

# CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,  
President / CEO

## Winter Reliability

While living in South Dakota, I learned a few things about winter weather: the need for good snow tires, how to measure snow in feet - not just inches, and the importance of teaching your children how to shovel the driveway at an early age. The Big Country will never be home to the snowstorms of our northern neighbors, but whether you are in South Dakota or in West Texas one critical element remains: always be prepared. As temperatures continue to drop and with potential winter storms on the horizon, rest assured that Taylor EC is equipped to handle the winter weather.

Maintaining and improving our electric infrastructure is not a winter project but rather a year-round endeavor to ensure our members have safe, reliable electricity. We are continually seeking ways to improve and safeguard our system. To do this, we begin by inspecting our infrastructure using state-of-the-art technology and a nation-wide standard called Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) to monitor all electric load on our system and isolate various devices to help troubleshoot problems. In addition to SCADA, Taylor EC utilizes an Outage Management System (OMS) to predict and verify outages. This OMS allows system control operators to look at any meter so they can pinpoint a potential trouble device or area of the system. The information is provided to our engineering and electric operations departments who develop then implement a plan to make any needed system improvements.

This technology assists us in identifying potential problems within our system while our crews identify and resolve any potential threats in the field. One such threat can be tree limbs or surrounding objects contacting or falling into powerlines and disrupting service. Taylor EC implemented a year-round tree trimming program, a preventative program to maintain a clear boundary around lines and equipment. A well-maintained boundary can help

reduce outages during heavy ice or rainstorms by preventing objects from encountering our system.

These preparations and others help safeguard our system from the potentially negative impacts of the winter season. Ice can quickly form on powerlines and key overhead infrastructure making it particularly difficult to make repairs during an outage. Powerlines are normally round, but as ice builds up it changes the shape and aerodynamics of the line and can cause it to gallop or dance. This ripple effect can shake entire spans of powerlines potentially causing outages and creating a dangerous situation for property and our linemen. Additionally, as heavy ice accumulates and then begins to melt it can cause powerlines to jump, in which the line will rebound upward after a sudden loss of ice and change in weight. While we can't predict how our area will be affected this winter, our preparations and system improvements allow us to reduce potential outages and provide you with better service when these storms arrive.

Our Texas weather tends to oscillate from one extreme to the other and often during short periods of time. Our focus on keeping the lights on, however, never waivers. Our advanced technology, rigorous preventative maintenance programs, and robust system improvements allows Taylor EC to provide our membership with safe, reliable electricity regardless of the weather. I sincerely appreciate you giving us the opportunity to serve you, and best wishes to you and your family on the upcoming holiday season.



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## Decorate Safely This Holiday Season

**THE HOLIDAY SEASON** offers great moments for building memories, but when it comes to decorating, it's also the perfect time to think about safety.

Fire departments look to the holiday season as a time for increased vigilance because the mix of lighting, candles and electrical wiring can be a recipe for tragedy.

Holiday decorations are designed for temporary use, so don't let them become permanent fixtures in your yard. The safety certification company UL classifies holiday lighting as seasonal products designed for no more than 90 days of use. While the actual holiday season runs about six weeks, weather and busy schedules mean outdoor displays are sometimes put up early and taken down late, exposed to the elements the entire time.

It's always important to inspect holiday lights each year before you put them up. Check for pinches or torn areas on wiring insulation. Exposed wiring and any signs of fraying or pinching are indications of weakened wiring, which can cause a fire.

The U.S. Fire Administration, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and nongovernmental safety organizations also remind consumers that extension cords, whether labeled for indoors or outdoors, are also designed for temporary use only. Household wiring is a solid metal wire, but extension cords are strands of thin wires that are twisted together. That pliability can allow them to break down over time, increasing the chance that they could fail.

Candle use also increases the risk of accidental fires, and experts suggest consumers consider battery-operated LED candles as safer alternatives. According to the National Fire Protection Association, candles start 2 out of every 5 home fires each year, and about 100 Christmas tree fires occur each holiday season, causing about \$12 million in damage annually.

You can reduce your risk by placing your live Christmas tree away from heat sources like vents and space heaters and topping off its water reservoir daily.

Taylor Electric Cooperative joins our local firefighters, the NFPA and the CPSC in urging you to consider safety as you decorate and enjoy the holiday season with family and friends. ■

## Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

### CONTACT US

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### President/CEO

Ryan Bartlett

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## 24/7

## Outage Hotline

For information and  
to report outages,  
please call us.

**LOCAL**

(325) 793-8500

### HANDY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

#### ONLINE

[taylorelectric.com](http://taylorelectric.com)

#### TAYLOR ELECTRIC APP

Available on your Apple or Android device.

#### BY PHONE

(325) 793-8500

Payments credited immediately.

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**Hours** Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

**Merkel** 226 CR 287, Merkel 79536

**Abilene** 7966 Highway 83, Abilene 79602

Payments credited immediately.

#### DROP BOX

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**Abilene** office next to first door on the left.

Payments credited next business day.

#### PAY STATIONS

• Cash Saver, 155 Sayles Blvd., Abilene

• United Supermarket, 2160 Pine St., Abilene

• Check Express, 906 E. Broadway Ave.,  
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- ▶ Ensure proper installation for optimal performance and to avoid air and water leaks.

**Here's a guide to some of the window jargon you may come across.**

- ▶ U-factor: the rate of heat loss. The lower the U-factor, the better a window resists heat flow.

- ▶ Solar heat gain coefficient: the fraction of incident solar radiation. A low SHGC means a window transmits less solar heat.

- ▶ Visible transmittance: the amount of visible light transmitted. The higher the VT, the more light is transmitted.

- ▶ Air leakage: The lower the AL, the less air will pass through cracks.

- ▶ Condensation resistance: how well a window resists condensation inside. The higher the rating, the more resistant to condensation a window is.

Having an understanding of energy-efficient properties helps make choosing new windows easier. **The DOE recommends the following when selecting new windows based on the climate:**

- ▶ In colder climates, consider gas-filled windows with low-e coatings to reduce heat loss. In warmer climates, select windows with coatings to reduce heat gain.

## What About the Windows?

**WINDOWS CAN MAKE** or break the energy efficiency of a home. Heat gain and loss through the glass is responsible for 25%–30% of residential heating and cooling energy consumption, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

When selecting windows for new construction or replacing a home's existing windows, choose the most efficient options you can afford.

If that's not an option for you, your windows could benefit from some simple fixes to increase the efficiency and comfort of your home. **Here are some suggestions from the DOE:**

- ▶ Check windows for air leaks. Then add caulk and weatherstripping to seal any leaks.
- ▶ Add window treatments and coverings to further seal out the elements.
- ▶ Add solar film to the interior side of windows.
- ▶ On the exterior, add shading, such as awnings, outside blinds or overhangs.

If windows need to be replaced, there are many options to consider, and some are more energy efficient than others. **The Efficient Windows Collaborative offers up tips for picking panes in Texas.**

- ▶ Make sure windows meet your local energy code, and look for the Energy Star label.
- ▶ Look for energy-efficient properties on the National Fenestration Rating Council, or NFRC, label.
- ▶ Compare annual energy costs for a typical house by using a computer simulation on the EWC website, [efficientwindows.org](http://efficientwindows.org).

- ▶ Choose a low U-factor for better thermal resistance in colder climates.
  - ▶ Look for a low SHGC. Low SHGC windows reduce heat gain in warm climates.
  - ▶ Select windows with both low U-factors and low SHGCs to maximize energy savings in temperate climates with both cold and hot seasons.
  - ▶ Look for whole-unit U-factors and SHGCs, rather than center-of-glass U-factors and SHGCs. Whole-unit numbers more accurately reflect the performance of the entire product.
- The benefits of high-performance windows can go beyond heating and cooling savings. **High-quality windows can:**
- ▶ Improve visibility and the infiltration of daylight.
  - ▶ Enhance comfort by controlling drafts and reducing direct sunlight with proper coatings.
  - ▶ Reduce condensation with warm interior surfaces and insulating frames.
  - ▶ Reduce the fading of fabrics and furnishings by blocking ultraviolet radiation with coatings.
  - ▶ Reduce peak heating and cooling loads, which may allow for the downsizing of heating and cooling equipment or a reduction in overall energy costs.
  - ▶ Make the home quieter by preventing noise from penetrating. ■



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## Smart Options for Your Home Security

**MANY PEOPLE ARE** beginning to realize the convenience and comfort that smart home technologies provide. A smarter home can save time and reduce stress, especially with a home assistant that can integrate all your smart devices, like the Amazon Echo or Google Home.

One motivator for many people is safety. Homeowners want peace of mind when it comes to the protection of their family, and smart security devices are a great way to make your home more secure.

Most smart home security options can be accessed through smartphone apps. So whether at work or on vacation, you can keep an eye on your home 24/7. If you're looking for ways to update the security of your home, these relatively new technologies are worth checking out.

### Smart Security Cameras

Security cameras are one of the basics of technology used to monitor your home. Many models are weatherproof, making them suitable for indoor or outdoor use. Wireless cameras are a great option, but wired versions are less expensive. There are many smart security cameras on the market that offer a variety of features, such as cloud storage, built-in floodlights or motion-activated sensors.

Camera prices vary based on features and capabilities, ranging from less than \$50 to several hundred dollars.

### Smart Doorbells

If you want to see who's at your front door, a smart doorbell can show you. Many smart doorbells can capture footage of up to a few hours at a time or retain footage of just before a disturbance was detected. Smart doorbells are similar to smart security cameras but are built into the doorbell instead of a separate camera. A key difference is that a smart camera captures footage all the time, while the smart doorbell only captures footage when it detects motion or when someone rings the doorbell. Quality versions start at about \$100 and go up depending on features.

Depending on your needs and budget, these smart security options can significantly improve your home security and make it easier for you to relax knowing you can monitor it right from the palm of your hand. ■



**Happy Thanksgiving**  
Thursday,  
November 26

Our offices will be closed Thursday–Friday, November 26–27, in observance of the holiday.

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