



The Pandemic Has Cut Demand for Electricity

We've adapted to keep power flowing reliably

MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

STEVE YOUNG

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has affected the electric utility industry, including electric cooperatives in Texas, as many folks continue to work from home and reduce their outside activities—as they have for several months. The result is a reduction in electricity consumption, decline in greenhouse gas emissions and shifts in power generation markets.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration in July forecast a 4.2% decrease in electricity consumption this year compared to 2019 because of the pandemic and its economic effects. The most dramatic toll can be seen in the commercial sector, where the EIA predicted a 7% decline in electricity sales as businesses closed or scaled back operations because of the virus. The agency forecast a 5.6% decline in the industrial sector for the year.

But there's a glimmer of good news: The EIA predicted a 12.2% decrease in energy-related carbon dioxide emissions for the year, depending on the course of our nation's economic recovery.

The pandemic is also disrupting power generation resources in ways few could have predicted. The EIA reported that it expects natural gas consumption to decline by 3% in 2020, mainly driven by lower consumption in the industrial sector because of efforts to slow the spread of the virus and a reduction in economic activity. Natural gas use is expected to further decrease in 2021, by 5%, because of a rise in natural gas prices.

Consequently the use of natural gas in power generation will likely decline, and coal is expected to become more competitive again for electricity generation, according to the EIA's forecast. The use of coal in the generation sector had been falling, accounting for 24% of production in 2019 and 18% in 2020, but it's expected to rise slightly, to 21%, in 2021 because of the pandemic.

The use of renewables in electric power generation continues to climb, and that pattern seems likely to continue, with renewables expected to make up 22% of the national electric power generation portfolio in 2021.

Natural gas produces about 50% of Texas' electricity generation currently, according to the U.S. Department of Energy; coal 32%; renewables 7%; and nuclear 9%. Other sources are petroleum and hydropower, making up a very small percentage each.

Whatever the future holds, remember that Hamilton County EC is always looking out for its members. From weighing the best power sources that help guarantee economical prices on electricity to sharing ways to conserve electricity, your cooperative is on your side. ■



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Residential electricity sales, however, are expected to remain steady, as lower electricity use in the first quarter of the year for heating has been offset by more consumption during the remainder of 2020 as people spend more time at home due to the pandemic.

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative continues to closely monitor the situation and stand up for you, our member-owners. Whether you are working at home or cutting back expenses at the workplace, the lights will stay on.



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Your Unique Source of Power

YOU HAVE A UNIQUE story to tell about yourself because you are part of an electric cooperative community. But if you're like a lot of electric cooperative consumer-members, you might not feel you know enough to tell that story well. So here's some help.

About 1 in 10 Americans receive their power the way you do, from an electric co-op. Electric cooperatives belong to the people they serve—that would be you and your neighbors—and were first formed in the 1930s because major utilities, owned by investors wanting to make a profit, ignored rural America. They didn't think there was enough money to be earned there. So people in rural communities joined forces and formed locally owned electric co-ops.

October is National Co-op Month, the time of year when cooperatives across the country celebrate the many ways co-ops are unique and, more important, the members they serve. This year we're focusing on our ties to the local community. Your co-op was built by the community, for the community, so let's take a look at what that means for you, the members of the co-op.

Your co-op is here to stay. Since the co-op belongs to the members it serves with safe, reliable, affordable energy, it's not going to move out of the country or even across the state. It's staying right where it is.

Your co-op knows you. No two cooperatives are alike. Across the country there are more than 900 electric co-ops. Because each of those co-ops belongs to the people who live there, the co-op listens to the community it is a part of. Whether it's working with the latest energy efficiency technologies or keeping the electric grid safe and secure, your electric co-op can offer solutions that make the most sense in your area.

Your co-op cares about your community. The co-op's top priority is to power the community. It is not owned by faraway, or even nearby, investors looking only for a good return on their money. Your co-op partners with local organizations on community events, fundraisers, youth programs and more. We're your friends and neighbors. By investing in the local community, your electric co-op supports economic development and prosperity for all, right here at home.

And these are just a few ways you and your electric cooperative are one of a kind. ■

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

CONTACT US

420 N. Rice St., Hamilton
P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531
Local (254) 386-3123
Toll-Free 1-800-595-3401
Web hamiltonelectric.coop

General Manager/CEO

Steve Young

Board of Directors

Sam Campbell, President, District 6
Dusty Duncan, Vice President, District 5
Jack Gardner, Secretary-Treasurer, District 2
Jack Caldwell, District 1
Melvin Eilers Jr., District 7
Ervin Koerth, District 3
Robert Straley, District 4

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

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. Highway 190, Kempner

Lometa City Hall

109 W. San Saba St., Lometa

VISIT US ONLINE

hamiltonelectric.coop



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OCTOBER HOLIDAYS

World Teachers' Day
Monday,
October 5

Global Hand-washing Day
Thursday,
October 15

Boss's Day
Friday,
October 16

Halloween
Saturday,
October 31

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Save Electricity While Working Remotely

AS AMERICAN FAMILIES and businesses transition to remote work to slow the spread of COVID-19, many have seen a surge in home energy use—and in electric bills. Simple money-saving steps can help lower your bills without jeopardizing safety or comfort.

Recommended energy saving tips include:

- ▶ Program your thermostat to maximize energy savings. Setting your thermostat 1 degree lower when heating or 1 degree higher when cooling can reduce energy use by up to 5%.
- ▶ Do only full loads of laundry and wash with cold water. Using warm water instead of hot can cut a load's energy use in half, and using cold water saves even more.
- ▶ Air-dry dishes. This can cut your dishwasher's energy use by up to 50%.
- ▶ Replace incandescent lightbulbs with LEDs. Lighting can amount to up to 12% of monthly energy use. LEDs can cut lighting costs by 75%.
- ▶ Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use. Small appliances and electronics use energy even when not in use. When powered on, game consoles, TVs and similar electronics are responsible for up to 12% of a home's energy use. ■

Hamilton County EC Board of Directors



Sam Campbell, President

District 6 is the area south of U.S. Highway 84 in Mills County and west to the cooperative boundary line.



Dusty Duncan, Vice President

District 5 is the area west of U.S. Highway 281 in Lampasas County, including all areas in San Saba and Llano counties.



Bob Gardner, Secretary-Treasurer

District 2 is the area east of U.S. Highway 281 in Hamilton County.



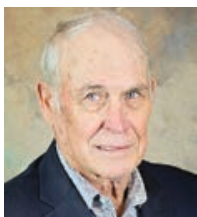
Jack Caldwell

District 1 is the area west of U.S. Highway 281 in Hamilton County.



Melvin Eilers Jr.

District 7 is the area north of U.S. Highway 84 bounded on the east by the Hamilton County line and on the west by the cooperative's boundary line.



Ervin Koerth

District 3 is the area in Coryell County.



Robert Straley

District 4 is the area east of U.S. Highway 281 in Lampasas County.



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HCEC Director Election Results

ON AUGUST 7 the membership of Hamilton County Electric Cooperative elected the following members to its board of directors:

Robert Straley, District 4

Sam Campbell, District 6

Melvin Eilers Jr., District 7

The board met August 27 and elected officers. The following members comprise the board of directors of Hamilton County EC:

Sam Campbell, president, Goldthwaite, District 6

Dusty Duncan, vice president, Lometa, District 5

Bob Gardner, secretary-treasurer, Hamilton, District 2

Jack Caldwell, Evant, District 1

Melvin Eilers Jr., Priddy, District 7

Ervin Koerth, Gatesville, District 3

Robert Straley, Lampasas, District 4



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Straight Shooting on Safety

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Texans love to hunt. There's suspense and excitement and escape from the daily routine. Always remember the 10 commandments of shooting safety:

Always point the muzzle of your gun in a safe direction.

Treat every firearm or bow with the same respect you would show a loaded gun or nocked arrow.

Be sure of your target.

Unload firearms and unstring conventional bows when they're not in use.

Know your safe zone-of-fire and stick to it.

Handle firearms, arrows and ammunition with care.

Control your emotions when using weapons.

Wear hearing and eye protection.

Don't consume alcohol or drugs before or while handling firearms or bows.

Never use electrical insulators or transformers as targets.

Hamilton County EC encourages you to always practice safety.

Safety Tips for Hunters

THIS HUNTING SEASON we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.

- ▶ Take notice of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
- ▶ Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- ▶ Know where the power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.
- ▶ Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines might not be as visible.
- ▶ Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes into contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- ▶ Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any nonelectrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews. ■



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Cool Off Your Winter Energy Bill

YOU'VE BUDGETED FOR holiday gifts, meals and maybe a vacation—but with money tight, that doesn't leave much room 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:**

Window coverings: Are you using your windows to capture heat? Open drapes and shades to catch free solar heat during the day. Close them at night to keep the heat inside.

Thermostat: Set your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower if comfortable).

Got tape? Though not as durable as foam, rubber or vinyl, you can use nonporous tape (such as cloth first-aid tape) to keep cold air from squeezing 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, in door frames and attic hatches, and to seal inoperable windows. Reinforce it with staples if needed.

Move the air: Run ceiling fans on low and reverse the rotation to pull air up in winter. This keeps warm air circulating without cooling you.

Free vents: Your heating, ventilating and air conditioning 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 will save 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 its coils every year, and set the temperature between 34 and 37 degrees; leave the freezer between zero and 5 degrees. Keep the freezer full because 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 12% of the average home's energy use. Set your water heater temperature no higher than 120 degrees. For households with only one or two members, 115 degrees works.

There are other ways to conserve energy, too. Remember, you 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 home's temperature a bit and wear a sweater to stay warm, or place an extra blanket on the bed at night. Find more ways to save at togetherwesave.com. ■

Community Calendar

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative is actively monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic. The following community event information was gathered in late August with sincere hopes that these events will be held. Please contact event sources directly to confirm event dates and details.

Comanche

Farmers Market, October 3, historic Comanche square.

Comanche Garage Sale, October 17, city of Comanche.

Trunk or Treat, October 31, historic Comanche square.

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

Copperas Cove

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

Evant

For information about Evant events, contact Charlotte Looney at cben1115@hotmail.com or (512) 750-9870.

Gatesville

For information about Gatesville events, go to visitgatesvilletx.com or gatesvilletx.info, or call the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce at (254) 865-2617 or Gatesville Convention and Visitors Bureau at (254) 865-8951.

Goldthwaite

Goldthwaite Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Hunters Appreciation Chili Lunch, November 7, Goldthwaite Pavilion. Lunch at 11 a.m., gun drawing at 2 p.m., and raffles and live music 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

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 about upcoming events, visit circletarena.net/calendar or call (254) 386-3559.

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

Hico

For information about Hico events, visit hicoctxchamber.com or facebook/[hicochamberofcommerce](https://www.facebook.com/hicochamberofcommerce), call (254) 434-1249, or email chamberhicoctx@gmail.com.

Kempner

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

Lampasas

Lampasas Trade Day, October 3, 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, great

food, and concessions. For information, contact Barbara Postel at (512) 734-1294.

Squared Silly, a child-friendly Halloween event, October 31, 5–7:30 p.m., downtown square. Hosted by Vision Lampasas, this event provides safe, fun activities for youngsters while allowing nonprofits to raise funds. Come enjoy a hayride; haunted house; bounce houses; costume contests for kids, families, and pets; and other fun games and activities. Small fee for activities. Most proceeds support local nonprofit organizations. For more information contact Diana Hodges at (512) 525-1871.

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

Lometa

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

Pearl

The Pearl Bluegrass First Saturday Jam and Stage Show is canceled until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Succulent and Tropical Plant Sale and Junk-in-Your-Trunk Sale, October 3, 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Pearl Community Center parking lot on FM 183. The Pearl Book Cottage will be open and there will be free vendor spaces. Sales will also be at individual homes in the Pearl community, with maps available at the Pearl Book Cottage. Books, furniture, plants of all kinds, bedding, yard art, clothing, pictures and more. For more information, call (254) 865-5864 or (254) 865-9282.

Pearl Church of Christ Homecoming Catered Barbecue Dinner, October 18, 10:30 a.m., Pearl Church of Christ, 6790 FM 183. Dinner served following the service. Please bring any old photos you may have of Pearl and drive your vintage car. For more information, call (254) 865-9282.

Pidcoke

For information about Pidcoke United Methodist Church events, call (254) 300-6342 or visit pidcoke-umc.org.

San Saba

San Saba County Historical Museum, each Saturday through October, 1:30–4 p.m., housed within Mill Pond Park, 110 S. Thomas Stewart Drive. To schedule a tour

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 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@hamiltonelectric.coop, write to HCEC at P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531, or call 1-800-595-3401.



Squared Silly
October 31
LAMPASAS

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during the week, email info@sansabamuseum.org. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

Pecan Capital Trade Day, October 3, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., San Saba County Courthouse, 500 E. Wallace St.

Handcrafted bowls, beautiful crafts, baked goods, jellies, tamales and more each month. For vendor information, call (325) 372-4029 or email sansabaedc@gmail.com.

San Saba County Friends of Animals Spaghetti Supper, October 3, 4–7:30 p.m., San Saba Civic Center, drive-thru or deliv-

ery. Fundraiser in support of SSCFOA's spay, neuter, rescue and adoption programs. Enjoy a delicious spaghetti dinner prepared again this year by chefs Don and Gaby Lindquist.

KSSB Fall Sweep Cleanup, October 10, 9 a.m.–noon, San Saba County Courthouse, 500 E. Wallace St.

Central Texas Food Bank Distribution, October 14 and October 28, 10 a.m.–noon, San Saba Civic Center. This will be a mobile (drive-thru) distribution.

San Saba County/Baylor Scott & White Blood Drive, October 20, noon–6 p.m., San Saba First Baptist Church, 208 W. Wallace St.

For more information about San Saba events, contact the San Saba Visitor Center at (325) 372-5200 or the chamber of commerce at (325) 372-5141, or visit sansabatexas.com/calendar or sansabachamber.org.