

Coping With Mother Nature



MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT/CEO RYAN BARTLETT

TAYLOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE STRIVES TO PROVIDE YOU WITH THE most reliable electric service possible. We work with the best technology available, perform regular maintenance and train our employees to spot system hazards.

Still, Mother Nature throws us some curves from time to time. Lightning, ice storms, fires, floods and tornadoes are just a few of the formidable challenges our highly qualified technicians face. Tree limbs bent or blown over during harsh weather are a regular concern. Even animals can be a problem. Squirrels, snakes, turkey vultures, ants, woodpeckers and other critters can cause interruptions when they come into contact with electric equipment.

Here are just some of the measures we take to keep interruptions to a minimum:

- ▶ Crews regularly trim tree branches along distribution lines.
- ▶ Lightning arresters on transformers direct lightning safely to the ground.
- ▶ Wildlife guards and insulated cables keep animals safe from transformers.

Electric fences keep raccoons and snakes out of substations. Some transmission poles have triangular fiberglass guards to keep roosting turkey vultures from damaging facilities. Plastic guards on the bottom of distribution crossarms can prevent damage from woodpeckers.

Providing uninterrupted power during times of peak load is a major priority, so your co-op chooses wire sizes and transformers that can handle the job. We install fuses, sectionalizers and reclosers to minimize areas of interruption. In addition, multiple ground connections help protect the system, equipment and the general public.

If an interruption does occur, technologies such as supervisory control and data acquisition systems automatically locate outages, which minimizes the time line-men must spend physically searching for obstructions to lines. They can go directly to the location of the problem and get the line or transformer repaired more quickly than ever before.

These are just some of the ways your co-op is working to provide electric service you can count on.



G-STOCKSTUDIO | ISTOCK.COM

Give Power Lines the Right of Way

If you notice anything that poses a threat or might interfere with power lines, such as encroaching trees or branches, inform Taylor Electric Cooperative.

If you are planning to plant trees on your property, make sure not to plant them directly under or near power lines.

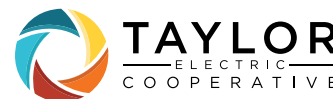
Keep shrubs, hedges and other plants clear of electric lines and poles.

And always assume every power line is energized.



Power Tip Well-placed landscaping not only adds beauty to your home, it also can reduce heating and cooling costs. On average, landscaping for energy efficiency provides enough energy savings to return an initial investment within eight years.

NUMISMARTY | ISTOCK.COM



HVAC Maintenance Guide

Get your ducts in a row

YOUR HOME'S HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEMS HELP KEEP YOU COMFORTABLE DURING oppressive heat and bitter cold, and they must be properly maintained to do so. Be aware of warning signs of potential problems and follow maintenance guidelines to ensure your HVAC system is operating safely and efficiently.

Don't Get Burned: Signs of Potential Problems

- ▶ Your energy bill goes up without increased use.
 - ▶ The system makes strange sounds, such as clunking or knocking.
 - ▶ Air in your home is too humid or too dry.
 - ▶ Certain areas of your home are noticeably hotter or colder than others.
 - ▶ An HVAC breaker keeps tripping.
 - ▶ If your furnace is more than 15 years old or if your air conditioner is more than 10 years old, it may be time for a replacement.
- If you observe any of these warning signs, have a certified HVAC specialist check out your system.

Keep Your Cool: Upkeep and Maintenance

- ▶ Make sure fuel-burning heating equipment is vented to the outside without obstruction.
- ▶ Replace HVAC filters at least every 90 days.
- ▶ Keep intake and output vents clean and clear of debris and dust.
- ▶ Have your heating and air conditioning systems inspected by a qualified service professional at least once a year to make sure they are running at optimal efficiency and to diagnose any potential problems.
- ▶ Some heating appliances may produce carbon monoxide, a deadly gas that is tasteless, colorless and odorless. Protect your home with CO alarms and test them monthly to ensure they are working properly.



Taylor Electric Cooperative

226 County Road 287 • P.O. Box 250
Merkel, TX 79536

PRESIDENT/CEO

Ryan Bartlett

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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HANDY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

Online

taylorelectric.com

Taylor Electric App

Available on your Apple or Android device

By Phone

(325) 793-8500

Visa, MasterCard, checks accepted.
Payments credited immediately.

In Person

Main office hours:

7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

226 CR 287, off I-20, west of Abilene Wells
Lane exit 274 between Tye and Merkel

Abilene office hours:

7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Monday–Friday

7966 Highway 83, Abilene 79602

Visa, MasterCard, checks, cash and money
orders accepted.
Payments credited immediately.

Drop Box

Main office drop box at front gate: 24/7

Abilene office drop box (next to first
door on the left): 24/7

Checks and money orders accepted.
Payments credited next business day.

Pay Stations

- **United Supermarket**, 521 S. Access Road, Clyde
- **Food Plaza #4**, 109 S.E. Fifth St., Cross Plains
- **Cash Saver**, 155 Sayles Blvd., Abilene
- **United Supermarket**, 2160 Pine St., Abilene
- **Check Express**, 906 E. Broadway Ave., Sweetwater

Cash, checks, money orders and debit
cards accepted.
Payments credited next business day.



Help on the Line

ON A MODEST STREET IN ABILENE, A DEDICATED GROUP OF PEOPLE are working to protect families.

“Domestic violence is about control,” says Dan Cox, executive director of the Noah Project, a shelter and outreach support service for victims of family violence. “In some cases, they [the abuser] will lock up all personal information, all forms of

life skills they need to be successful on their own. “We provide trauma-informed care, which means we meet them where they are,” Cox says. “On average, victims go back seven times before finally staying away. So, we strive to teach them how to survive in an outside environment so they don’t feel the need to return.”

Cox recalls the story of a mother with three children who came to the shelter. After only a few days, the mother felt prepared to leave. “Sixty days later, the mom called wanting to know if they could come back,” he says. “She was overwhelmed. She came back, took the programs seriously and left with an apartment lined up, health care and day care for her kids. She left more prepared after taking the programs and better equipped to do it on her own.”

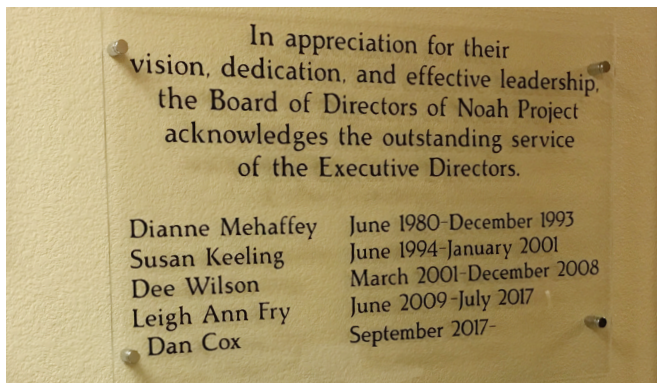
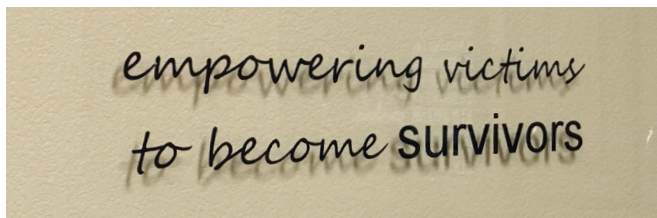
The Noah Project also provides services to the community, including prevention programs at schools for kindergart-

ners through college-age students. During a visit to a local school, five students came forward with stories of violence in their homes. The organization also partners with area groups to help bridge the gap for families seeking help and support. It is part of the Abilene/Taylor County Alliance to End Family Violence, which includes the Abilene Police Department, Taylor County Sheriff’s Office, Taylor County District Attorney’s office and 13 other area groups. Their goal is to maintain open communication and create joint action plans that reduce the number of family violence incidents.

The Noah Project is able to provide all of its services through federal grants and does fundraising for its remaining needs. It hosts a yearly golf tournament and accepts donations throughout the year.

Taylor Electric Cooperative wants to highlight the Noah Project, a member nonprofit that is doing great things in our community to help those impacted by domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is not limited to a certain group of people—it affects people of all ages and any gender. Domestic abuse and family violence can happen to anyone from any demographic. If you would like to donate or learn more about the Noah Project’s services, visit noahproject.org or call (325) 676-7107.



ID: driver’s licenses, birth certificates, any form of money and, often, information regarding their children.” The abuser locks away these items to prevent victims from leaving. They want their victims to feel unable to survive outside of their control.

“When someone comes here, we help them get their identities back, both literally and figuratively,” Cox says.

The Noah Project has programs and resources designed to help survivors of abusive situations. The organization has a full-time attorney to help with legal issues, a staff therapist and child advocates who help families adjust and begin rebuilding their lives.

The Noah Project was founded in 1980 in response to a growing number of reported domestic abuse cases. According to the Noah Project website, researchers at the time distributed surveys to area hospitals, law enforcement agencies, attorneys and social service organizations. They discovered that within a six-month period, more than 1,000 incidents of family violence were reported.

In response, the Noah Project opened its first shelter and adopted a mission of ending domestic violence and sexual assault, while empowering survivors.

The Noah Project works to arm families with the support and

Keep Halloween More Treat Than Trick

EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD SCARE ON HALLOWEEN BUT NOT WHEN it comes to safety. The harsh reality is that, on average, children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car on Halloween than on any other day of the year, so make sure you take every safety precaution this October 31.

Trick-or-Treating

Outfit your trick-or-treater with a glow stick or flashlight with fresh batteries, but make clear to never shine light beams into the eyes of drivers. Instruct children to stay on sidewalks wherever possible and to look both ways before crossing streets.

Make sure that little revelers (and you) cross streets only at corners and never from between parked vehicles. Lastly, keep youngsters from indulging until after a trusted adult has inspected their trove of treats carefully.

Haunting the House

Never use electrical products outdoors that are marked for indoor use. You could get shocked—or worse.

Dried flowers, cornstalks, hay and crepe paper are highly flammable. Keep them away from open flames and other heat sources, including lightbulbs and heaters. Always inspect each decoration before use and discard any with cracked, frayed or



bare wires. Always turn off electrical decorations and extinguish any open flames before leaving home or going to bed. Use a flashlight or battery-operated candles in jack-o'-lanterns.

While Driving

Slow down in residential neighborhoods to at least 5 mph below the posted speed limit to give yourself extra time to react to children who may dart into the street.

Watch for children walking on roadways, medians and curbs. Look for children crossing the street; they may not be paying attention to traffic and cross the street midblock or between parked cars. Turn on your headlights to make yourself more visible—even before the sun has set.

Have Vampires Invaded Your Home?

WITH TODAY'S ELECTRONICS, TURNING THEM OFF DOESN'T SAVE as much energy as you think. "Off" doesn't necessarily mean off anymore.

Many gadgets use energy even when you are not using them, and the "vampire energy" consumed by TVs, computers and other devices when they're switched off adds up. Entertainment centers are full of these energy-sucking devices.

Most televisions slowly sip electricity while waiting for someone to press the "on" button. They use energy to remember channel lineups and keep time. DVD players, digital video recorders, and cable and satellite boxes also use energy when we think they're off.

In an average home, 5–8 percent of electricity consumption stems from small devices, wasting approximately \$70 worth of power every year.

Identify Plug Parasites

Microwave ovens and alarm clocks, which use relatively small amounts of standby power, are acceptable to leave plugged in. But game systems, TVs and other entertainment components use fairly significant amounts of power when turned off.

Try plugging household electronics such as computers, monitors, printers, cellphone chargers and game systems into power strips. Not only do power strips protect from power surges, they allow you to turn off several items at once.

You don't have to worry about unplugging items with mechanical on/off switches, such as lamps, hair dryers or many small kitchen appliances—they don't draw any power when turned off.

Smart Strips = Easy Savings

Most smart strips feature three colored outlets, each with a unique task. Anything plugged into red outlets stays on—electricity to these receptacles never cuts off, making them perfect for satellite or cable boxes. The blue outlet serves as a control plug and is ideal for a typically heavily used device like a TV or computer.

The remaining outlets, generally neutral or green in color, are sensitive to current flowing through the blue outlet, so turning off the TV or computer cuts power to them as well.

Payback for smart strips generally can be achieved in less than one year.