

There Is a Cooperative Difference



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER CLINT GARDNER

ALL ELECTRIC UTILITIES OFFER THE SAME PRODUCT—but where it comes from makes a difference.

In the United States, most people receive their electricity from one of three types of utilities: 1) investor-owned, 2) municipally owned or 3) cooperative, which is owned and controlled by the people who use it. Let's take a closer look at these three types of ownership models and see why the difference matters to you.

In the investor-owned model, the corporation is owned by stockholders who may or may not be actual customers of the utility, and may or may not live in the area where the utility operates. Investor-owned utilities tend to be large corporations such as TXU Energy or NRG. They serve large cities, suburban areas and some rural areas, too.

In most cases, investor-owned utilities, or IOUs, have few employees interacting in the communities where they operate. Combined with outside investors, whose sole motive is to make a profit on their investment, this lack of community representation generally tends to lead to less personalized service. Consumer surveys confirm that IOUs have the lowest customer satisfaction ratings of all types of utilities. Nevertheless, about 72 percent of the U.S. population is served by investor-owned utilities.

Municipal electric systems, as the name implies, are government-owned. They can serve large cities such as San Antonio or Austin, or smaller areas such as Brownfield, Fredericksburg or College Station. In a municipal system, a city runs the utility with little direct oversight from the citizens who receive its power. About 16 percent of the market is served by municipal utilities.

Rural electric cooperatives serve the smallest number of consumers, about 12 percent of the national market, which equals 42 million people. In 47 states, there are more than 800 electric co-ops, including Coleman County Electric Cooperative.

It is worth noting that although co-ops serve the fewest people, co-ops' electric lines cover a disproportionately large share of the U.S. landmass—more than 75 percent. This is because co-ops provide power where others once refused to go, due to the service area's low population density.

Electric co-ops rank highest in member satisfaction among the three types of utilities because co-ops serve member-owners, not customers.

As the electric utility business continues to evolve, co-ops are committed to being there for members, to provide for electric energy needs and contribute to the development and well-being of the community. Unlike large investor-owned utilities, co-ops are rooted right here in Texas.

Over the years, Coleman County EC has answered the call to provide additional benefits and services because it is extremely important to us that our community thrives and prospers. This is why we offer personal service, along with economic development, conservation and service programs.

There is a cooperative difference. You own the co-op, and we are here to serve you.



Happy Thanksgiving

from Coleman County EC

**Our offices will be closed
Thursday and Friday,
November 26–27, to celebrate
the Thanksgiving holiday.**

HITDELIGHT | DOLLARPHOTOCLUB.COM



Veterans Day November 11

**Coleman County EC thanks all
veterans for their service.**

SHREVEPORT | DOLLARPHOTOCLUB.COM

Entertain Safely In the Holiday Season

AS THANKSGIVING and Christmas approach, use these tips to ensure that your home is ready for all of the festive activities of the holiday season.

Fire Safety

Test your smoke alarms monthly and make sure that your house is protected by an adequate number of working alarms.

Smoke alarms should be installed in each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.

Share your fire escape plan, including the location of your outside meeting place, with your overnight guests.

Keep halls, stairs and doorways properly illuminated and free of clutter and other objects that could hinder an escape during a fire emergency.

Decorating Safety

Avoid overloading electrical outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire.

Do not place extension cords where they could be tripping hazards.

Do not run extension cords under rugs or furniture.

Keep all decorations 3 feet away from heat sources, including space heaters and fireplaces.

Keep young visitors in mind: Place cords, breakables, candles and other potentially dangerous items out of children's reach.

Turn off and unplug all decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.

Use only weatherproof electrical devices for outside activities. Protect outdoor electrical devices from moisture.

Heating Equipment Safety

Have your heating system inspected annually by a licensed professional.

Use space heaters properly and safely. Keep them out of high-traffic

areas and at least 3 feet from anything that can burn.

Do not leave a space heater running unattended. Turn off space heaters and unplug them when you leave the room or go to sleep.

Never leave an open flame, including a fireplace, unattended.

Child Safety

When hosting small children, be sure to put items out of reach that might present a choking hazard—coins, jewelry and especially small batteries, which carry an added risk if ingested.

Move all cleaning products and other dangerous items out of reach of children and store them in a locked area.

Set your water heater temperature to 120 degrees to reduce the risk of scalding.

Install tamper-resistant receptacles to prevent electrical shocks and burns, and use safety covers on unused outlets.

Never allow children to play with electrical decorations or cords.

Electrical Safety

Outdoor outlets should be protected with GFCI technology to reduce the risk of electric shock.

Avoid overloading electrical outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire.

Check outlets regularly for problems, including overheating, loose connections, reversed polarity or corrosion.

Cooking Safety

Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling.

Keep young children at least 3 feet away from cooking appliances.

Keep towels, potholders and curtains away from hot surfaces.

Wear short or close-fitting sleeves. Loose clothing can catch fire.

Coleman County Electric Cooperative

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Operating in Brown, Callahan, Coleman,
Coke, Concho, Runnels, Taylor and Tom
Green counties

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FIND US ON THE WEB

colemanelectric.org

Power Tip

Don't let vampires suck the life out of your energy-efficiency efforts! Unplugging unused electronics—otherwise known as “energy vampires”—can save you as much as 10 percent on your electric bill.