



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

BILLY P. JONES

## Serving Up Savings

**THE HOLIDAYS BRING** a frenzy of decorating, cooking and family gatherings, and amid the hectic hustle and bustle, you may receive higher-than-usual energy bills.

Keeping this in mind, I thought this month would be a good time to remind Navarro County Electric Cooperative members of a few efficiency tips to help lower your energy use.

Winter months can bring some of the highest energy bills of the year, but making minor, low-cost improvements, like adding weatherstripping around exterior doors and caulking around old, drafty windows can help.

You can also lower energy use by managing holiday lighting. LED holiday lights use as much as 88% less energy than incandescent lights. Even if you're already using efficient lighting, smart timers can help you save even more energy by connecting to a

oven is on. Take advantage of the extra warmth and give your heater a break. Lower your thermostat a degree or two before guests arrive. You can decrease energy use by 3% for every degree you lower the thermostat, and your guests will be more comfortable in a room that isn't overheated.

While entertaining family and friends, you can cook up energy savings by using small countertop appliances like microwaves, air fryers and slow cookers, which use much less energy than a stovetop or oven.

If you do use the oven, bake multiple dishes at once for maximal efficiency. After all, it takes as much energy to cook one dish as it does to cook several. While many recipes call for you to preheat the oven, it isn't always necessary.

Anything that needs to be baked or roasted longer than an hour doesn't need to be put in a preheated oven. Most modern ovens heat up very quickly—you don't need to run them a dozen extra minutes.

Turn the oven off a few minutes before the recipe's end time and allow the residual heat to finish baking the dish. When using the stovetop, match the pan size to the burner to maximize efficiency. And remember: Your cookware matters. Ceramic, cast iron and glass hold heat better than metal pans, so they will cook food faster using less energy.

I hope a few of these tips will be helpful this holiday



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smartphone app or voice assistant to program lights to turn on and off at set times. If you don't use smart home technology, you can still save energy by using traditional timers.

Additional easy ways to save during the holiday season include turning off overhead lights and using your LED-bedecked Christmas tree to illuminate your home. If you have a fireplace, remember to close the flue when you're not burning a fire to ensure heat doesn't escape up the chimney.

Entertaining this holiday season? Turn down the thermostat. When you have a crowd of people in a room, it can heat up pretty fast, especially if the

season. Remember, we're here to answer any questions you have about managing energy use or your monthly bills. With a little planning, you can find efficient ways to save on everything from holiday décor to your favorite recipes.

From your friends at Navarro County EC, we hope you have a wonderful holiday season. ■



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## NCEC To Award Scholarships

**NAVARRO COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** will award \$6,000 scholarships to six local students for the 2024–25 school year.

Applications are available online at [navarroec.com](http://navarroec.com) and must be received in our office no earlier than December 18 and no later than February 29, 2024. The scholarships must be used for fall 2024 and spring 2025 semesters. For more information, contact Mark Rash at (903) 874-7411, ext. 120, or [mrash@navarroec.com](mailto:mrash@navarroec.com). ■

## A Note on Line Items

**PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT** the Securitization Cost Recovery Factor line item on your Navarro County Electric Cooperative electricity bill includes securitized charges owned by Brazos Securitization (the bond issuer) and not Navarro County EC. Revenue generated from the securitized charges is used by the bond issuer to pay the securitized bonds issued December 14, 2022, by the bond issuer, pursuant to a financing order adopted by Navarro County Electric Cooperative on August 29, 2022, in accordance with the provisions of Subchapter D of Chapter 41 of the Texas Utilities Code. A portion of the proceeds of the securitized bonds were used by the bond issuer to purchase securitized property created under the financing order from Navarro County EC, which proceeds were, in turn, used by Navarro County EC to pay extraordinary costs and expenses arising out of the February 2021 winter storm. ■

## Navarro County Electric Cooperative

### CONTACT US

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P.O. Box 616, Corsicana, TX 75151

**Local** (903) 874-7411

**Toll-Free** 1-800-771-9095

**Email** [msdept@navarroec.com](mailto:msdept@navarroec.com)

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

### General Manager/CEO

Billy P. Jones

### Board of Directors

Ron L. Buckley, President, District 2

Kent Sheffield, Vice President, District 1

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Benny Melton, District 5

Julie Mraz, District 7

Gary Murphy, District 3

Bill Southard, District 4

**24/7**

**Outage  
Hotline  
Numbers**

For information and  
to report outages,  
please call us.

**LOCAL**

(903) 874-7411

**TOLL-FREE**

1-800-771-9095

### ABOUT NAVARRO COUNTY EC

NCEC owns and maintains more than 3,000 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 12,000 members in Ellis, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and Navarro counties.

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

### BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Online at [navarroec.com](http://navarroec.com)
- Through the SmartHub app
- By phone at 1-855-385-9975

(Phone payments are not accepted on the NCEC office line.)

### TEXAS CO-OP POWER

NCEC provides *Texas Co-op Power* and [TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com) to give you information about events, safety, special programs and other activities of your cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the co-op office.

### VISIT US ONLINE

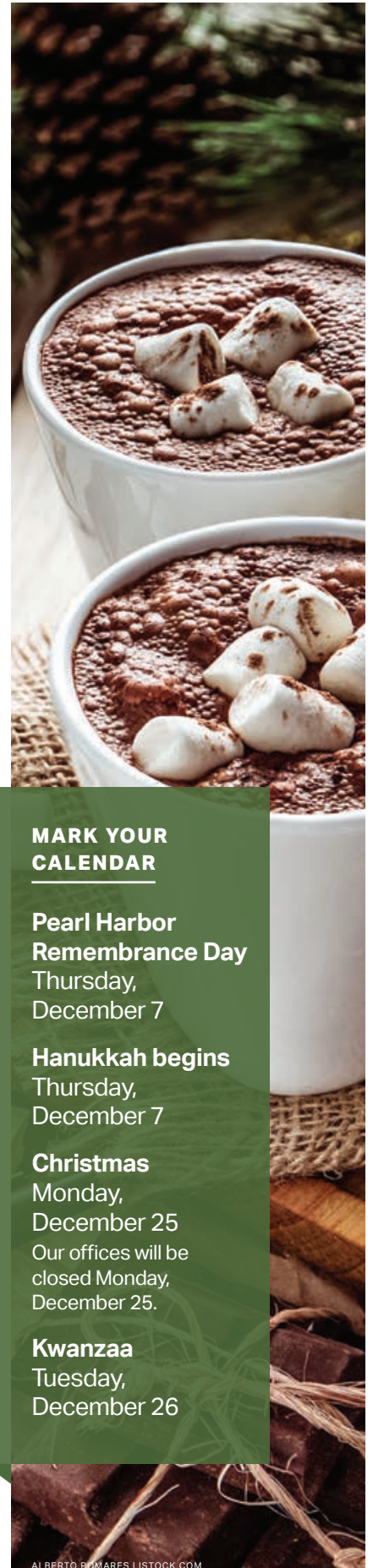
[navarroec.com](http://navarroec.com)



Check us out at  
[TexasCoopPower.com/navarro](http://TexasCoopPower.com/navarro)



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### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**  
Thursday,  
December 7

**Hanukkah begins**  
Thursday,  
December 7

**Christmas**  
Monday,  
December 25  
Our offices will be closed Monday,  
December 25.

**Kwanzaa**  
Tuesday,  
December 26

ALBERTO ROMARES | ISTOCK.COM

## Be Prepared for Winter Storms

**WHEN TEMPERATURES DROP** and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Winter storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Texans are affected by extreme winter weather at some point. Navarro County Electric Cooperative cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

**Stay warm.** Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using them, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

**Stay fed.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends having handy several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.

**Stay safe.** When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It's best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and don't travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling (903) 874-7411. You should also call 911.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can mean the difference between life and death. Navarro County EC is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. For more winter safety tips, visit [ready.gov/winter-weather](https://ready.gov/winter-weather). ■

# Keep Your Live Christmas Tree Fresh All Season

**IF YOU WANT** your live Christmas tree to stay fresh until New Year's Day, buy a really, really fresh one to start with.

If you buy one whose needles are already falling off, it's not going to last long. Plus, you can create a fire hazard if you place electric lights on a tree that's too dry.

**Here are some tips for buying a fresh tree and for keeping it healthy until you're ready to take it down:**

**Shop for your tree at a lot that stores the trees under a canopy and out of the sun.** If the trees are lying on the ground, notice if there's wet burlap between them and if the vendor has been hosing them down frequently during the day. If the trees are displayed upright, choose one that's standing in water or has wet burlap wrapped around the bottom of its trunk.

**The fresher the tree is when you buy it, the longer it will last.** Especially if the tree you buy has been imported from out of state, it was probably cut before Thanksgiving. If it's already drying out, it will sag, discolor and drop its needles quickly once you get it into your warm house.

**Put it up as soon as you get it home.** Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2 inches from the base of the trunk. If you can't put it up right away, cut the 2 inches off and prop the tree up in a bucket of water, and keep the bucket full.

**Add water to the tree stand several times on the first day.** After that, keep the reservoir as full as you can. Check it every day.

**Find a place for your tree that's away from heating vents and the fireplace.** The closer it is to a heat source, the quicker it will dry out. A heat source too close to the tree causes more than 1 in every 5 Christmas tree fires.

**Take the tree down as soon as the needles start to fall off of it.** Get rid of the tree promptly. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in a home or garage or placed outside against the home. ■



PETE VAN VLEET | ISTOCK.COM



MARIHA-KITCHEN | ISTOCK.COM

## Cinnamon Crackles

**½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened (no substitutions)**

**½ cup shortening**

**1 cup sugar**

**½ cup packed brown sugar**

**1 egg**

**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

**½ teaspoon almond extract**

**2½ cups flour**

**1 tablespoon ground cinnamon**

**2 teaspoons baking soda**

**2 teaspoons cream of tartar**

**2 teaspoons ground nutmeg**

**½ teaspoon salt**


**2 teaspoons grated orange zest**

**1 teaspoon grated lemon zest**

**Additional sugar, for rolling cookies**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cream butter, shortening and sugars thoroughly in a large bowl. Add egg and extracts; mix well.
3. In a separate bowl, combine flour, cinnamon, baking soda, cream of tartar, nutmeg, salt and zests. Add by heaping spoonfuls into butter and sugar mixture and stir until combined.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put about ½ cup sugar into a bowl. Shape dough into 1-inch balls and roll in sugar. Place balls 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake 12–15 minutes or until cracked and very lightly browned.

**MAKES 6 DOZEN COOKIES**

 Find this and more delicious recipes online at [TexasCoopPower.com](https://www.texascoopower.com).