

# CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,  
President / CEO

## The Value of Electricity Continues to Shine

How many of us remember dropping into Taylor Electric Cooperative's office with our parents and grandparents to pay the light bill? Whether you do that in person, by mail or online today, paying your monthly bill does a lot more than just keep the lights on.

Electricity keeps us connected to our modern world. Consider all the necessities and conveniences we enjoy in part because of the power lines running to the electric meters outside our homes.

Count up your TVs, computers, printers, gaming consoles and smart devices. Whether they get used every day or just occasionally, the electricity that keeps them working comes from Taylor EC.

Have you looked around your kitchen lately? Between the coffee maker and toaster and the microwave and electric skillet, a lot of us have added several kinds of small appliances.

If you've got a craft nook or workshop, the power tools and machines you use to cut and shape your projects are either plugged in or recharged from the outlets connecting your household wiring to Taylor EC.

You use co-op power to run all these devices, and we still keep the lights on. The good news is, even as we rely more on electricity, it's still a bargain, especially compared to other things we pay for regularly.

Costs for medical care, residential rental rates and education have increased at substantial rates. The same is true for groceries, clothing, gas and many other items.

Even though the cost of a kilowatt-hour has risen, at the average rate of about 1% since 2015—half the rate of medical, rent and education costs—co-ops across the country have reported a decline in average residential use

per household since 2010. That means we're doing more things with less energy.

When it comes to value, electricity is a clear winner, and we're always looking for ways to work with you to make it even better. That's why Taylor EC urges energy efficiency, encourages you to look for Energy Star-rated appliances and promotes technology designed to give members more control over their electricity use.

Energy performance dashboards, smart thermostats and power strips, and appliance settings that shift most water heating, laundry and dishwashing outside of peak rate periods help reduce the co-op's overall power demand. They also give you opportunities to control or even trim your monthly utility bills. And it's going to become even more important as digital devices and internet-connected technologies become even more prevalent in our lives.

Technology and the gateways that keep it working use electricity, so you'll depend upon Taylor EC for more than the power that keeps the lights on. For more energy tips, visit our website at [Taylorelectric.com](http://Taylorelectric.com).

That's why we're always working to provide service that's reliable, keep costs as low as possible, and make it even more valuable to our members—you, your family and your neighbors.



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## Summertime Saving Strategies

**ANOTHER LONG, HOT** Texas summer is on its way. Here are several ways to use energy more efficiently and save money on electricity during the months ahead.

**Change your air conditioning system's filter** every three months during cooling season—or more if your neighborhood is especially dusty. Dirty filters stop air from flowing through, which causes your AC to work harder—and use more energy—as it keeps your home cool.

**If you have a programmable thermostat**, have it run the AC only during part of the day. There's no need to keep your house comfortable if nobody's in it. Running the AC at night could be less expensive than cranking it up during the day, when it's hot and demand for electricity is at its peak.

**Use ceiling fans.** If you don't have any, consider it a good investment. Install them in bedrooms, the kitchen and the living room. Fans move the air around, cooling people nearby. They might allow you to nudge the AC a degree or two higher.

**Close the drapes.** A sunny day might be pretty to look at through a window, but hot rays can heat the air in your home and force the AC to work overtime. Keep curtains and blinds closed on bright, hot days—especially on south- and west-facing windows.

**If you have a pool**, wait until after dark to run your pool pump. Operating it during off-peak hours when fewer people are using a lot of appliances at once can save money on your energy bill.

**Switch your central air conditioning system's fan to "auto."** The "on" setting forces it to run constantly—even when your house is already cool. ■

## Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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### President/CEO

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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.

#### IN PERSON

**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

**Merkel** office at front gate.

**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., Sweetwater

Payments credited next business day.

#### VISIT US ONLINE

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



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[TexasCoopPower.com/taylor](http://TexasCoopPower.com/taylor)



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## Start With a Home Energy Audit To Save

**WANT TO MAKE HOME EFFICIENCY UPGRADES** but don't know where to start? A home energy audit could help you identify solutions that could save you 5%–30% on your energy bill, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

A home energy audit can pinpoint where your home is losing energy and what you can do to save money. An auditor will also help find health and safety issues in your home.

Certified home energy auditors should go through the following steps in a home energy audit, according to the DOE.

1. Analyze the past year's bills to determine base energy consumption.
2. Interview you, the homeowner, to learn about problems and how the home operates.
3. Explain the audit process.
4. Conduct an inspection of the home's exterior.
5. Do a health and safety inspection.
6. Conduct an inspection of the home's interior.
7. Assess electrical system safety concerns.
8. Inspect combustion appliances.
9. Perform a blower door test and/or thermographic scan to detect sources of energy loss.
10. Analyze findings and create a comprehensive home energy report to show which upgrades are best for your home and your potential energy savings.

The DOE offers some common recommendations after a home energy audit:

Conduct whole-home air sealing to reduce air leakage and drafts.

Add insulation to your home's attic, foundation or walls to prevent heat loss.

Seal and insulate ducts in unconditioned spaces.

Remove or repair any parts of the home with internal moisture or mold to improve air quality and reduce deterioration.

Improve the efficiency of heating, cooling and hot water equipment.

Install home ventilation, smart thermostats, LEDs, smart power strips, Energy Star-certified appliances and other efficient technologies that improve home performance.

If having an auditor come to your home isn't for you, there are some great online options that can give you valuable insight into improving your home's energy efficiency. Check out [energy.gov](http://energy.gov), [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov) and [togetherwesave.com](http://togetherwesave.com).

The right combination of improvements to your home will depend on the age and quality of current equipment, the local climate, and your home energy goals. ■

# Use Caution With DIY Electrical Work

WITH FOLKS SPENDING MORE time at home, more and more homeowners have been inspired to tackle do-it-yourself projects.

Before you dive in, you should know that thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured and killed as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes every year, according to Electrical Safety Foundation International.

Data from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission shows that there are nearly 400 electrocutions in the U.S. each year. About 15% of electrocutions are related to consumer products. Wiring hazards accounted for about 14% of those deaths.

Additionally, an estimated 360,900 residential building fires are reported to U.S. fire departments each year, and they caused an estimated 2,495 deaths, 13,250 injuries and \$7 billion in property losses. The leading cause of the largest fires was electrical malfunction.

Homeowners taking on DIY projects are especially at risk when they do not have the training or experience needed to safely perform home electrical work. Working with electricity requires planning and extreme care to prevent injury, death and dangers down the road.

ESFI and Taylor Electric Cooperative recommend hiring a qualified, licensed electrician to perform any electrical work in your home. **However, if you do decide to do it yourself, consider the following safety guidance:**

- ▶ Make an effort to learn about your home's electrical system so that you can safely navigate and maintain it.
- ▶ Never attempt a project that is beyond your skill level. Knowing when to call a professional may help prevent electrical fires, injuries and fatalities.
- ▶ Always turn off the power to the circuit that you plan to work on by switching off the circuit breaker in the main service panel.
- ▶ Be sure to unplug any lamp or appliance before working on it.
- ▶ Test wires before you touch them to make sure that the power has been turned off.
- ▶ Never touch plumbing or gas pipes when performing a do-it-yourself electrical project. ■



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## Kitchen Appliances That Save Time and Energy

**WHETHER YOUR OVEN** and stovetop are powered by gas or electricity, it's no secret that they consume more energy than smaller countertop appliances, like slow cookers and toaster ovens. In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup.

If you're looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying appliances for your kitchen.

**Air fryers** have become popular, and consumers have a lot of good things to say about these handy little machines. Air fryers use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food—meaning little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals. Air fryers are available in various sizes, and prices range from \$40 to \$200-plus.

**Electric griddles** have certainly been around for a while, and they offer several benefits for any home chef. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes for griddles vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30.

**Pizza** brings people together, so why not consider a pizza maker for your kitchen? These compact countertop machines are an inexpensive alternative to a costly brick oven, and they use less energy than a traditional oven. Plus, most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas, quesadillas and more. You can purchase a pizza maker for \$30–\$150 or more. ■