task lighting. With no bulbs to burn out, the light works as long as the fixture does. They aren’t as cheap as other options, but prices are dropping. In the long run, they’ll pay for themselves.

▶ Install a programmable thermostat. Use it to lower the heat by a few degrees once the family leaves the house every day and to raise it back up just before everybody gets home. You won’t feel any less comfortable at home, but you’ll notice a dip in your bill.

If every Hamilton County Electric Cooperative member embraces just one or two of these ideas, or took other energy efficiency measures, the effect would be magnified by our entire membership.

And if everyone in Texas embraced even the simplest of these ideas, like turning off unused lights, it could add up to significant savings and would help keep the lights on for all of us. ■



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strated, with more extreme conditions, there could be a shortfall.

But if we all do our part and make energy conservation a habit, we may be able to avoid outages.

As one saying goes, it takes 21 days to create a new habit. During that time, it may take a conscious effort to change your behavior—for instance, remembering to switch off lights as you leave a room.



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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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Local (254) 386-3123

Web hamiltonelectric.coop

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Cody Lasater

Board of Directors

Robert Straley, President, District 4

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



Youth Tour Set for June 15–22

High school juniors and seniors: Become part of the legacy

HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE will sponsor two students to attend the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 15–22. Hamilton County EC is proud to carry on its commitment to empowering local teens from its service area to participate in the trip, which is organized by Texas Electric Cooperatives.

Students selected for this opportunity join more than 150 of their peers from Texas and some 1,900 other students from across the U.S. on this trip of a lifetime. Designed to give young people insight into national history, Youth Tour expands participants' horizons while educating them about government and cooperatives.

Electric cooperatives in Texas have participated in Youth Tour since 1965, when co-ops joined forces to follow then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson's call to send youths to the nation's capital to "actually see what the flag stands for and represents."

The trip starts with a chartered flight to Washington for an action-packed week that includes tours of historic sites, museums and congressional offices, where participants meet with their U.S. representatives.

Other highlights of the trip include a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and an evening cruise on the Potomac River. Participants also attend Youth

Day, hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, for a day of learning and inspiration.

A sense of purpose has guided co-ops throughout their existence, and for Hamilton County EC and other electric cooperatives across the country, that means investing in our young people—the leaders of tomorrow.

To become part of this legacy and represent HCEC on Youth Tour, apply now for the essay contest.

Eligibility: Students who have completed their sophomore year of high school and whose parents or legal guardians are members of Hamilton County EC are eligible.

Contest Rules: Students must complete a 2025 Youth Tour application and submit an essay not to exceed 500 words on the following prompt: "Describe a service project that would benefit your community." The winners will be chosen according to the originality and content of their essays. Essays must be attached to the completed application and submitted no later than Friday, January 31.

For more information, visit texasyouthtour.com. Contact Keela McDonald at (254) 386-9428 or keela.mcdonald@hamiltonelectric.coop for an application. ■

Cool Off Your Winter Energy Bill

AFTER THE EXPENSES of the holiday season—gifts, meals and travel—money might be a little tight, not leaving much for home energy efficiency upgrades. Does that mean you're powerless to lower your electric bill?

Not at all. Keep your energy bill cool this winter with these tips and tricks.

Drape delivery. Are you using your curtains to capture heat? Make sure drapes and shades are open to catch free solar heat during the day. Close them at night to keep the heat inside.

Set but don't forget. Set your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower if you can) and always lower it a few more degrees when you're away from home.

Got tape? Though not as durable as foam, rubber or vinyl, you can use nonporous tape (first aid cloth tape, for example) to keep cold air from drifting into your home. Tape is good for blocking corners and irregular cracks and can be used at the top and bottom of a window sash, door frames, attic hatches and inoperable windows.

Fan it up. Run ceiling fans on low and in a clockwise rotation to move air up in winter. This keeps warm air circulating without cooling you.

Free vents. Your HVAC system will have to work twice as hard if your air registers and vents are blocked by rugs, furniture or drapes. Keep them clear to allow air to flow freely.

Garage drain. Leave your garage door down. A warmer garage in winter saves energy.

Rug relief. Have a spare rug? Use it to cover bare floors for added insulation.

Cool food. Don't make your fridge work too hard. Clean the coils yearly, set the temperature to 34–37 degrees and set the freezer to 0–5 degrees. Keep the freezer full; frozen food helps your freezer stay cool. When cooking, keep lids on pots, and let hot food cool off before placing it in the refrigerator.

Hot savings. Heating water accounts for 18% of a typical home's energy use. Set your water heater temperature no higher than 120 degrees. For households with only one or two members, 115 works.

Remember: Don't pay for what you don't use. When you're not watching TV or using lights, computers and other electronics, turn them off. Lower your room temperatures a bit and wear a sweater to stay warm, or place an extra blanket on the bed at night. ■



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THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION YOUTH TOUR

JUNE 15-22, 2025



Are you a Texas high school student? Would you like to travel to Washington, D.C., and visit historic landmarks—all without spending a dime of your own money?

Perhaps you'd like to meet elected officials, or maybe you're looking for an inspirational experience in the company of other Texas teens. If that sounds like you, then the Government-in-Action Youth Tour is your tour. Apply now!

www.hamiltonelectric.coop
Keela McDonald 254-386-3123

Start your adventure at
TexasYouthTour.com.

Community Calendar

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

Comanche

Comanche Market, January 4, 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Comanche County Courthouse, 101 W. Central Ave.

Elvis Presley Day, January 4, 1–4 p.m., Comanche County Museum, 402 Moorman Road. Celebrate Elvis' 90th birthday with music and videos.

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.

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

Copperas Cove

Polar Bear Plunge 5K, January 18, Copperas Cove City Park, 1206 W. Avenue B.

Come run or walk the annual 5K to the Polar Bear Plunge. Afterward, plunge into the freezing waters of the City Park Pool. Sponsored by Copperas Cove Parks and Recreation. For more information, call (254) 542-2719 or visit copperascovetx.gov/parks.

Chamber Membership Banquet—Flashback to the 80's, January 25, 6–10 p.m., Civic Center, 1206 W. Avenue B.

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

Gatesville

Coryell County Youth Fair, January 6–11, Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop.

Gatesville Chamber Member Banquet, January 18, 6–8 p.m., Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop. Dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Military Annual Fish Fry, January 24, 5 p.m., Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop. Sponsored by the Cotton Belt Depot Foundation contest.

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.

Hico

Annual Hico Chamber of Commerce Banquet and Citizen of the Year Awards, January 27, 6 p.m., Hico Hall, 101 W. Avenue B.

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



**Polar Bear Plunge 5K
January 18
COPPERAS COVE**

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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.

Pearl

Pearl Bluegrass; January 4, 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; January 4, February 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

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.

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.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day
Thursday, January 9

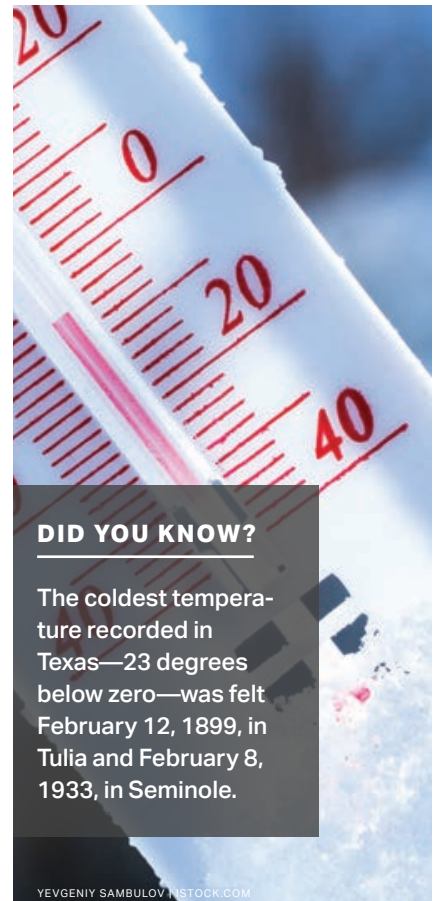
National Cut Your Energy Costs Day
Friday, January 10

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday, January 20

National Hot Chocolate Day
Friday, January 31



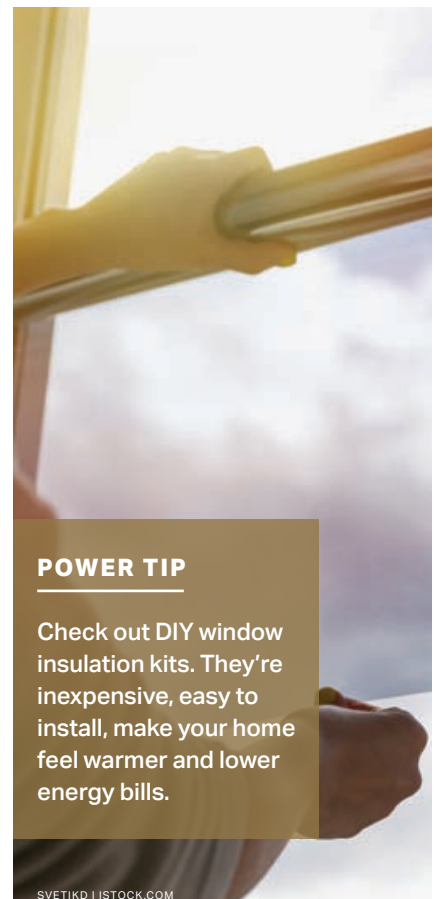
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DID YOU KNOW?

The coldest temperature recorded in Texas—23 degrees below zero—was felt February 12, 1899, in Tulia and February 8, 1933, in Seminole.

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POWER TIP

Check out DIY window insulation kits. They're inexpensive, easy to install, make your home feel warmer and lower energy bills.

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