

# CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,  
President / CEO

## Call Us First

I don't know about you, but at my house, we're bombarded with information. Among the TV, daily piles of junk mail, email, social media, the radio and even random phone calls, it just never seems to end. Everybody seems to be selling something, and it can be hard to know who to trust.

But one thing I know for sure: You can trust your neighbors. So call us first.

At Taylor Electric Cooperative, we're not in the business of making profits, as other utilities are. We're in the business of powering communities and empowering our members. We're your friends and neighbors, and we live right here in the same community. We go to the same stores, churches and restaurants, and we work for you.

We know consumers have more options than ever nowadays. You can produce your own electricity at your home or business, store that power, and use it to power electric vehicles or even your house.

As a nonprofit, community-focused cooperative that was built by the very communities it powers, we have a duty to share our specialized energy knowledge with our members. We want to make sure you have all the very best information when it comes to making decisions about electricity that can impact your future.

So if you get a flyer about solar power and wonder if it might be right for your home, call us first. Everybody's situation is different, and your co-op can give an unbiased assessment of yours.

Thinking about ordering a whole-home generator? Call us first. We can help make sure you buy reputable products from reputable sources that are sized and installed correctly to safely power your home.

Wondering if it's feasible to add an electric vehicle to your garage? Call us first. We can recommend a trusted professional who can price out and install a home charging system.

Want to save on your electric bill? Call us first. We know our part of Texas better than anyone and can help you find inexpensive ways to conserve power at your home.

Whatever you do, trust your friends and neighbors at Taylor EC. Call us first.



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# Easy Steps to Greater Efficiency

**DO YOU WANT TO SAVE** money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? A typical American family spends around \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills, according to the Department of Energy. Much of that money is wasted through leaky windows and ducts, old appliances, or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. And you won't have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

## Where To Start

Improving the envelope of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tightly sealed home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and ductwork can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air.

By placing weatherstripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around pipes, dryer vents, fans and outlets helps to seal the envelope and allows for greater energy efficiency.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LEDs can make a big difference and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. LED bulbs typically have an operational life span of 30,000–50,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours for most incandescents. According to the DOE, you can save \$75 each year by replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with LEDs.

## Wrapping Up Savings

Installing a blanket around your electric water heater can reduce standby heat losses and save you 7%–16% in water heating costs. For an investment of \$35, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about an hour. To avoid overheating, don't set the thermostat above 120 degrees on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure your heating and air conditioning system is performing at an optimal level. Regularly checking, changing or cleaning the filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money. HVAC professionals recommend cleaning or replacing system filters monthly.

## Take Control of Your Energy Savings

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was customized for the current season and your family's schedule? This is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine-tune the temperature during particular hours of the day.

Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules, and internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and adjust automatically. Most models come with an override option so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programming. ■

## Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

### CONTACT US

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**Phone** (325) 793-8500

**Web** [tayloelectric.com](http://tayloelectric.com)

### 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

## 24/7

## Outage Hotline

For information and to report outages, please call us.

**LOCAL**

(325) 793-8500

### HANDY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

#### ONLINE

[tayloelectric.com](http://tayloelectric.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

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



Check us out at

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



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## Interested in Solar? Let's Talk!

**TAYLOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** is committed to helping our members find affordable, reliable and safe energy options. Here are some considerations to help you evaluate whether a rooftop solar array is right for you.

### Is rooftop solar a good option for me?

**Maybe.** Whether and how much you will benefit from a residential solar array depends on:

- ▶ How much you pay for electricity and how much you use.
- ▶ Your roof.
- ▶ Federal, state and local incentives for solar development.
- ▶ Your rooftop solar provider.

Taylor EC addresses many of these concerns on our Energy Services page at [taylorelectric.com/energy-services](http://taylorelectric.com/energy-services), where you will find FAQs and a solar calculator to aid you in the decision process.

### Is my house suitable for a rooftop solar array?

**Maybe.**

- ▶ Does your roof face south or west, and is it shaded?
- ▶ Will you need to replace your roof sometime during the life of the panels? If so, you should replace your roof first.
- ▶ Have you explored all of your energy efficiency options? Your electric cooperative can help you reduce your energy use and properly size your array.

### Will solar panels provide electricity during an outage?

**No.** Without a battery system and a smart inverter, most rooftop arrays cannot provide power during outages.

### What should I know before I sign a contract?

**It depends on whether you purchase or lease an array.** If you're purchasing a rooftop solar array, be sure to ask:

- ▶ What is the total installed (turnkey) cost of the system?
- ▶ What is the payback period? What are the assumptions

underlying that estimate? Are those assumptions consistent with my situation?

- ▶ Are tax credits available? If so, how much and who gets them?
- ▶ Does the company offer warranties on panels and inverters?
- ▶ What are the details of the service contract?
- ▶ What type of maintenance do the solar panels need? Who is responsible for that?
- ▶ What are the interconnection requirements with my co-op? Will I still get an electric bill?

### If you are leasing panels in a rooftop array, be sure to ask:

- ▶ What is the upfront cost of the system?
- ▶ Are there other customers in the vicinity with comparable systems? How much electricity do their systems produce?
- ▶ Can the lease be transferred if I sell the house?
- ▶ What are the interconnection requirements from my co-op, and who is responsible for meeting them?

### How can I protect myself and my investment?

**Research.**

- ▶ Are the installers certified by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners to install photovoltaic systems?
- ▶ When was the company established? How many residential solar arrays has it installed since then? Can the company provide a list of its projects and references for them?
- ▶ Ask for all details, promises and claims in writing and take time to review them before signing any contract.

If you are still wondering if solar panels are a good fit for your family, please contact Taylor EC—we will gladly answer your questions. ■



SERVICES FOR  
**LIVING.**  
CONNECTIONS FOR  
**LIFE.**

Before purchasing solar, give us a call or visit our website. **We're here to help you.**

**(325) 793-8500**

**TaylorElectric.com**



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