

Who Profits From Co-op Service? You Do!



MESSAGE FROM
CEO/GENERAL MANAGER CLINT GARDNER

LATELY WE'VE BEEN HEARING A QUESTION from members that deserves a thoughtful answer: "If you're a nonprofit, why don't you charge just enough to pay your bills?"

The answer is that Coleman County Electric Cooperative must charge enough to purchase power, provide service and maintain a positive cash flow. This gives us a cushion to handle unexpected situations and allows us to secure favorable terms from lenders for money we might need to expand and maintain our delivery system.

When fuel costs for generation go up, your co-op pays more for electricity. If we didn't pass along that charge to you, we'd soon find ourselves in financial straits. Therefore, when generation and fuel costs rise, you can expect to see a bump in your electric bill. When they go down, you'll notice a proportionate decrease in your bill.

In a nutshell, that's part of how a nonprofit operates. All the money we collect pays for keeping your co-op whole. We're not accountable to outside investors. We're accountable only to you, our member-owners. We use our resources to make sound investments that benefit you.

As a distribution cooperative, we have to get the power to you reliably. That means training and compensating our employees, and purchasing high-quality poles, transformers, wires, bucket trucks and safety equipment. That also means getting your power back on as quickly as possible if severe weather damages the system. We do that by investing in technology that helps us work more accurately and quickly.

We also pay decent wages to the people who repair the lines, send out bills and answer your calls for help when you need it. Don't forget, that's money that goes right back into the community where your co-op employees live and work.

You see, at Coleman County EC, there are no outside investors making money on stock dividends or profit sharing. That's because you, the members, are the owners of the cooperative, and every dime the co-op brings in over expenses is invested back in this business—and eventually is returned to you in the form of capital credits.

Our mission is simple: Empower the communities we serve by providing a steady, reliable supply of electricity at the lowest cost possible.

The business structure of electric cooperatives can be traced to our roots decades ago. During that era, the big electric companies that served cities were not convinced that the expense of building lines to serve rural areas would pay off for their investors. So rural residents who wanted electricity banded together, borrowed money from the federal government and formed nonprofit electric companies.

As those rural areas have grown and changed, the cooperatives that powered their growth have also changed. Cooperatives are among the nation's leaders in innovative and efficient approaches to electricity delivery. Many electric co-ops also now deliver services such as high-speed Internet to areas that previously didn't have them.

There's one thing that hasn't changed: We exist to serve our local communities, not to turn a profit for distant investors.

Main Street, not Wall Street: That's the cooperative way.



Co-op members will soon have access to a new high-speed Internet provider.

New Services Coming for Co-op Members

WE HAVE SOME EXCITING NEWS to share regarding a new project Coleman County Electric Cooperative will be undertaking.

TransWorld Network is a communications company that works in partnership with electric cooperatives to provide high-speed Internet to co-op members and residents in surrounding areas.

TWN currently works with several area electric cooperatives to provide this service to their members and has enjoyed great success.

Coleman County EC has decided to also offer this program to our members because of the continued need in the area for reliable and affordable broadband services, coupled with our desire to provide additional value-added services to our members.

In partnership with TWN, Coleman County EC will offer high-speed Internet and digital phone service throughout our service territory. Initially, service will be available in limited areas while the network infrastructure is being developed and deployed. Internet plans will range from \$43.95 to \$99.95 per month with speeds up to 10 Mbps to allow adequate bandwidth for streaming services like Netflix and Hulu. Business plans will also be available.

We anticipate that services will be available in select areas beginning late spring/early summer. A representative from TWN will be at the cooperative's annual meeting on July 15 to share details about the new services.

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Thank a Lineman April 11

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES DESIGNATED the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

The resolution, adopted unanimously by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Board of Directors, says this about linemen and the proper recognition of their contributions:

“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America’s Electric Cooperatives.”

On April 11 this year, Coleman County Electric Cooperative will honor the dedicated people who work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on. We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous circumstances to keep power flowing and protect the public’s safety.

Your co-op’s linemen maintain 3,722 miles of line in our service territory.

“Our lineworkers are the first responders of our electric distribution system, and they work around the clock on high-voltage lines,” says CEO and General Manager Clint Gardner. “Conditions can be dangerous, but they power through to ensure reliable service for our members.”

We invite all our members to take a moment and thank linemen for the work they do. If you see a lineman at the grocery or a local ballgame, shake his hand and let him know you appreciate his work. If you post on social media, use #thankalineman to show your support for the heroes who light our lives.



SAVE THE DATE!

**COLEMAN COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

78TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Friday, July 15, 2016 • 5:30 p.m.
Coleman High School • Coleman**

Watch this page next month for more details.



Coleman County Electric Cooperative

3300 N. Highway 84 • P.O. Box 860
Coleman, TX 76834

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

CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Clint Gardner

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CALL US AT

(325) 625-2128 local

1-800-560-2128 toll-free

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colemanelectric.org

Power Tip

Close apps on your phone or tablet when they aren't in use. It will save battery life, which means you'll charge less frequently, saving electricity.