Navarro County Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 616 • Corsicana, Texas 75110 • (903) 874-7411

The Challenge To Build a Better World

2012 Marks the International Year of Cooperatives

MESSAGE FROM MANAGER BILLY JONES

In today’s uncertain economic times we may wonder if it’s possible to build a better world. We want our children and neighbors to succeed. We need a strong and sustainable community. But how do we build a better world? History tells us that when we band together, we can do anything. That’s where cooperatives come into play.

This month we kick off a yearlong celebration marking the International Year of Cooperatives 2012. Our theme, “Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World,” resonates loud and clear in today’s uncertain economic times. That’s one way electric cooperatives build a better world.

Electric cooperatives may only serve 12 percent of Americans, but our lines cover 75 percent of this great nation. By banding together, we deliver power to 42 million rural Americans in 47 states—and we’re not finished.

Through our national electric co-op association, co-op linemen are volunteering overseas to deliver electricity to 2 billion people living without power. Over the last 50 years, these efforts have provided light and hope to 2 billion people living without power. Over the last 50 years, these efforts have provided light and hope to 100 million people in more than 40 countries. That’s one way electric cooperatives build a better world.

During the International Year of Cooperatives 2012, it’s important to remember that co-ops put people first. We brought electricity to this community to improve our quality of life and keep young people from leaving to seek opportunities in electrified cities. Nearly three-quarters of a century later, we still want our children to succeed. That’s why we support the Government-in-Action Youth Tour and provide scholarships for local students. These budding leaders will help us build a better world.

We also want to celebrate our legacy of innovation. Co-ops work together—cooperatively—to find solutions to improve service for our members. Can you imagine profit-driven utilities working together to keep bills affordable?

At Navarro County EC, innovation takes many forms, from our energy-efficiency and renewable-energy efforts to transforming the electric grid. Each innovative step forward builds a better community for all of us.

Whenever a community faces a need—a challenge to making life better—the cooperative business model comes into play. By putting people first and innovating to meet member needs, cooperative enterprises build a better world. To learn more, visit www.go.coop.

THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

1. VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP. Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL. Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

3. MEMBERS’ ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION. Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than the capital invested.

4. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE. Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with external sources, it is done so on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintain the cooperative’s autonomy.

5. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION. Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6. COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES. Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY. While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities.
Another near miss in August demonstrates again that Texas is riding too close to the line when it comes to electricity supply.

When summer’s unrelenting heat prompted millions of Texans to run their air conditioners, the demand for electricity came dangerously close to outrunning available supply. This scenario was almost a repeat of the one in February, when demand for heating during one of the coldest snaps in recent years came close to triggering unplanned power interruptions. What’s going on here?

First, both weather events were extreme. The heat August 1-4 topped 100 degrees in almost every part of the state, putting a strain on power plants feeding the grid controlled by ERCOT, the Electricity Reliability Council of Texas, which manages the flow of electric power to 85 percent of the state’s customers. The drought that has gripped the state has also made the problem worse, hobbling some power plants that don’t have enough available water to cool their turbines.

Weather won’t always be as extreme, and the drought—we all hope and pray—will break. But there are other factors that figure into the power demand picture that won’t go away: the state’s growing population and the strong business climate.

The more people who move to the state, the more electricity customers there will be. And Texas continues to grow, adding almost 5 million people from the 2000 to the 2010 census. A lot of that population growth is because people are coming here to work.

Texas’ economy appears to be weathering the national recession better than other states. That business strength increases demand for electricity to power factories and stores.

Building new generation facilities is not easy. It never has been. But the lack of a comprehensive national energy policy, which has been stalled in Congress for years, and an increasingly stringent set of regulations from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have made it harder recently. Uncertainty about direction of the country’s energy future makes investors leery of putting money up to pay for new generation.

If we don’t get our energy priorities straight, the next big heat wave or cold snap could result in more than a near miss—it could leave you in the dark.

Tell your representatives in Washington that energy policy is too important to leave on the back burner.

If you need new windows, roofing or air conditioning, try to buy them before the end of 2011. That’s when the federal government’s tax credits for energy-efficient home improvements will expire.

Bigger, better tax credits for insulation, roofs, doors, windows, heating/air conditioning and water heaters—up to $1,500—expired at the end of 2010. But the government extended smaller tax credits through this year.

They include a credit for 10 percent of the cost, up to $500, for biomass stoves; heating, ventilating and A/C; insulation; metal and asphalt roofs; nonsolar water heaters; and windows and doors.

Through 2016, you can take a credit of 30 percent of the cost with no limit for geothermal heat pumps; small, residential wind turbines; and solar energy systems.

You’ll need to have the product installed by December 31 to claim the credit on your 2011 taxes. For more details, visit www.energystar.gov.
Has Your Information Changed?

It is important that Navarro County Electric Cooperative have the most up-to-date contact information for all members. If you have recently changed telephone numbers, mailing address or gate combination, the co-op needs you to contact us at (903) 874-7411 or 1-800-771-9095, or include a note with your monthly payment, and we will update your record.

Providing NCEC with your 911 service location address and contact information will help the co-op serve you better. Please remember to keep NCEC informed if your contact information has changed.

ONLY CRACKPOTS TAKE POTSHOTS

It doesn’t take a crack shot to hit an electric insulator or transformer, just a crackpot. During hunting season, careless shooters taking potshots at electric equipment can cause major problems for your electric cooperative.

Here’s why:

• You are inconveniencing your fellow member-customers whose electricity has been disrupted.

• It could even be a matter of life and death to someone on a life-support system or to someone who is hit by a stray shot.

• Damage to electrical equipment is very expensive to repair. Lines may be cut or weakened from a shot, and they may sag or break, becoming a severe hazard for anyone who comes into contact with the line.

• Broken insulators can cause power outages that are hard—and expensive—to find. An insulator cracked by a bullet can remain online for a long time before it finally fails.

Enjoy your sport, but be a responsible hunter. Teach your children to respect power lines, electrical equipment and guns so that they, too, will be responsible hunters.

Power Tip

Most computers come with a sleep mode feature for the CPU and monitor. Energy Star-rated computers power down to a sleep mode that consumes 70 percent less electricity than a computer without that feature.

Note: Screen savers are not energy savers. Using a screen saver may use more energy than not using one, and it interferes with the energy-saving sleep mode.
Don’t Let Hazards Haunt Halloween!

Halloween is the most festively frightening night of the year. Here are some safety reminders to help keep yours danger-free:

- As you’re decorating, make sure to check for cracked sockets, frayed, loose or bare wires and loose connections.
- Fasten all outdoor lights securely to trees and other firm supports. Do not use nails or tacks that could puncture insulating cords and damage wires.
- Make sure decorative lighting is well ventilated, protected from weather and a safe distance from anything flammable, such as dry leaves and shrubs. Do not coil extension cords while in use or tuck them under rugs or drapes.
- Make sure all outdoor electrical lights and decorations are plugged into an outlet protected with a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). If your outlets aren’t equipped with GFCIs, have an electrician install them or buy a GFCI adapter plug. Don’t overload outlets with too many extension cords and strands of lights.
- Keep power cords off walkways and porches that trick-or-treaters might use. You don’t want them to trip.
- Leave the porch light on for trick-or-treaters, and be sure to turn out all spooky lights and decorations before leaving home or going to bed. This will also save energy.

For more tips visit www.safeelectricity.org.

Source: Electric Consumer