

# Electricity Use Rises With Summer Temperatures

*Increased demand could test the state's supply*



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER CLINT GARDNER

**DO YOU REMEMBER THE ELECTRICITY BILL YOU** received after this winter's cold spell? It gave many of our members a bit of sticker shock. Of course, we all use more kilowatt-hours to stay warm when the cold and ice of January come knocking. The unfortunate result is higher-than-usual bills.

Now, as we are in the middle of summer, a reverse weather pattern holds the potential to cause higher-than-normal bills

sees 90 percent of the state's power grid, is predicting record-breaking peak power usage. To keep the system reliable, ERCOT prefers to maintain a small percentage of generation capacity beyond what is needed to meet peak demand. This extra energy capacity is called the "reserve margin," and it measures the system's ability to meet demand for power during the hottest days. The current projections for hotter summer weather and increased demand could test the reserve margin.

With that in mind, we all need to manage our electricity use.

A few home improvements and simple changes in day-to-day habits can add up to big savings this summer. For example, a few tubes of latex or silicone caulk for your windows will help keep cooler air inside your home and the hot air outside where it belongs. If you insulate your hot water pipes, you can cut water heating costs by 4 percent. And remember to set your air conditioning system thermostat to 78 degrees and maybe even a little higher if you're planning to be away from the house for a while.

Would you like to make an even greater impact on your bill? Check your home's insulation. According to [energy.star.gov](http://energy.star.gov), the insulation in your home's attic should cover joists and be evenly distributed. It is also important to use insulation with a recommended R-value of 30–60. You will not only feel the difference in your home, you'll help offset peak demand.

At [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov), you'll find a variety of tools and tips to help maximize your home's energy efficiency.

Most importantly, Coleman County Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit power provider. That means our mission is to provide you with the electricity you need to improve your quality of life—not turn a profit for investors. An important part of that mission entails providing you the tools you need to manage your electricity use. We want you to stay comfortable this summer with power bills you can afford.



again. "Compared with last summer," the U.S. Energy Information Administration predicts, "this summer's temperatures are forecast to be warmer." The EIA expects Americans will use more electricity this summer than last and pay more for it. The agency forecasts the typical residential electricity bill to increase 3.4 percent over last summer's bill.

Now add in the demands of the fast-growing state economy, and you have all the makings for higher electric bills.

No one knows how much extra your co-op might have to pay, but the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which over-

# More Than 80 Years Later, You Still Have the Power

## IT'S BEEN MORE THAN 80 YEARS SINCE THE RURAL ELECTRIFICATION PROGRAM BEGAN.

To survive—and even prosper—over that period of time takes considerable strength. The fact that electric cooperatives are alive and well today speaks volumes of the many people who have protected the rights and interests of co-op members in Austin and Washington, D.C.

Electric cooperatives have been offering consumers a real choice from the day our doors first opened. The members get to decide how the business is run and what services are offered. Under the watchful eye of locally elected boards of directors, electric cooperatives focus on delivering high-quality, reliable and affordable service every day to the people and businesses they serve. Your cooperative still is committed to making a difference.

While your cooperative works to keep electricity affordable and reliable by improving the efficiency of its electric system and operations, considering new resources and staying politically active, you can do your part by using energy efficiently at home and work. **Here are a few easy ways to trim your energy use:**

- ▶ Caulk or weatherstrip windows and doors. A typical home can lose as much as one-third of its conditioned air through leaks.
- ▶ Install a programmable thermostat and change filters regularly. About half of your electric bill is spent heating and cooling your home.
- ▶ Wash clothes in cold water.
- ▶ Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.
- ▶ Add more insulation in your attic. Your home can lose energy through a poorly insulated roof or walls.
- ▶ Turn off lights, appliances and electronics when not in use.

Life may be dramatically different from what it was 80 years ago, but one thing hasn't changed: Coleman County Electric Cooperative is here to serve you.



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## Coleman County Electric Cooperative

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

*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

Here's a simple, energy-saving trick for your home: Get painting. Light paint colors on walls and ceilings reflect more light, making rooms brighter and reducing the need for high-wattage lightbulbs.

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