

CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,
President / CEO

Membership Matters: Why your presence is so important

The foundation of any great organization lies within the strength of its decision makers. Strong leaders are knowledgeable in their field and strive to make a positive impact. At Taylor Electric, our decision makers are our members and our member-elected board of directors. On April 16th, we will host our 81st Annual Meeting of the Membership and I hope you can make it! This is your opportunity to fellowship with other members, learn more about Taylor Electric, and participate in the board of director election process. Your participation in annual meeting is a vital part of our cooperative future. By attending,



members receive front-row access to pertinent business information, and they have an opportunity to make informed decisions that will guide the co-op into new ventures. For example, it was our members who led the charge in launching fiber internet and who sought to move billing from Alabama to our local offices. The implementation of these improvements would not have occurred if it had not been for members voicing their thoughts and ideas. Unlike other organizations, our members have direct contact with our board of directors and

our employees to discuss anything they see as important.

To effectively understand the needs of our membership, we need to hear your voice; exercising your right to vote is the easiest way to accomplish this. Our budgets, staffing decisions, and goals for the next year are all approved by your board of directors and passed along to us, your staff, who act upon those decisions. Your attendance at annual meeting and well-informed vote helps guide our steps into future endeavors.

We recognize the importance of your time and want to offer members more than a just a meeting.

Our 81st annual meeting will be an

“Your participation in annual meeting is a vital part of our cooperative future.”

interactive experience that allows for time to visit with one another while gaining insightful knowledge into your co-op. In conjunction with the business meeting, members can participate in our health fair, visit employee booths, collect capital credit checks, and we always serve a hot lunch.

As we move further into 2020, we are energized by the innovation and opportunity we see on the horizon. We know that, with our membership, we will continue to push boundaries and provide member-centric services to further improve our membership’s quality of life. We hope you will join us April 16th, at the Abilene Convention Center for our 81st Annual Meeting of the Membership as we continue to push the boundaries of what it means to be your local cooperative.

CEO CORNER

SAVE THE DATE!



TAYLOR EC ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, April 16
Abilene Convention Center



226 County Road 287 • P.O. Box 250
Merkel, TX 79536

PRESIDENT/CEO

Ryan Bartlett

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cecil Davis, Board Chairman, *Zone 1*
Leland Robinson, Board Vice Chairman, *Zone 1*
David McFall, Secretary-Treasurer, *Zone 2*
Garland Carter, *Zone 2*
Richard Petree, *At-Large*
Kathryn Rainey, *Zone 3*
Gay Simmons, *Zone 3*

HANDY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

Online

taylorelectric.com

Taylor Electric App

Available on your Apple or Android device

By Phone

(325) 793-8500

Payments credited immediately.

In Person

Office hours:

7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

Merkel location:

226 CR 287, Merkel 79536

Abilene location:

7966 Highway 83, Abilene 79602

Payments credited immediately.

Drop Box

Merkel office at front gate

Abilene office next to first door on the left

Payments credited next business day.

Pay Stations

- **United Supermarket**, 521 S. Access Road, Clyde
- **Food Plaza #4**, 109 S.E. Fifth St., Cross Plains
- **Cash Saver**, 155 Sayles Blvd., Abilene
- **United Supermarket**, 2160 Pine St., Abilene
- **Check Express**, 906 E. Broadway Ave., Sweetwater

Payments credited next business day.

Springtime Savings

EVEN THOUGH IT SEEMS LIKE IT WAS JUST CHRISTMAS, SPRING IS ALREADY HERE.

As the weather warms up and the days get longer, it's a good time for homeowners to take a few steps that could save energy—and money—throughout the spring and summer. Here are eight ideas to get you started.

1. Tune up your air conditioner. AC weather is likely still a couple of months away, but if you put off having your equipment serviced until it's hot outside, you run the risk of a breakdown on a sweltering summer day. A qualified technician

can replace your central air conditioning system's filters, make sure it has enough refrigerant and clean its evaporator coils. A pro also can spot problems in the making and recommend repairs so they don't put your unit out of commission.

2. Open your windows.

Natural ventilation costs nothing. On warm spring days, invite spring breezes and sunshine in. It's a great way to air out the house as you begin your annual spring cleaning.

3. Turn off the heat. And delay your use of the air conditioner. Unless March and April are especially warm this year, enjoy the fresh spring air for as long as you can.

4. Seal gaps in the dry-wall on the indoor side of your exterior walls. You'll find them around electrical outlets, cable lines, windows and doors. The U.S.

Department of Energy estimates that you can save up to 30% on your energy bills by sealing air leaks around your house.

5. Service your large appliances. The refrigerator is one of your home's biggest users of energy. Keep it clean on the inside and out—including the back of it, where coils collect dust and sap the unit's efficiency. Clean the lint out of your dryer's vent.

6. Bring in sunlight. During daylight hours, switch off artificial lights, open the blinds, and use windows and skylights to brighten your home.

7. Use ceiling fans. Cooling your home with ceiling fans will allow you to raise your thermostat several degrees when it gets warm outside. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort.

8. Cook outside. On warmer spring days, keep the heat out of your home by using an outdoor grill instead of an indoor oven.



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Meter Tampering Can Kill

TAMPERING WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER can cost you your life.

No, the crime won't land you on death row when the electric cooperative—whose technicians are trained to spot electricity theft—reports you to the police. In that case, you'll be charged with theft, possibly sent to jail and definitely slapped with fines of about triple the money you thought you could save by rigging your meter.

But an attempt to bypass or alter an electric meter can result in shock, fire, explosion and even electrocution. And if you're lucky enough not to get hurt, you'll still leave the tampered meter in a state that's dangerous to others, including the electric cooperative employee who reads or maintains it.

Plus, you're driving up electric costs for your neighbors, just as shoplifters force stores to inflate the prices of their products to cover losses from theft.

The cooperative does not have to catch you red-handed to turn you over to the authorities. In fact, the law assumes that a person who benefits from the use of stolen electricity has tampered with the meter.

If you're aware of a meter on our lines that you suspect has been tampered with, please let us know. You could save a life.



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📍 7966 Hwy 83 Abilene, TX 79602
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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A PROPOSITION ON THE BALLOT

To compile Taylor Electric Cooperative Inc.’s existing Articles of Incorporation and 8 amendments into a single Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation, with clerical corrections

MAIL-IN BALLOT NOTICE

Members who cannot attend Taylor Electric Cooperative’s annual meeting on April 16, 2020 can cast their ballots on this proposition through mail. Each Cooperative member is entitled to one vote. Absentee ballots are available upon request beginning March 5, 2020. Call (325) 793-8500 to have a ballot sent to your home or business. You will receive a prepaid envelope for the ballot return. Absentee ballots must be postmarked by 5:30 p.m., April 10, 2020 to Taylor EC headquarters and will be deposited into a secure ballot box, which will be opened by election administrators.

BALLOT ITEM CONTENT AND PROPOSED CHANGES

1. To compile existing Articles of Incorporation and eight (8) amendments into a single Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation.
2. To clarify Article VIII of Part II: Move existing language from the end of subpart (c) and relocate at the left margin so it is clear it modifies the opening statement of Article VIII, not just subpart (c). This was the original intent given the context and corrects a clerical formatting error.
3. To renumber the second duplicate Article XI of Part II as Article XII.

A full copy of the Articles of Incorporation with the proposed changes described above is available to view on Taylor Electric’s website at taylorelectric.coop under “Your Coop / Annual Meeting”. A full copy may also be obtained at Taylor EC headquarters. You may also call (325) 793-8500 to have a copy sent to your home or business.



CFL or LED?

Compact fluorescent lightbulbs may soon become history, like incandescents before

INCANDESCENT LIGHTBULBS—THE ONES THAT WE INSTALLED IN TABLE LAMPS AND overhead fixtures since the beginning of electricity—have become relics since the U.S. government ordered that manufacturers stop making most of them in 2014. Is the compact fluorescent lightbulb next?

The twisty CFL bulbs, which can last up to five years and are much more energy efficient than the old incandescents, were once hailed as the latest and greatest energy and money saver for household lighting. But LEDs—which are often built right into light fixtures, so you’ll never have to change a bulb again—have proved to be a better energy value.

Both CFLs and LEDs use up to 75% less energy than incandescents. But LEDs last much longer than CFLs—up to 25,000 hours compared with 10,000 or so.

Here’s why LEDs are quickly becoming America’s favorite lightbulb:

- ▶ LEDs don’t get hot to the touch while they’re on., unlike incandescents, which release about 90% of their energy as heat. CFLs release about 80% of their energy as heat, but LEDs release almost no heat, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

- ▶ Unlike CFLs, LEDs contain no mercury, so their environmental impact is minimal.

- ▶ With an LED fixture that has the lighting element built right into it, no bulb is visible and no bulb will ever need changing.

- ▶ LEDs come in a wide range of wattages, styles and hues, and many are compatible with dimmer switches.

- ▶ LEDs are made with very sturdy materials and components that can stand up to harsh weather, shocks, vibrations and abrasion—one reason they’re increasingly adopted for roadside applications.

- ▶ The price of LED bulbs has dropped from about \$100 a bulb five years ago to around \$3 or less today.

As the popularity of LEDs grows, the CFL, like the incandescent, could become a museum piece—a relic of a bygone and less energy-efficient era.

Public Cellphone Charging Ports Invite Hackers

YOU MIGHT WANT TO GET IN THE HABIT of making sure your phone is fully charged before your next visit to the airport—because it turns out that public cellphone charging ports can put your information at risk.

According to findings from forensics experts, when you plug your phone into a USB charging hub at an airport, shopping mall or other public place, hackers may be able to access your device’s data. Those convenient chargers are an easy target for criminals.

To protect yourself and your data, invest in your own charger and carry it with you when you’re away from home.

The same goes for plugging in while riding in a taxi or with a ride-hailing service. Ports in some cars automatically sync with your phone, which means the car could download your data—from playlists to financial records.

In cars with a hard drive or data storage mechanism, hackers could steal more than playlists—they could steal your identity with the information they collect from your phone.

Connecting to public Wi-Fi is risky as well because anyone who is on the same network could gain access to your data.



Join the Fight To Stop Scammers

Consumers are urged to report potential scams to utilities and authorities



OUR INCREASINGLY CONNECTED WORLD IS GIVING SCAMMERS more opportunities to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers, which means local authorities, utilities and other businesses are working overtime to keep people informed. To help protect yourself, your family or your business from being victimized, heed the longtime maxim about vigilance, “If you see something, say something.”

The Federal Trade Commission has received reports about scammers impersonating utility companies in an effort to get money. Reporting these scams helps authorities fight them.

Electric cooperatives are among the businesses and consumer organizations supporting Utilities United Against Scams. The international consortium of electricity, natural gas, water and sewer providers and trade and industry associations is sharing information on payment scams, identity theft, and sales and service schemes to gain a leg up on the criminals.

Impostor scams are the most common type of fraud reported to the FTC. Impersonators call homes and small businesses demanding payment for supposedly delinquent bills and threatening to terminate service. This type of scam becomes more common during peak heating and cooling seasons, when its practitioners prey on consumers’ need to maintain utility service amid temperature extremes.

Variations on the scheme are also becoming more common. Rather than making an initial claim that a consumer owes an outstanding balance, some scammers are now claiming an overpayment is the reason for a phone call to a consumer. They will make contact in an attempt to get banking information so they can process a supposed refund.

Never give banking information over the phone unless you place the call to a number you know is legitimate.

There has also been an uptick in door-to-door scams by people claiming to represent utility providers like your electric co-op. Representatives knock or ring the doorbell offering to replace or repair a meter or other device, or they solicit personal information to sign up a consumer for programs that they claim could reduce their energy bills.

They may try to charge you for the phony service, sell you unnecessary products, collect personal information for use in identity theft or simply gain entry to steal valuables.

High-pressure demands are a common tactic in many of the schemes. Urging immediate decisions or actions—such as immediate payment, particularly by a specific method like a gift card, wire transfer, cellphone or third-party app—should raise serious red flags.

Utility-connected scams are common because utility services are so integral to daily life. Lighting, heating, water and sewage services are all essential, so any threat of service disconnection can provoke a lot of anxiety in a potential victim.

Your first defense is maintaining awareness of your account status, including knowing whether balances are up to date. This is becoming more important as scammers use more automatic dialers, or robocalls, to phish for potential marks.

If the caller insists you have a bill past due, that’s a big red flag. Contact the utility company directly using the number on your paper bill or on the company’s website. Don’t call any number the caller gave you because it’s likely to be answered by someone who is part of the scam.