

# Electric Grid Reliability and Resilience



MESSAGE FROM  
**GENERAL MANAGER CLINT GARDNER**

**KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON IN THE EVENT OF A NATURAL DISASTER OR cyber incident is a major—and growing—concern for the electric industry. At Coleman County Electric Cooperative, we take steps to lessen potential damage and ensure that the system recovers quickly so it can get back to the business of providing you power.**

## What's the Difference?

Power grid resilience and power grid reliability are frequently, and often interchangeably, referenced in conversations about keeping the lights on. This raises the question: What is the difference between reliability and resilience?

*Reliability* means the ability of the power system to deliver electricity in the quantity and quality demanded by users. Reliability means that the lights are always on in a consistent manner.



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*Resilience* concerns the ability of a system to recover and, in some cases, transform from disruptive events. Resilience-focused approaches to stabilizing the grid emphasize the idea that such incidents occur regularly, and systems should be designed and shored up to bounce back quicker and stronger.

## Steps Toward Stability

A panel of national experts, including scientists from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, recently conducted a study on behalf of the U.S. Department of Energy to make recommendations for improving grid security.

The panel recommended more cooperation among stakeholders and stepped-up coordination on threat assessment, training and joint recovery planning. Major emphasis was placed on the need for research involving government and industry players, including NRECA and its member cooperatives.

At Coleman County EC, our own resiliency efforts involve every aspect of our operations—from the member service representatives to the linemen and engineers in the field to the communicators keeping the media and members updated.

Electric co-ops serve the most rugged, remote terrain in the country, covering more than 70 percent of the nation's landmass. We have learned how to restore power in incredibly difficult circumstances, and we're focused on increasing reliability and resilience for you, our members.

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## Prepare for Little Visitors

### WITH THE HOLIDAYS COME HOUSE-

guests, and often they're little ones. Kids and grandkids can be a joy, but their presence requires preparation around the house. Use these tips to ensure that your home is ready to welcome your loved ones for all the festivities.

- ▶ Put away small items that could pose choking hazards, such as batteries, buttons, coins and jewelry.
- ▶ Install tamper-resistant electrical receptacles to prevent shocks and burns, or use safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children.
- ▶ Never allow children to play with electrical decorations or cords.
- ▶ Use safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairways to keep babies and toddlers safe.
- ▶ Move all cleaning products and other dangerous items out of reach of children and store them in a locked area.
- ▶ Consider turning your water heater temperature down to 120 degrees to reduce the risk of scalding.
- ▶ Teach overnight guests your fire escape plan, including the location of your outside meeting place. Everyone should know at least two ways out of each room in your home.

# Small Appliance Dangers

**IT'S EASY TO FIND SUBSTANDARD ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES ON THE MARKET, ESPECIALLY** at attractive, discounted prices. Such products are recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission if they are found to be unsafe, but that often happens too late. The following products and devices can be particularly dangerous, especially if faulty or misused:

## Hair Dryers

The CPSC recommends consumers buy hair dryers that comply with certain safety standards, effective since January 1991, that add protection against electrocution if they fall into water. Choose hair dryers with large, rectangular plugs and certification marks from a well-known testing laboratory, and never use hair dryers near water.

## Electric Blankets

An electric blanket easily can overheat and cause a fire if items are placed on top of it while in use. Blankets should be discarded if wiring is cracked or broken, or if dark, charred or frayed spots are noticed.

## Portable Heaters

When using portable heaters, keep at least 3 feet between the heater and any flammable materials, such as paper, curtains or bedding. Portable heaters never should be used near water or in bathrooms, and they should be plugged only into outlets with ground-fault circuit interrupters.

## Extension Cords

Extension cords cause an estimated 4,000 injuries, 50 deaths and 3,300 residential fires each year. Extension cords never should be used on a permanent basis, as they are intended for temporary use as needed only. Residential fires can occur if the cords are faulty, overloaded, damaged or misused.

**Keep in mind the following tips when using extension cords:**

- ▶ Always use cords with polarized plugs.
- ▶ Cover unused outlets with caps or install tamper-resistant receptacles.
- ▶ When disconnecting cords, pull from the plug, not the cord.
- ▶ Use heavy-duty cords for high-wattage appliances.
- ▶ Never run electrical cords under rugs or next to walls where heat can build up.

## Veterans Day November 11

**Coleman County EC salutes  
veterans for their service.**



## Coleman County Electric Cooperative

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

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### FIND US ON THE WEB

**colemanelectric.org**

## Power Tip

When you're going to sleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10-15 degrees. Doing so for eight hours can save 10 percent on heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat makes it easy to "set it and forget it!"