



MESSAGE  
FROM  
GENERAL  
MANAGER

CODY  
LASATER

## Merry Christmas From Hamilton County EC

**THE HOLIDAYS ARE** a time of reflection. I'm grateful for my own family as well as my co-op family at Hamilton County Electric Cooperative. We're driven by a sense of mission and purpose, and our team feels a strong connection to our community and our members because we live here too.

While many of our community-focused programs and activities ramp up this time of year, we have several programs and services in place to help our members year-round. I'd like to remind you about some of these offerings in hopes you'll find them beneficial.

We hope you take advantage of our smartphone app, SmartHub, which empowers you to monitor your electricity usage and pay your energy bill through your phone.

One of the most important investments we make is in our local youths. Hamilton County EC awards over \$10,000 in scholarships to students annually. And each year, through our Government-in-Action Youth Tour program, we send high school juniors



and seniors to Washington, D.C., for an immersive weeklong experience of democracy in action.

At the heart of these programs is you—the members we proudly serve. Looking back, I'm grateful for so many wonderful community partners and for the positive impact we can continue to make.

This holiday season, I wish you and your loved ones peace, joy and prosperity. Speaking on behalf of our team at Hamilton County EC, I know the future will be bright because of you. ■



AQUARTS STUDIO | ISTOCK.COM

## Watch Out for Fa-la-la-la Fakes

**WHETHER YOU'RE BUYING** lights to trim the tree or power tools to wrap as gifts, beware of bogus bounty this holiday season.

Many home products are illegally counterfeited, placing the purchaser—or the recipient of the perilous present—in danger of using faulty electrical equipment that doesn't meet safety standards.

As you do your holiday shopping, inspect your purchases for a mark from a reputable product safety testing organization, like CSA International or UL. Here are some tips to help you spot illegal counterfeiting.

If the product has an unbelievably low price, it's probably a fake. Compare the prices and warranties of similar products.

Touch and examine the product. Counterfeits are often light and feel cheaply made.

Check for misspellings or unclear printing on labels, packaging and instructions.

Poorly designed or unclear packaging with only partial illustrations could be a sign of a fake.

Look for missing items in the product box and for items that appear different from those described on the packaging.

Don't count on the retailer to weed out the offending merchandise. Even reputable vendors can be duped. ■

# Happy Holidays

From Hamilton County Electric Cooperative

Our offices will be closed Friday, December 23, and Monday, December 26.

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## Questions about energy usage? Call us first.

As your **trusted energy adviser**, your co-op is here to help. Make us your first call for questions and information.

**(254) 386-3123**  
**hamiltonelectric.coop**

**HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

### CONTACT US

112 E. Gentry St., Hamilton, TX 76531

P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531

**Local** (254) 386-3123

**Toll-Free** 1-800-595-3401

**Web** hamiltonelectric.coop

### General Manager

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.

### LOCAL

(254) 386-3123

### TOLL-FREE

1-800-595-3401

### ABOUT HAMILTON COUNTY EC

HCEC owns and maintains more than 4,000 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 12,000 members in Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills and San Saba counties.

### PAYMENT OPTIONS AND LOCATIONS

**Online** at hamiltonelectric.coop

**Call** 1-877-833-4031 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



CHARLES MANN | ISTOCK.COM



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**  
Wednesday,  
December 7

**National Wreaths Across America Day**  
Saturday,  
December 17

**Hanukkah begins**  
Sunday,  
December 18

**Christmas**  
Sunday,  
December 25  
Our offices will be closed December 23 and 26 in observance of the holiday.

ALBERTO POMARES | ISTOCK.COM

## Don't Ignore Your Water Heater

**YOU PROBABLY NEVER** see it, but your water heater works hard all year round to make sure your family can take hot showers, rinse caked-on food off of dishes and wash your clothes at any temperature you choose.

During the winter, however, the water heater works even harder. Cold weather means it has to spend extra energy to heat water. Extra showers, laundry and dirty dishes during the holiday season mean heating more tanks of water to keep up.

So don't ignore it. Like any appliance, your water heater needs attention and maintenance to stay in good working condition.

**Take a look.** Most homeowners don't look at their water heaters until there's a problem, but a glance every now and then could keep those problems at bay. If the outside of the tank is rusting or if water is leaking from it or you see rusty water stains on the floor surrounding it, call a plumber right away.

**Reset the temperature.** It's easier than you think to accidentally raise or lower the temperature setting on a water heater, just by knocking it with a mop while you're cleaning the floor, for example. Verify that the appliance is set to 120 degrees. You'll notice a difference in the water temperature in the shower if it's too low or too high.

**Insulate the water heater.** Insulating the pipes and tanks will keep heat inside the tank and prevent it from escaping into the air. Consider investing in an inexpensive water heater blanket, usually made from foil or fiberglass. It will help the tank maintain a consistent temperature. A tip: Leave it on year-round.

**Call for service.** An annual flush will remove sediment and minerals that can build up in the tank and reduce the water heater's efficiency and life span. ■

# Merry Christmas From Your Co-op's Member Services Team

HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE employs local people who work to serve our members. Even with technology in place empowering you to address most matters online, your co-op still has smiling faces behind its counters and at the other end of our phone lines—something you may appreciate even more during the Christmas season.

Our member services team is solely responsible for assisting Hamilton County EC members with their electricity inquiries. As the face and voice of our cooperative, this dedicated group is always ready to help. That personal connection when signing up for service, learning about rebate opportunities or having your billing questions answered is what this caring bunch enjoys most about their jobs.

Many of them are Hamilton County EC members themselves, sharing power lines with the membership. When your electricity goes out, so does theirs. They do everything they can to provide the best service possible for your best interests and their own because we are all members. Meeting members' needs in the quickest and safest way is their No. 1 goal.

You may be interested to know that when these amazing men and women aren't helping Hamilton County EC members, they're taking their children to 4-H meetings, attending Friday night football games and simply enjoying their community over the holiday season.

Hamilton County EC is committed to the people we serve, and our member services department exemplifies that commitment. Not only do they strive to help, but they work to make sure our members know we are all Hamilton County EC family.

As family, you're always welcome to give us a call or stop by your cooperative offices to ask questions about your electric service or just to say merry Christmas. ■



DRAGONIMAGES | ISTOCK.COM



RON BAILEY | ISTOCK.COM

## Pecan Pie Muffins

- 1 cup chopped pecans**
- 1 cup brown sugar**
- ½ cup flour**
- ½ teaspoon baking powder**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium-size bowl, stir together pecans, brown sugar, flour, baking powder and salt.
2. Add melted butter, eggs and vanilla to bowl and stir to mix well.
3. Spoon batter into a foil-lined muffin pan. (Batter will stick to regular paper muffin cups.) Fill each cup about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Bake 20–25 minutes.

**MAKES 12 MUFFINS**

 Find this and more delicious recipes online at [TexasCoopPower.com](https://www.texascooppower.com).

# Community Calendar

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

## Comanche

**Comanche County Christmas Synchronized Light Show**, through January 1, Comanche County Courthouse square, 101 W. Central Ave. Tune your radio to 87.9 FM.

**Comanche Ice Skating Rink**; December 3–23; 5–9 p.m. Fridays, 1–9 p.m. Saturdays, 1–5 p.m. Sundays; Comanche Community Center, 100 Indian Creek Drive. A synthetic ice rink for our community and visitors to enjoy. Ice skates will be provided for all skaters.

**Comanche County Museum Christmas Open House**, December 3, 1–4 p.m., Comanche County Museum. Class of '57 band, snacks and desserts.

**Santa's Workshop**, December 10, 1–5 p.m., inside Homestead Hall, 101 N. Houston St. Assortment of festive arts and crafts for children to enjoy. Free.

**Pictures With Santa**, December 10, 3–6 p.m., Comanche County Courthouse square, 101 W. Central Ave.

**Lighted Christmas Parade**, December 10, 6 p.m., Comanche County Courthouse square, 101 W. Central Ave. Theme: "Vintage Christmas."

**Jingle Mingle**, December 11, noon–1 p.m.,

Comanche Depot, 304 S. Austin St. A time to mingle and pick up tickets for the Tour of Homes.

**Tour of Homes**, December 11, 1–4 p.m.

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

## Copperas Cove

**Krist Kindl Market**, December 1–4, City Park. The event kicks off Thursday evening with a tree lighting ceremony. Music, vendors, food and carnival. Free admission.

**Christmas Lighted Parade**, December 3, 6 p.m.

**Copperas Cove Junior High Band Concert**, December 5, 6 p.m., Lea Ledger Auditorium, 400 S. 25th St.

**S.C. Lee Junior High Band Concert**, December 6, 5:30 p.m., Lea Ledger Auditorium, 400 S. 25th St.

**Copperas Cove High School Voices of Cove Christmas Concert**, December 8, 7 p.m., Lea Ledger Auditorium, 400 S. 25th St.

**Copperas Cove High School Band Concert**, December 9, 6 p.m., Lea Ledger Auditorium, 400 S. 25th St.

**Crossroads High School Winter Graduation**, January 20, 6 p.m., Lea Ledger Auditorium, 400 S. 25th St.

**Copperas Cove High School Voices of**

**Cove Pop Show**, January 26, 7 p.m., Lea Ledger Auditorium, 400 S. 25th St.

For information about Copperas Cove events, contact 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

For information about Evant events, contact P-Cay Burkhalter at (254) 791-5441 or [pcay@buenavistawildlifesafari.com](mailto:pcay@buenavistawildlifesafari.com).

## Gatesville

**Chamber Market Days**, December 10, 8 a.m.–1 p.m., Cotton Belt Depot, 2307 S. Highway 36. Browse vendors' offerings, including fresh fruits and vegetables, metal decor, honey, salsa, jellies, baked goods, plants, homemade crafts, and furniture.

**Christmas Parade**, December 10, 10 a.m., Main Street.

For more information about Gatesville events, call the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce at (254) 865-2617, visit [gatesvilletx.info](http://gatesvilletx.info) or download the Explore Gatesville app.

## Goldthwaite

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

**Parade of Lights**, December 3, 6–7 p.m., downtown.

**People's Choice Art Show**, December 3, 4:30–8 p.m., downtown.

**Photos With Santa**, December 3, 2–4 p.m., welcome center, 1219 Fisher St. \$5 per child.



**Gingerbread House Contest**  
December 1  
LAMPASAS

FG TRADE LATIN | ISTOCK.COM

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

## Hamilton

### Circle T Arena, 4007 W. Highway 36.

For information on upcoming events, visit [circuitarena.net/calendar](http://circuitarena.net/calendar) or call (254) 386-3559.

### Holiday Tree Lighting, December 1, 6–8 p.m., historic downtown square.

**Boots and Bling, December 3, 5:30–11 p.m., Circle T Arena.** Dinner, dance, and silent and live auctions. For more information, visit [friendsofhamiltonisd.com](http://friendsofhamiltonisd.com).

**Winter Wonderland, December 3, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., Hamilton County Historical Museum, 115 W. Henry St.** Event includes a bake sale, appearances by Santa and Mrs. Claus, and a silent auction. The museum grounds will be decorated with Christmas trees, lights and inflatables. Booth rentals are \$20 each. For more information, call (254) 688-0165.

For more information about Hamilton events, visit Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center at [hamiltontexaschamberofcommerce.com](http://hamiltontexaschamberofcommerce.com) or on Facebook, call (254) 386-3216, or email [hamiltonchamber@tx@gmail.com](mailto:hamiltonchamber@tx@gmail.com).

## Hico

**Christmas Market, December 3, 10 a.m.–6 p.m., downtown.** Vendors featuring hand-made goods, boutique items, jewelry, knives and much more.

**Lighted Parade, December 3, downtown.**

**Girls Night Out, December 15, downtown.**

For information about Hico events, visit [hicochamber.com](http://hicochamber.com) or [facebook.com/hicochamberofcommerce](https://www.facebook.com/hicochamberofcommerce), call (254) 434-1249, or email [chamberhico@tx@gmail.com](mailto:chamberhico@tx@gmail.com) or [bluestarhico@gmail.com](mailto:bluestarhico@gmail.com).

## Kempner

For information about Kempner events, call Kempner City Hall at (512) 932-2180.

## Lampasas

**Gingerbread House Contest, December 1, 4–7 p.m., Lampasas County Museum, 303 S. Western Ave.** Theme: "I'll Be Home for Christmas: A Tribute to First Responders."

**Lampasas Trade Days, December 3–4, January 7–8; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.; 2646 E. Highway 190.** Merchandise includes antiques, collectibles, quilts, crafts, folk and fine art, new home furnishings, shabby chic furniture, new clothing, jewelry, candles, handbags, electronics, iron works, outdoor decor, plants, tools, and food concessions. For more information, contact Barbara Postel at (512) 734-1294.

**Carol of Lights, December 3, downtown courtyard square.** Activities include vendors, antique car show and Snow Queen contest. Hosted by Vision Lampasas. For more information, email [info@visionlampasas.org](mailto:info@visionlampasas.org).

**Lighted Christmas Parade, December 3, 6:30 p.m.** For more information, email [info@visionlampasas.org](mailto:info@visionlampasas.org).

**Tour of Homes, December 4.** Hosted by Lampasas County Museum. For information, contact the museum at (512) 556-2224 or [lampasasmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:lampasasmuseum@gmail.com).

**Christmas on the Creek, December 10, 5–8 p.m., W.M. Brook Park, 310 U.S. Highway 281.** Hosted by Vision Lampasas. For more information, email [info@visionlampasas.org](mailto:info@visionlampasas.org).

**William Beckmann, December 10, 7–11 p.m., Putters & Gutters Family Fun, 2341 U.S. Highway 281.** Tickets \$15 in advance; \$20 day of at Putters & Gutters or at [outhousetickets.com](http://outhousetickets.com).

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

## Lometa

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

## Pearl

**Pearl Bluegrass, December 3, January 7; doors open at 7 a.m.; Pearl Community Center; 6301 FM 183.** Stage show starts at 1 p.m. Acoustic bands (no electric instruments) and musicians are invited. No fee to play on the stage or watch the stage shows. For information on how to sign up for the stage show, contact Ronald Medart at (254) 865-6013. Kitchen open 11 a.m.–5 p.m. RV parking with full hook-ups available on a first-come, first-park basis, 30 amps are \$20 and 50 amps are \$25.

**Pearl Book Cottage, December 3, January 7; 10 a.m.–5 p.m.** Junk-in-your-trunk and farmers market around the outside of the book cottage. Vendor booth \$5. Books and resale items will be available inside the building. For information, call Kay Pruett at (254) 865-5864.

## Pidcoke

For more information about Pidcoke United Methodist Church events, visit [pidcoke-umc.org](http://pidcoke-umc.org).

## San Saba

**Sip N' Stroll Wine Tasting Event, December 10, 2–6 p.m., visitors center, 113 S. High St.** Hosting visiting and local wineries who will be pouring tastes of their delicious wines in our downtown businesses. Ticket holders will receive a wine glass and tote bag.

**Lighted Christmas Parade, December 10, 6:30 p.m., downtown.**

For more information about San Saba events, contact the San Saba Visitor Center at (325) 372-5200 or the chamber at (325) 372-5141 or visit [sansabachamber.org](http://sansabachamber.org).

**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](mailto:donna.harris@hamiltonelectric.coop), write to HCEC at P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531, or call 1-800-595-3401.



### POWER TIP

All I want for Christmas is a programmable thermostat so I can save as much as 10% on my heating costs.

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