

The New Generation of Co-op Members



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER/CEO STEVE YOUNG

WHILE MANY URBAN Americans enjoyed the comforts of household electricity in the early 1930s, much of the United States had not yet experienced this luxury. Still in need of power were the country's rural farmlands, where privately owned utility companies determined it was not cost-effective to provide electricity.

Fortunately, President Franklin Roosevelt had a plan. In 1935, the Rural Electrification Administration was established as part of the New Deal, allowing farmers and ranchers to borrow money from the federal government to form local,

cooperatives providing electricity across the nation. Each one operates with the same goal: to provide the greatest service to members at the lowest possible cost and enhance members' quality of life.

Electric cooperatives are tasked with the job of serving members 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. To do this effectively, it is imperative that co-op employees adapt to the ever-changing needs of members. Demographics have shifted over the past several years: Along with serving older generations of members who might have played a role in founding the cooperative, we now are serving younger generations, as well.

To better serve all our members, Hamilton County Electric Cooperative employees are adjusting how we communicate. It is increasingly apparent that members prefer instant access to information—a preference that stems from reliance on the convenience of smartphones and apps. Cooperatives across the country have adopted new technologies to help provide this kind of instant access for those who wish to use it.

By working to meet demands for instant information, we've found opportunities to communicate with members whom we might never have reached in the past. Using outlets such as social media, radio, print ads, websites and apps, cooperatives have found new ways to present information and connect with more members.

Yet we continue to offer the same member services we've always had. Members are still welcome to stop by the office to visit with a member services representative about their service or pay their electric bill, if they wish. Those who stop by always will be greeted by a smiling face.

At Hamilton County EC, our members are our top priority. We remember why our co-op was started so many years ago, and we strive to maintain a relationship with every one of our members, from every generation. Upholding the values of the men and women who founded the cooperative, we continue to strive to provide you with the very best possible service at the very lowest possible cost.



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Co-ops are finding creative new ways to connect with members using today's technology.

consumer-owned electric cooperatives, owned and operated by the determined and hardworking people who created them. These men and women worked to bring electricity to rural America not only for their own benefit but also for the benefit of their friends and neighbors.

The establishment of electric cooperatives transformed rural America. Farmers could work more efficiently, bringing higher profit in the long run. Parents cooked more easily on electric stoves; children studied longer under the glow of light-bulbs; and farm families' lives were forever changed.

Thanks to the men and women who worked together to energize rural America, there are now more than 900 electric



SAVE THE
DATE!

78TH ANNUAL HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017

Registration begins at 4:30 p.m.

Hamilton ISD Junior High, 611 S. College St., Hamilton

Catfish and barbecue dinner catered by J&M Hill Country Bar-B-Q

5:00-6:15 p.m. in the Hamilton Junior High School Cafeteria

Business meeting 7 p.m. in the Chandler Craig Auditorium

The business meeting will be followed by entertainment and prizes.

Featuring a special performance by Jason Roberts, Grammy Award-winning fiddle player

Come out to help us celebrate 78 years of service. We look forward to seeing you there!

Look for additional meeting details in the next issue of *Texas Co-op Power*.

TAPHOUSE_STUDIOS | ISTOCK.COM

Power Tip

Keep warm summer air outside where it belongs! Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.



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Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

420 N. Rice St. • P.O. Box 753
Hamilton, TX 76531

GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Steve Young

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Contact Us

For general information
or to report an outage

CALL US

(254) 386-3123 local or

1-800-595-3401 toll-free

PAYMENT LOCATIONS

Hamilton County EC Office

420 N. Rice St., Hamilton

Brown & Wesson Insurance

915 Third St., Goldthwaite

Fort Gates Water Corporation

103 Gateway Circle, Gatesville

Kempner Water Supply

11986 E. Hwy. 190, Kempner

Lometa City Hall

109 W. San Saba St., Lometa

Online

hamiltonelectric.coop

Telephone

Call 1-877-833-4031 to pay using our automated phone system (credit/debit card or check).

Bill payments can be set up to be bank drafted or charged to a debit or credit card monthly.

Prevent DIY Projects From Landing You in the Hospital

SUMMER HAS A WAY OF SPROUTING do-it-yourselfers. If you like to work around your house and yard, make sure you take the proper steps to do it safely, using these tips:

Everybody likes to feel like the master of their domain, but it's best to leave complicated jobs—especially those involving electricity—to the professionals. Even the most seasoned amateur handymen and women should stay away from jobs that could put them in danger of injury or starting a fire.

If you do work with electricity, your tools need to have insulated grips to keep them from conducting a current into your body.

Switch off the circuit breaker that corresponds to the project you'll be working on.



CATHERINE VEULET | ISTOCK.COM

Wear long sleeves, protective shoes and long pants when mowing or working around the yard.

In use, stop using it. Take the tool to a manufacturer-authorized repair center for service.

Shield your eyes with safety goggles and ears with hearing protection, and suit up with heavy-duty gloves, dust masks and other safety gear recommended for each tool before you power up.

Wear sturdy, protective shoes or boots, and long pants and sleeves when using power tools—even your lawn mower. Tie back long hair, jewelry, hoodie strings, scarves and other loose-dangling items that could get caught.

If you're repairing a lamp, appliance or other plugged-in device, unplug it before you start your work.

Plug any power tools you use into outlets equipped with ground-fault circuit interrupters. GFCIs prevent you from getting shocked.

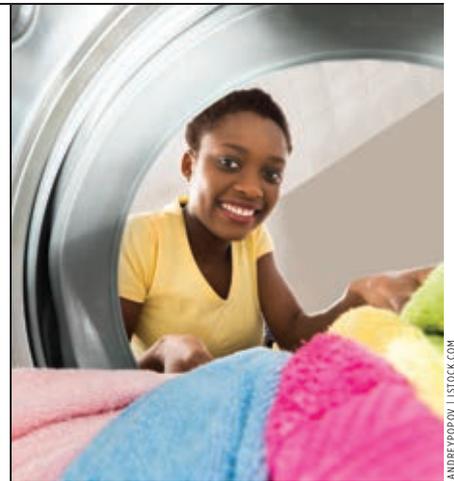
If you need an extension cord for a power tool, choose a cord that measures less than 100 feet.

Water and electricity don't mix, so don't use power tools in wet or even damp areas.

If you're drilling into a wall for a project, check the placement of electrical or plumbing features so that nails, screws, hammers or power tools do not come into contact with wires or pipes.

Safeguards on outdoor electric tools are there for a reason. Always make sure they are in place before operating.

If a power tool trips an electrical safety device while



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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.

Heat and Cool Efficiently

AS MUCH AS HALF of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. Making smart decisions about your home's heating, ventilating and air conditioning system can have a big effect on your utility bills—and your comfort. Take the following steps to increase the efficiency of your heating and cooling system.

Change your air filter regularly. Check your filter every month, especially during heavy use months (winter and summer). If the filter looks dirty, change it. At a minimum, change the filter every three months. A dirty filter slows down airflow and makes the system work harder to keep you warm or cool, wasting energy and money in the process. A clean filter prevents buildups of dust and dirt in the system that can lead to expensive maintenance or early system failure.

Tune up your HVAC equipment yearly. Just as a tuneup for your car can improve gas mileage, an annual tuneup of your heating and cooling system can improve efficiency and comfort.

Install a programmable thermostat. “Smart” thermostats are ideal for people who are away from home during set periods of time throughout the week. Through proper use of preprogrammed settings, a programmable thermostat can save you about \$180 every year in energy costs.

Seal your heating and cooling ducts. Ducts that move air to and from a forced-air furnace, central air conditioner or heat pump are often big energy wasters. Sealing and insulating ducts can improve the efficiency of your heating and cooling system by as much as 20 percent—and sometimes much more.

First, focus on sealing ducts that run through the attic, garage or crawl space, if you have one. Use duct sealant (mastic) or metal-backed (foil) tape to seal the seams and connections of ducts. Do not use duct tape, despite its name.

After sealing the ducts in those spaces, wrap them in insulation to keep them from getting hot in the summer or cold in the winter. Next, seal any other ducts that you can access in



Schedule an HVAC tuneup to keep your house cool this summer.

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the heated or cooled part of the house.

Consider installing Energy Star-qualified heating and cooling equipment. If your HVAC equipment is more than 10 years old or not keeping your house comfortable, have it evaluated by a professional. If it is not performing efficiently or needs upgrading, consider replacing it with a unit that has earned Energy Star approval. Depending on where you live, replacing your old heating and cooling equipment with qualified models can cut your annual energy bill by more than \$115.

Before you invest in a new HVAC system, though, make sure that you have addressed the big air leaks in your house and ducts. Sometimes these are the real sources of problems.

Community Calendar



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Hamilton County EC will be closed Tuesday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day.

Hamilton County EC director election ballots will be counted August 4 at 1 p.m.

The Hamilton County EC Annual Membership Meeting will be held August 4 at 7 p.m. at the Hamilton ISD Chandler Craig Auditorium.

Comanche

Jams in June Free Concert, June 8, 15, 22 and 29, downtown historic square

76th Annual Rodeo Parade, June 16, historic downtown

Rodeo Shoppers Day, Comanche Rodeo and Dance, June 17, historic downtown and rodeo grounds

Veterans Lighted and Patriotic Display, June 30–July 5, historic downtown

De Leon Peach and Melon Festival, August 8–12, De Leon Community Park

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

Copperas Cove

Summer Fun Run 5K Run/Walk, June 17, 8 a.m.–noon, South Park, 2602 Dennis Drive

Cove House Classic Bike Tour, August 12

For more information about Copperas Cove events, call the Copperas Cove Chamber of Commerce at (254) 547-7571, email chamber@copperascove.com or visit copperascove.com.

Evant

Chamber of Commerce Dinner, June 3, 6 p.m. Member drive and open house for newly restored downtown.

Evant Rodeo Association Play Day, June 10 and July 8, 9 a.m.

Fourth of July Celebration, July 1, all day, Evant City Park

City of Evant Kids' Program, June 21, July 5, July 19, 9–10:30 a.m., Evant City Hall

BBQ Cook-Off Benefiting the Dee Dee Rice Scholarship Foundation, August 11–12, Evant Square

For information, contact Mary Ann Davison at evantchamber@gmail.com or (254) 404-5487.

Gatesville

Chamber Trade Days, 2nd Saturday of every month, parking lot of Cotton Belt Depot, 2307 S. Highway 36. This is not only a great opportunity for local vendors to set up and show off their unique merchandise, but also a great chance for citizens to support local small vendors.

Gatesville Country Music Hall of Fame Show/Jamboree, Third Friday of every month, 7–8 p.m., City Auditorium, 110 N. Eighth St. A family-friendly event. There is no admission fee, but donations are accepted for the performers. For more information, visit gatesvillecountrymusichalloffame.com or call Roger Vierser at (254) 547-6834.

Fire Ant Tour Bicycle Ride, June 10. Registration begins at 6:30 a.m. and ride starts at 8 a.m. Riders can choose to ride 11, 24, 50 or 62 miles (approximately). Registration is \$25 in advance or \$30 on-site. Online registration will be available at gatesvilleexchangeclub.org. For more information, contact Clark Burns (254) 223-2718.

4th of July Fireworks Show, July 4, 10 p.m. Presented by the City of Gatesville along with local sponsors, for the enjoyment of local citizens and visitors from surrounding communities.

80th Annual Gatesville Riding Club Rodeo, July 27–29, 8 p.m., Gatesville Rodeo Arena, Veteran's Memorial Loop. This year's event to include TBRA/Ride TV Ladies' Ranch Bronc Riding Tour.

For more information about Gatesville events, call the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce at (254) 865-2617 or Cheri Shepherd, Gatesville Convention and Visitors Bureau at (254) 499-0102.

WE WELCOME YOUR EVENT SUBMISSIONS

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 will contain events scheduled in the month of publication and the following two months. 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@hamilton.electric.coop, write to HCEC at P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531, or call 1-800-595-3401.

Goldthwaite

Full Meal Deal BBQ Brisket and Trimmings, June 11, 11 a.m. Goldthwaite Volunteer Fire Department fundraiser. Donations only.

Goldthwaite Summer Fest, June 17. Sponsored by the Mills County Artisan Guild. For more information, call (325) 948-3214 or (254) 372-3075 or email millscountyartisanguild@centex.net.

Patriot Celebration, July 1, Goldthwaite City Park. The Mills County Chamber of Commerce serves \$1 hot dogs and drinks, as well as free ice cream. There is a children's parade at 6 p.m. and a fireworks show at dark.

For more information about Mills County events, call the Mills County Chamber of Commerce at (325) 451-4334 or visit millscountychamber.com.

Hamilton

Pop-Up Shops, June 1, July 6, August 3, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Studio on the Square, 109 N. Rice St. For more information, visit studioonthesquarehamilton.com.

For more information about Hamilton events, visit hamiltontexas.com, contact the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce at (254) 386-3216 or hamiltonchambertx@gmail.com.

Hico

Old Settlers Reunion, July 17-22. This week-long event is sponsored by the Hico Civic Club and features a parade through downtown. A carnival and concerts will be held at the Hico City Park. For information, call (254) 796-4221

Horseshoe Tournament, July 21, 5:30 p.m., Hico City Park. Sponsored by the Hico Chamber of Commerce. For information, call Kenney Giessner at (254) 796-4727.

For more information about Hico events, visit hicochamber.com or email hicochamber@mail.com.

Killeen

1st Cavalry Division Association 70th Annual Reunion, June 7-11. For more information, visit 1cda.org or call (254) 547-6537.

Lampasas

Lampasas Trade Days, June 24, July 29, August 26, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 2646 E. Highway 190. Free admission and parking. For information, contact Barbara Postel at (512) 734-1294.



LAMPASAS
July 7
BBQ Cook-Off Taster's Choice

31st Annual Sulphur Creek Car Cruise, June 10, 8 a.m.-4p.m., W.M. Brook Park. Contact Mike White at Advanced Window Tint at (512) 556-3745 for information.

Spring Ho Festival, July 3-9. Activities and festivities all week long. For information, contact the Spring Ho Committee at (512) 556-5301 or visit springho.com.

BBQ Cook-Off Taster's Choice, July 7, 6-9 p.m., Cooper Spring Nature Park, Hackberry and Avenue A. Those who purchase a Taster's Choice wristband can sample delicious dishes from every participating team. After sampling them all, you may vote for your favorites. \$10 per wristband, includes 10 votes.

Spring Ho "Hot As Hell" BBQ Cook-Off, July 7-8, Cooper Spring Nature Park, Hackberry Street and Avenue A. For more information, visit lampasaschamber.org.

Toughest 10K in Texas 5K and 1-Mile Run, July 8, 7-10 a.m., Hancock Park Pavilion

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

Lometa

Lions Club Mop and Broom Sale, June 1, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Highway 183 south of the light

Fireworks, July 4, dark:30, Regional Park

Pearl

Bluegrass Festival, June 3, July 1, August 5, 11 a.m. Stage show, jam rooms, home-cooked food and bookstore. For more information, visit pearlbluegrass.com.

Pearl Book Cottage, June 3, July 1, August 5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. All kinds of books and resale items. Payment by donation. All donations go to charity. For information, call (254) 865-9282 or (254) 865-5864.

Pidcoke

Vacation Bible School, July 31-August 4, 6-8 p.m., Pidcoke Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. Sponsored by Pidcoke United Methodist Church and Pidcoke Baptist Church. The theme this year is "Intergalactic Starveyers."

Big Yard Sale, August 5, 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Communitywide event. Proceeds go to supplying backpacks with school supplies to school children in first-fifth grades in Lampasas, Gatesville and Copperas Cove. Last year, 75 backpacks were provided, and we hope this year will be a better year to help more children. Vendors can call Rex Hooten at (325) 660-3547 to arrange booth space.

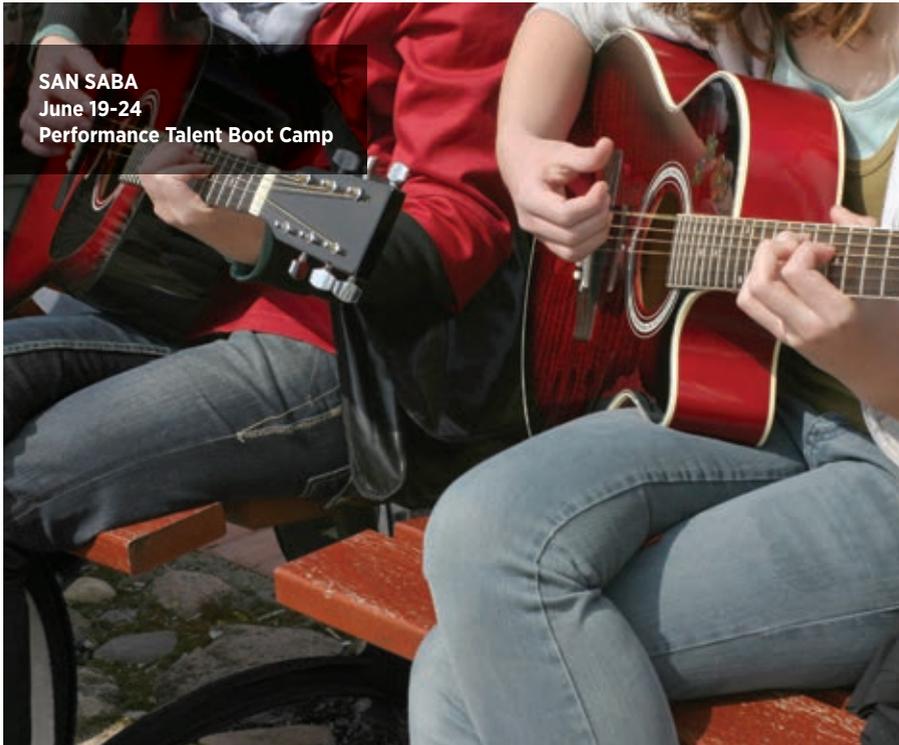
Pidcoke is halfway between Copperas Cove and Gatesville on FM 116. For more information about Pidcoke United Methodist Church events, call (254) 760-2288 or visit pidcoke-umc.org.

San Saba

San Saba County Farmers Market, Wednesdays through August, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Courthouse Square. The market features the best of produce grown in San Saba County. For more information, contact Tony Guidroz at (325) 372-8291.

Pecan Capital Trade Day, June 3, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., San Saba County Courthouse, 500 E. Wallace St. For more information, contact JoAnne Van Gorp (325) 372-4029.

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FLAG DAY

Wednesday, June 14

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San Saba River Golf Course Tournaments, County Road 102

- ▶ Guys and Dolls, June 3-4
 - ▶ 2-Person Scramble, July 22-23
 - ▶ 3-Person Shamble, August 12-13
 - ▶ Golf Club Championship, August 26-27
- For registration details and tee times, please visit golsansaba.com or phone the Pro Shop at (325) 372-3212.

Cow Camp Cook-Off, June 9-10, Risien Park, 300 U.S. Highway 190. For information, contact Tony Guidroz at (325) 372-8291.

San Saba Pro Rodeo Days, June 9-10, Rodeo Grounds on Highway 16 N. This year's rodeo features legendary bullfighter and funny man Leon Coffey. For information, contact the Rodeo Association at (325) 372-5416.

Pecan Capital Street Dance, June 10, 8-11:45 p.m., Courthouse Square. Featuring performances by Sammy Kershaw with special guests, and the Danny Edwards Band. Free admission. Tables available for rent. Benefits the San Saba Volunteer Fire Department. For information, contact Tony Guidroz at (325) 372-8291.

Performance Talent Boot Camp, June 19-24. The event features an exciting lineup of musicians and teachers who provide instructional classes in many areas of the music industry. For information, contact Kay Lynn Scott at (325) 372-8600 or visit performancetalent.com.

WOW Summertime Road Trip and Cook-Off, June 23-25 and June 30-July 2, Wedding Oak Winery, 316 E. Wallace St. Ticket price is \$30. You get a tasting glass, food pairings and, in this case, a vote for which of the 12 wineries has the best entrée. Contact Wedding Oak Winery at (325) 372-4050 for information.

Fourth of July Celebration in the Park, July 4, all day, Mill Pond Park, Thomas Stewart Drive. Fireworks begin at 9 p.m. Sponsored by the City of San Saba and Impact 2000 Plus. For more information, contact Tony Guidroz at (325) 372-8291.

Junk in the Trunk Garage Sale, July 8, 8 a.m.-noon, Courthouse Square. Items can only be sold from your trunk or bed of your truck; nothing can be set on the ground. For information, contact Tony Guidroz at (325) 372-8291.

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



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Happy Father's Day

from Hamilton County EC
Sunday, June 18

Seal Window and Door Trim

SEALING AIR LEAKS AROUND YOUR HOME and adding insulation can add comfort and energy efficiency. It also can provide up to a 10 percent savings on your annual energy bill. Simple fixes include installing weatherstripping on doors and caulking around windows, while bigger jobs might include sealing leaks in ductwork and adding insulation in your attic.

Leaks around windows and doors can lead to uncomfortable drafts and energy losses. Sealing trim in these areas is a moderately difficult do-it-yourself project, but the benefits can be substantial if you are sure of the problem and can address it accordingly.

This project might have less impact on energy use than those in the attic, but doors and windows tend to be more accessible areas and are perfect for a DIY endeavor. Even if your windows are otherwise airtight, the payoff for sealing around window and door trim still can be substantial.

Some obvious signs and symptoms that your home has air leaks and can benefit from sealing are:

- ▶ **Drafts around closed windows or doors.**
- ▶ **Visible gaps around the window or door trim.**
- ▶ **Noticeable pests and dust entering through gaps or holes in or around windows or doors.**
- ▶ **Odors from the outside entering the home.**
- ▶ **Peeling paint around interior window or door frames.**

Sometimes it's not obvious if a window or door is leaking around the trim. There are a few quick and easy ways to locate leaks to see if your home could benefit from these fixes.

Perform a paper test: Close the window on a piece of paper. If the paper easily moves back and forth, this means your window could be tighter. This can be accomplished by adding thicker weatherstripping.

Try a smoke test: Light an incense stick and hold it next to the seams or sash of the window. If you see the smoke pushed in one direction or another, you most likely have a leak.

For detailed instructions on how to prepare and undertake this project—or how to identify a contractor to do it for you—visit energystar.gov.



Peeling paint around interior doors and windows is a sign that your home needs sealing.

WHAT IS



SMARTHUB IS Hamilton County EC's new, innovative tool for account management. SmartHub can help you take control of your electricity and your account like never before!

▶ Register with SmartHub and you will be able to view your current bill or previous month or even previous year to compare costs. You can also view your daily or monthly electricity usage. You can see how your use is trending over time and take steps to reduce your consumption.

▶ Making payments through SmartHub is fast and easy. You can store your payment information for future payments or set up automatic payments. SmartHub provides a safe and secure environment for transactions between HCEC and your financial institution.

▶ Go paperless and manage your account via SmartHub! By registering with SmartHub, you can receive bill notifications by email or text.

▶ Register now at hamiltonelectric.coop! Click the Pay Online button to begin registration. You may also download the app, SmartHub, for free with your smartphone or tablet.

WHAT IS SMARTHUB?



Be in the Know Secure Customer Support Pay Bill Check Usage