

# Capital Credits To Be Returned to Members



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER/CEO STEVE YOUNG

**THIS MONTH, HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE RETURNS \$1,909,564 in capital credits to its members for the years 1985–1988.** Members should get checks if they received service from the cooperative for one or more years during this time frame. This allocation brings the total amount of our capital credits retirements to \$4,913,424. HCEC returns capital credits to its members on a first-in, first-out basis.

Many of you may wonder why the cooperative is just now returning capital credits owed to its members back in 1985. That is a legitimate question, and I will try and explain. Every year, the cooperative collects revenues from its members in excess of the cost of providing electric service. These excess monies are called margins, and margins are allocated to each member in the form of capital credits based on the revenue received from the member in any given year.

Although Hamilton County Electric Cooperative is a nonprofit cooperative, margins are a necessity. Margins are required by the cooperative's lenders to ensure that the co-op maintains a sound financial condition and can make future principal and interest payments on its debt obligations. Margins are held and used by the co-op, then released as capital credits when the board of directors decides it is financially prudent.

HCEC has experienced substantial growth during the past 30 years, as the cooperative's utility plant has increased from \$14 million in 1986 to more than \$78 million in 2016. "Utility plant" represents the amount of money the cooperative has invested in electric lines, equipment and other physical property. A large part of the \$64 million spent on new utility plant resources during the past 30 years was funded by margins retained by the cooperative.

It would not have been financially prudent, or even allowed by our lenders, to pay for this new plant entirely with borrowed money. HCEC must invest its members' money in new utility plant expenditures to maintain the cooperative's sound financial condition and ensure that it remains a viable business for the future.

HCEC's board of directors is committed to maintaining the financial strength of your cooperative and keeping electric rates as low as reasonably possible. The board will continue to return capital credits when doing so will not jeopardize the financial condition of your cooperative.

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative appreciates all its members and the loyalty you all have shown. If you have questions about capital credits or anything else, please feel free to call me at 1-800-595-3401 or email me at [steve.young@hamiltonelectric.coop](mailto:steve.young@hamiltonelectric.coop).



## Prepare for Little Visitors

### WITH THE HOLIDAYS COME HOUSE-

guests, and often they're little ones. Kids and grandkids can be a joy, but their presence requires preparation around the house. Use these tips to ensure that your home is ready to welcome your loved ones for all the festivities.

- ▶ Put away small items that could pose choking hazards, such as batteries, buttons, coins and jewelry.
- ▶ Install tamper-resistant electrical receptacles to prevent shocks and burns, or use safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children.
- ▶ Never allow children to play with electrical decorations or cords.
- ▶ Use safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairways to keep babies and toddlers safe.
- ▶ Move all cleaning products and other dangerous items out of reach of children and store them in a locked area.
- ▶ Consider turning your water heater temperature down to 120 degrees to reduce the risk of scalding.
- ▶ Teach overnight guests your fire escape plan, including the location of your outside meeting place. Everyone should know at least two ways out of each room in your home.



# Small Appliance Dangers

**IT'S EASY TO FIND SUBSTANDARD ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES ON THE MARKET, ESPECIALLY** at attractive, discounted prices. Such products are recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission if they are found to be unsafe, but that often happens too late. The following products and devices can be particularly dangerous, especially if faulty or misused:

## Hair Dryers

The CPSC recommends consumers buy hair dryers that comply with certain safety standards, effective since January 1991, that add protection against electrocution if they fall into water. Choose hair dryers with large, rectangular plugs and certification marks from a well-known testing laboratory, and never use hair dryers near water.

## Electric Blankets

An electric blanket easily can overheat and cause a fire if items are placed on top of the blanket while in use. Blankets should be discarded if wiring is cracked or broken, or if dark, charred or frayed spots are noticed.

## Portable Heaters

When using portable heaters, keep at least 3 feet between the heater and any flammable materials, such as paper, curtains or bedding. Portable heaters never should be used near water or in bathrooms, and they should be plugged only into outlets with ground-fault circuit interrupters.

## Extension Cords

Extension cords cause an estimated 4,000 injuries, 50 deaths and 3,300 residential fires each year. Extension cords never should be used on a permanent basis, as they are intended for temporary use as needed. Residential fires can occur if the cords are faulty, overloaded, damaged or misused.

### Keep in mind the following tips when using extension cords:

- ▶ Always use cords with polarized plugs.
- ▶ Cover unused outlets with caps or install tamper-resistant receptacles.
- ▶ When disconnecting cords, pull from the plug, not the cord.
- ▶ Use heavy-duty cords for high-wattage appliances.
- ▶ Never run electrical cords under rugs or next to walls where heat can build up.



## Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

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

### GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Steve Young

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

P.M. Gerald Jr., President, *Hamilton*  
Sam Campbell, Vice President, *Goldthwaite*  
Bob Gardner, Secretary-Treasurer, *Hamilton*  
Dusty Duncan, *Lometa*  
Melvin Eilers Jr., *Priddy*  
Ervin Koerth, *Gatesville*  
Henry Langford, *Lampasas*



## 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](http://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.

# Phone Chargers and Water: Bad Call

## OUR CELLPHONES SEEM INDISPENSABLE

these days—especially to the younger generation. It's true: Phones are handy, combining the functions of a telephone, clock, camera, TV, computer and lots of other machines into one small package that's easy to carry everywhere. But sometimes, the habit of taking our phones everywhere can get us into trouble.

This was the case with 14-year-old Madison Coe of Lubbock, who was electrocuted in July when she attempted to use and charge her phone while taking a bath at her father's home in Lovington, New Mexico.

Coe's family gave Lovington police permission to release her last text message, in which she wrote: "When you use [an] extension cord so you can plug your phone in while you're in the bath." Attached to the message was a photo of a charger plugged into an extension cord resting on a towel.

A police report confirmed that the phone was never immersed. The phone's charger cord was connected to an extension cord, which was plugged into a nongrounded bathroom wall outlet that didn't have a ground-fault circuit interrupter. Coe "took precautions to keep the connection of the cords dry," the report states, but "it is believed she was not aware of a significant area of fraying to the extension cord."

This tragic event highlights several intersecting electrical safety concerns: cellphones and chargers, extension cords, outlets and water. Review these points with your family and you could save a life.

## Water and Electric Appliances

First, the most basic—and important—point: Electricity and water should never mix. Keep all electrical appliances away from water. Never rest anything plugged in on the edge of a sink, tub or toilet, or outside near a pool or hot tub. Make sure hands are dry and you are not standing in or touching water while touching anything electrical.

Parents should remind children that a cellphone is an electrical appliance just as likely as an electric razor or hair dryer to cause a shock with water, and encourage kids to put down their phones before going into bathroom or pool areas.

## Cords and Plugs

Once a charger is connected, the risk of shock increases. Appliances have protective, insulated cords and coverings to prevent contact with the electricity inside, but if the insulation



Even though some phones are water-resistant, their chargers are electrical devices that are very dangerous near water.

TREETEREE | SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

or the appliance covering becomes damaged, users are at risk of contacting a bare live wire, which could cause serious shock. Inspect cords and plugs regularly, and throw away any that show fraying or damage to the grounding prong.

## Outlets

Outlets should be equipped with ground-fault circuit interrupters if they are in areas near water, such as bathrooms, kitchens, utility rooms, and outdoors around pools and hot tubs. A GFCI can prevent electrocution by immediately cutting power to a circuit when it detects a fault through contact with water.

Outlets equipped with GFCIs have buttons that read "Test" and "Reset," and should be tested regularly for proper functioning. If you need to install GFCI outlets in your home's water areas, contact a licensed electrician.

An estimated average of 70 electrocution fatalities per year were associated with consumer appliances between 2007 and 2009, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, which assisted police in the investigation into Coe's death. The most common product categories associated with these electrocutions were small appliances, large appliances and power tools.

Paying attention to the dangers of electricity around water can help prevent an unthinkable tragedy like the one that befell Madison Coe. Make sure you and your family know how to stay safe.

# Brace for the Cold

**STAY COZY INDOORS THIS FALL AND WINTER** without sending your energy bills soaring. Here's how:

▶ Tape heavy-duty, clear plastic sheets to the insides of the frames of drafty windows.

▶ Lower the thermostat by 10–15 degrees for eight hours a day to save up to 10 percent on heating and cooling bills. Try it overnight or while you're at work all day. Or install a programmable thermostat that will set itself back automatically at the times you want.

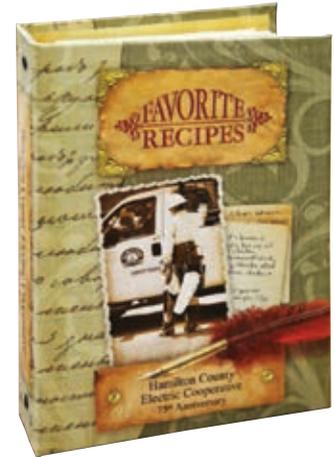
▶ Lower the dial on the water heater to 120 degrees. Heating water accounts for 18 percent of the energy your home uses, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

▶ Scour the house for gaps around plumbing pipes, and cables for TVs, routers and landlines, where cold air can get into the house and heated air can escape. Caulk or weatherstrip those gaps and around doors and windows.

▶ Close the damper to your wood-burning fireplace when you're not burning wood in it. Better yet, avoid using it. Those old fireplaces suck the warm air right out of a room and send it outdoors.



SENGEVA | ISTOCK.COM



## HCEC Cookbooks Available

**HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** Association is selling *Members' Favorite Recipes* cookbooks for \$20 each (including sales tax) at the co-op's main office at 420 N. Rice St. in Hamilton, at Fort Gates Water at 103 Gateway Circle in Gatesville and at Kempner Water Supply Corp. at 11986 E. Highway 190 in Kempner. You can also use a debit or credit card to order the book by calling Donna Harris at 1-800-595-3401 or emailing her at [donna.harris@hamiltonelectric.coop](mailto:donna.harris@hamiltonelectric.coop). The cookbooks can be shipped for an additional \$5.95 per cookbook.

*Members' Favorite Recipes*, printed by Morris Press Cookbooks of Kearney, Nebraska, was published to honor the cooperative's 75th anniversary.

The cookbook contains historical information on the incorporation of Hamilton County EC and 600 recipes submitted by co-op members. These much-loved recipes include appetizers, beverages, soups, salads, vegetables, side dishes, main dishes, breads, rolls, desserts, cookies and candy. Many of the recipes have been passed down from generation to generation. Several members shared memories related to the recipes, and they are included in the cookbook, as well. Each recipe includes the contributor's name, so it is easy to find recipes from family and friends.

IRYNA HELNYK | ISTOCK.COM

WIMPY | ISTOCK.COM

## Happy Thanksgiving

from Hamilton County EC

Our offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 23–24, to celebrate the holiday.



## Veterans Day November 11

Hamilton County EC salutes veterans for their service.



# Community Calendar



## Comanche

**Deer Hunter Chili Supper**, November 3, historic downtown

**Tribute to Our Veterans**, November 11, Comanche Community Center

**Honoring Our Veterans Luncheon**, November 12, Comanche Community Center

**Christmas Open House**, December 2, Comanche County Museum

## Copperas Cove

**Feast of Sharing**, November 16

**Shop Small Business Saturday**, November 25, 8-10 a.m.

**Krist Kindle Markt**, December 1-3, downtown, 111 Ave. E. Features vendors with Christmas crafts, collectibles, holiday gift ideas and yummy food. For more information, visit [kristkindlemarkt.com](http://kristkindlemarkt.com).

**Jackpot Playday**, November 18, 10 a.m. Sponsored by the Evant Rodeo Association. All-around prize for each age division, 70 percent payback in each event. For more information, contact Lauren Goins at (254) 206-0662.

**Sip and Shop Christmas on the Square**, December 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., downtown

**Christmas Tree Lighting**, December 2, City Park, begins at dark

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

## Gatesville

**Gatesville Shop Local**, November 4, local retail shops and boutiques

**Field of Honor**, November 10-13, East Main and South 27th streets. Dedication ceremony Saturday, November 11, 10 a.m. Hundreds of flags will fly in memory and honor of veterans, active military members, police officers, firefighters and EMTs. Sponsored by the Gatesville Exchange Club. For more information or to sponsor a flag, go to [visitgatesvilletx.com](http://visitgatesvilletx.com).

**Chamber Market Days**, Second Saturday of every month in the parking lot of the Historic Cotton Belt Depot, 2307 S. Highway 36. This not only is 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 [gatesvillecountrymusicalloffame.com](http://gatesvillecountrymusicalloffame.com) or call Roger Viers at (254) 547-6834.

**Christmas Lights in the Park**, Nightly through December. Enjoy a free drive-thru lighted display.

**Christmas Parade and Celebration**, December 9



**GATESVILLE**  
November 10-13  
Field of Honor

**Christmas in Comanche**, December 9, historic downtown and around.  
10 a.m., Shoppers' Day on the Square;  
11 a.m.-4 p.m., Christmas Homes Tour;  
5-6 p.m., Jingle and Mingle at 4 North Event Center; and  
7 p.m., Christmas Lighted Parade

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

**YMCA Christmas Parade**, December 2

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

## Evant

**Feed the Hunters**, November 11, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Evant square

**Christmas Classic and Holiday Market, December 16, Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop.** Coryell County 4-H hosts a lamb and goat jackpot show beginning at 9 a.m. with a Christmas Shopping Market inside, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Booth spaces for the market are available for rent. For more information, call (254) 865-2414. Event is open to the public.

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

## Goldthwaite

**Hunters Appreciation Chili Lunch, November 4, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Legacy Plaza Pavilion.** For more details, call the Mills County Chamber of Commerce at (325) 648-3619.

**Goldthwaite Mills County Artisan Guild Annual Holiday Bazaar, November 18, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., Civic Center, 1903 Cline St.** Booths 10x10 ft., \$35. Electricity an extra \$10 (limited supply). Set-up Friday, November 17, 5–7:30 p.m., and Saturday, November 18, 7:30–9:30 a.m., must be ready by 10 a.m. Cutoff date for booths is November 13. Contact Mills County Artisan Guild at [millscountyarisinguild@centex.net](mailto:millscountyarisinguild@centex.net) or Jody Previtia at (325) 948-3214.

**Parade of Lights, December 2.** Local businesses design floats to display in the parade.

## Hamilton

**Pop-Up Shops, November 2, December 7, January 4, 5:30–8:30 p.m., Studio on the Square, 109 N. Rice St.** For more information, visit [studioonthesquarehamilton.com](http://studioonthesquarehamilton.com).

**Holiday Market, November 11, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Fair Park Pavilions, 1007 Park Road at Alamo.** Free admission. Huge Friends of the Hamilton Public Library book sale, vendors galore, food, Kids' Korner, Farmers Propane salsa contest and much more. Sponsored by the Pottsville Extension Education Club. For booth reservations and other information, contact Judy Goodson (325) 226-1670 or [myoneofakindbyjudy@gmail.com](mailto:myoneofakindbyjudy@gmail.com).

**Hamilton Hollydays, November 16.** Hamilton kicks off holiday lighting festivities at 6 p.m. on the downtown square. Local shops and restaurants will be open 5–8 p.m. Come to any of the Hamilton Hollyday events for a chance to win a two-night stay at the Inn at Circle T and dinner for two at the Crossfire Steakhouse and Cantina. The more you shop, the better your odds are to win! The winner will be chosen at Christmas on the Square, December 7.

**Small Business Hollydays, November 25, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.** Shop local campaign

**The Jennifer Hall Scholarship Fund Dance, November 25, Jayson Harris Pavilion.** Doors open at 6 p.m., dance at 7:30 p.m. Katy Parrish, daughter of John and Lisa Parrish, opens with the national anthem. Calvin Clary sings, with the Clint Allen Janisch Band to follow, and Clayton Landua closes the show. Concessions and a silent auction. Tickets \$10 at the door.

**Hamilton Hollydays, November 30, 5–8 p.m.** Shop local campaign

**Christmas on the Square, December 7.** Pictures with Santa start at 3:30 p.m.; Jingle Jog 4:30 p.m.; kid's activities, holiday music and story time 5:30; and Christmas parade 6 p.m.

**Christmas Tour of Homes, December 9, noon–5 p.m.** Tickets can be purchased at Studio on the Square. Ages 13 and up, \$10.

*For more information about Hamilton events, visit website [hamiltontexas.com](http://hamiltontexas.com), contact the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce at (254) 386-3216 or [hamiltonchambertx@gmail.com](mailto:hamiltonchambertx@gmail.com).*

## Hico

**Downtown Holiday Open House, November 11,** a Historic Hico event that features treats, door prizes and special discounts at participating shops.

**Christmas Parade, December 2, 6 p.m.** Sponsored by the Hico Chamber of Commerce

**Tour of Homes, December 2**

*For more information about Hico events, visit [hico-tx.com](http://hico-tx.com) or email [hicochamber@mail.com](mailto:hicochamber@mail.com).*

## Kempner

**Veterans Day Ceremony, November 11, 11 a.m., City Park, 12641 E. U.S. Highway 190**

## Lampasas

**Free Guided Tours of the historic Lampasas County Courthouse, Saturdays, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., historic downtown courthouse square.** The 30-minute tours visit each floor of the courthouse, including the stately second-floor courtroom as well as the third floor, which houses the tower clockworks. The Lampasas County Courthouse is the third-oldest courthouse in continuous use in Texas. For more information, contact Jim Rutland (512) 556-5302 during regular business hours.

**Lampasas County Museum, Fridays and Saturdays, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.** Learn about the history of Lampasas County through permanent displays and special exhibitions. 303 S. Western Ave., between Second and Third streets. Free of charge.

**Hunters Welcome, November 3, 9 a.m.–3 p.m., H-E-B parking lot.** The barbecue lunch is \$8 and includes a Texas-size barbecue sandwich with all the fixin's, chips, cookie and a drink.

**Fall Courtyard Square Garage Sale, November 4, 8 a.m.–3 p.m., courtyard square.** For more info, contact Andy Berry at (512) 556-5434.

**Lampasas County Veterans Biographies, November 10–18, Fridays and Saturdays, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.,** Lampasas County Museum. For more information, call (512) 556-2224.

**Vintage Postcards of Lampasas County Book Launch, November 11, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.,** Lampasas County Museum. Celebrate the publication of the museum's newest book. Books available for sale. For more information, call the museum at (512) 556-2224.

**Christmas on the Creek, November 22–January 2, W.M. Brook Park.** A beautiful display of lights and other scenery. New this year is the 12 Days of Christmas and Santa's Village displays. Free admission.

**Carol of Lights, December 2, 10 a.m.–7:30 p.m., downtown Lampasas.** Ornament decorating and storytelling by Mrs. Santa at My Girls, 415 E. Third St., on the square. Santa visits with the kids in the Ajinomoto Windsor Foods lobby. Snow Queen pageant, carolers, Christmas Bazaar in the courthouse, classic cars, Christmas tree judging and home tour tickets at the Lampasas County Museum, 303 S. Western Ave., two blocks from the square. Day ends with the Ajinomoto Windsor Foods Lighted Christmas Parade. \$1 admission to the Town and Country Christmas Bazaar in the Lampasas County Courthouse. Entry fee goes to their scholarship fund. Other events are free. For information, call Dianna Hodges at (512) 525-1871 or visit [visionlampasas.com](http://visionlampasas.com) or [lampasasdowntown.com](http://lampasasdowntown.com).

**Lighted Christmas Parade, December 2, 6:30 p.m., courthouse square.** For more information, email [info@visionlampasas.com](mailto:info@visionlampasas.com).

**Holiday Tour of Homes, December 3, 1–5 p.m.** For information and tickets, contact Lampasas County Museum at (512) 556-2224.

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

## Lometa

**Hometown Christmas**, December 9, City Hall

For more information, about Lometa events, contact the City of Lometa at (512) 752-3331.

## Pearl

**Bluegrass Festival**, November 4, December 2, January 6, 11 a.m. Stage show, jam rooms, home-cooked food and bookstore. For more information, visit pearlbluegrass.com.

**Pearl Book Cottage**, November 4, December 2, January 6, 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.

## San Saba

**Annual Opening Hunters Welcome Weekend**, November 3. Hunters will receive goodie bags compliments of the San Saba County Chamber of Commerce. Call (325) 372-5141 for more information.

**Hunters Welcome San Saba VFD Steak Dinner and Raffle**, November 3, 4:30-7:30 p.m., San Saba Volunteer Firehouse, 702 E. Storey St. Steak dinner plate \$15. For information, visit facebook.com/san.vfd.

**Pecan Capital Trade Day**, November 4, December 2, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Courthouse Square, 500 E. Wallace St. Handcrafted bowls, beautiful crafts, baked goods, jellies, tamales and much more available to you each month through December. For information, contact Joann Van Gorp at (325) 372-4029.

**Hamrick and Stafford 13th Annual Customer Appreciation Day**, November 4, 6-9 p.m., Hamrick's Auto and Stafford Chevron, 611 E. Wallace St. Come and enjoy free food & drinks, plus live music. For information, contact Hamrick's Automotive Services at (325) 372-5775.

**Hunter's Stew**, November 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Civic Center. Warm bowls of hunter's stew await you at this new fundraiser hosted by the San Saba Garden Club.

**Christmas Light Extravaganza**, November 23-January 5, Mill Pond Park, Thomas Stewart Drive. Dusk-10 p.m., Sunday-Thursday; dusk-midnight, Friday-Saturday

**San Saba Chamber of Commerce Fifth Annual Sip 'n' Stroll Wine Tasting Event**, December 9, 2-6 p.m. Pick up tickets at Everett's Furniture, 310 E. Commerce St. Seven visiting wineries in seven downtown businesses. Cost \$20, includes 10 wine tasting tickets, a wine glass and wine tote bag (while quantities last). Tickets can be purchased in advance on the chamber's website or at Everett's Furniture. For information, call the chamber at (325) 372-5141 or email executive.director@sansabachamber.com.

**River City Holiday Band Concert**, December 9, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Courthouse Square, 500 E. Wallace St. Enjoy this free, festive holiday concert while you wait for the Lighted Christmas Parade to begin.

**Lighted Christmas Parade**, December 9, 6:30-7:30 p.m., downtown, rolling down Wallace Street from Seventh Street, with lights, music and plenty of excitement. For an entry form, contact the chamber at (325) 372-5141.

**Santa's Holiday Workshop**, December 9, 7-9 p.m., Estep-Burleson Plaza, 116 S. Cherokee St. This FREE family event features photos with Santa and fun activities for the kids.

**San Saba County Youth Livestock Show**, January 11-13

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

## Star

**Star Volunteer Fire Department Annual Fish Fry**, November 11, 5:30 p.m., Star Volunteer Fire Dept., Hwy. 84. There is no charge, but all donations are appreciated.



STAR  
November 11  
Star VFD  
Annual Fish Fry

4PHOTOBYESTOCK.COM

### 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.

# Energy Q&A

OUR ENERGY ADVISOR ANSWERS FOUR OF THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT energy conservation in the home.

**Q: How important is it to seal air leaks in your home?**

**A:** Air leaks in the walls, ceilings and floors of your home can waste up to 30 percent of the energy consumed by heating and cooling equipment. Sealing air leaks reduces energy loss, helps control environmental contaminants such as dust and moisture, and makes your home more comfortable.

**Q: Why is it so important to keep the return air filter clean on your heating and cooling system?**

**A:** Clean filters keep your heating, ventilation and air conditioning system healthy. They enable it to run more efficiently, keep repair costs to a minimum and reduce monthly energy bills. Clogged filters make the HVAC system work harder as it conditions the air in your home, which raises your energy bill and shortens the life span of the equipment.

**Q: What is the proper temperature to set my thermostat?**

**A:** In the winter, 68 degrees when you are home, and 63–65 degrees when you're gone. In the summer, 78 degrees when you are home, and 81–83 degrees when you're away. For each degree above or below the recommended setting that you set your thermostat, you potentially can save 5–8 percent on your electric bill.

This is where a programmable thermostat really can help lower energy usage, by automatically changing the settings for you. Once you program the desired settings into the thermostat, you no longer have to remember to manually change the settings before you leave your house.

**Q: How much is enough insulation?**

**A:** In our part of the country, the 2012 Energy Code standards call for an insulation value of at least R-38 in the attic and R-17 on exterior walls.

Insulation is what resists the flow of heat into your home during the summer and out of your home in the winter. The higher the R-value of your insulation, the greater the resistance to heat flowing through it.

Most older homes do not have this level of insulation. However, it is relatively easy to add more insulation to most attics to increase the R-value. Walls are another story. Unless you are planning on tearing into your walls as part of a remodeling project, it is difficult and expensive to increase their level of insulation.

## WHAT IS



**SMARTHUB IS** Hamilton County EC's 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](http://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

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME**  
ends at 2 a.m., Sunday, November 5.  
Remember to set your clocks back one hour.

MARTIN WAHLBORG | ISTOCK.COM

**Power Tip**  
When you're going to sleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10–15 degrees. Doing so for eight hours can save 10 percent on heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat makes it easy to "set it and forget it!"

DZIEWUL | ISTOCK.COM