

We Celebrate Our Service Members This July Fourth



MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT/CEO RYAN BARTLETT

WE OFTEN CELEBRATE JULY FOURTH WITH cookouts, pool parties and fireworks. It's a festive time with friends and family as we commemorate our nation's independence. But for so many, the holiday calls to mind the brave men and women who uphold the principles and ideals of our country through dedication and sacrifice. We are honored at Taylor Electric Cooperative to serve our military families and call them our friends, family and employees.

Commerce, does its best to make these families feel welcome.

Together, we work hard to foster a strong relationship with Dyess AFB, and the success of that effort is evidenced by the name of a national military award—the Abilene Trophy, formerly known as the Air Mobility Command Community Support Award. It is a testament to the dedication of our community to welcome and support our Air Force families.

Taylor EC is proud to serve on several boards and area

organizations with the mission of supporting our armed forces. We are also privileged to have both reserve and retired service members as our employees. They bring the same level of dedication to our cooperative and community as they did to their branch of the military. They continue to answer the call whenever there is a need in our community or in our region. For example, when Hurricane Harvey hit our southern cooperative family, our linemen volunteered to help our fellow co-ops. We were overwhelmed by the number of offers from our employees to aid in the recovery effort. Though not all our linemen were able to assist, they all felt the need to help those affected by the disaster and uphold the principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives.

While you spend time with your family this July Fourth, remember those who have served our country and those who continue to do so. It's only because of

them that we have a reason to celebrate this Independence Day. I want to personally thank everyone who has served or is serving our nation. I am grateful we have men and women answering the call to protect our freedoms and who selflessly honor our country. Thank you for your service!



Our cooperative has the unique privilege of being a short distance from Dyess Air Force Base. When new Air Force families arrive, we stand ready to serve their needs and introduce them to the cooperative difference. Taylor EC, through our partnership with the city of Abilene and Abilene Chamber of



Close blinds and drapes during the hottest part of the day to slow the sun's warming rays.

Hot Days Remind Us To Use Energy Wisely

THE HOT DAYS OF SUMMER CAN BE TAMED A BIT WITH ENERGY-EFFICIENT HABITS THAT can make your home more comfortable.

It's never too late to make a few changes to help keep things cool and lower your energy costs.

Check for loose or leaky windowpanes. If your home still has single-pane windows, consider replacing them or adding a window film. Single-pane windows allow cool air to easily escape your home during the summer and warm air to seep out in the winter. Replacing old, inefficient windows now is an investment that will pay for itself in energy savings year-round—and keep your home more comfortable.

If you still use incandescent lightbulbs, it's time to make the switch to LEDs. These bulbs are far more energy efficient than old-fashioned bulbs, which produce more heat than light. That heat works against your air conditioner during the summer.

When air conditioner filters get dirty, they get clogged—and air can't flow freely through them. That forces your AC unit to work harder. Replace air filters once a month during cooling season.

Install a programmable thermostat, which automatically adjusts the temperature, so you use less energy to cool your home when no one is there. The device can save you up to \$100 a year on cooling and heating bills.

Move appliances and lamps away from your thermostat. Because they emit heat, they can trick your thermostat into thinking that the house is warmer than it really is—and the AC to work harder than it should.

Keep drapes and blinds closed during the hottest part of the day to minimize the amount of heat from the sun that enters your home. Consider installing solar screens or shutters to block the heat before it can get in.



Taylor Electric Cooperative

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PRESIDENT/CEO

Ryan Bartlett

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cecil Davis, Board Chairman, Zone 1
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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.



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Plan for a Safe and Happy July Fourth

JULY IS A FAVORITE TIME OF YEAR FOR MANY OF US. IT'S THE middle of summer, the kids are out of school and, of course, we celebrate Independence Day! Many of us celebrate our nation's independence with grilled burgers and hot dogs, homemade ice cream and other sweet treats—and, needless to say, fireworks. It's a time for fellowship with family and friends, but at Taylor Electric Cooperative, we also want to make sure our members focus on safety.

Nothing says Independence Day like a spectacular fireworks display. The safest way to enjoy this part of the celebration is to head to a local fireworks show. **But if you want to put on your own show at home (and you've confirmed it's legal and there are no burn bans), be sure to follow these safety tips:**

- ▶ Always follow the instructions on the fireworks' packaging and never give fireworks to children.
- ▶ Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
- ▶ Make sure to wear protective eyewear when lighting fireworks.
- ▶ Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to

relight a "dud."

- ▶ Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
 - ▶ Never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.
- Cookouts are a great way to bring folks together on the Fourth. Whether you are grilling in your backyard or at a community park, make sure your feast includes a generous portion of fun and a side helping of safety. Remember to:
- ▶ Supervise your grill at all times and use the proper tools for cooking on a grill.
 - ▶ Never add charcoal starter fluid when the coals have already been ignited.
 - ▶ Always follow the manufacturers' instructions when using grills.

Fireworks and cookouts wouldn't be complete without a sunny day. Here's hoping we have good weather, and if we do, make sure you are practicing sun safety by using a broad-spectrum sunscreen (and reapplying often), wearing sunglasses and drinking plenty of water.

Portable Generator Safety

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on power lines and utility poles, which sometimes results in power outages.

Portable generators can provide a trustworthy temporary source of power during storm-induced electrical outages but can become deadly if improperly installed or operated. A few simple precautions can keep you and your family safe from carbon monoxide poisoning and electric shock—dangers of improper portable generator use.

Installation Safety Tips

Have a licensed electrician install the generator to ensure it meets all local electrical codes.

Do not connect generators directly to household wiring without an appropriate transfer switch installed by a professional. Power from generators connected directly can backfeed along power lines and electrocute anyone coming into contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs.

Make sure your generator is properly grounded. Use a ground-fault circuit interrupter to prevent electrocutions and electric shock injuries. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available for \$12 to \$30.

Using Your Generator

Make sure your home is equipped with a battery-operated or battery backup carbon monoxide alarm.

Never operate a generator inside your home or in other enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. Generators can very quickly produce high levels of carbon monoxide that can be deadly.

Opening doors and windows or operating fans to attempt to ventilate a generator will not prevent carbon monoxide buildup in your home. Even with a working CO alarm, you should never use a gasoline-powered generator inside your home or garage.

Position the generator at least 25 feet outside your home and away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the house.

Do not open windows or leave doors open while a generator is operating outside.

Carbon monoxide is a silent killer. Don't take chances. Get



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to fresh air right away if you feel dizzy or weak.

Do not use the generator in wet conditions and always ensure your hands are dry before touching the generator.

Turn the generator on before plugging appliances into it. Once the generator is running, turn your appliances on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit.

Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord.

Make sure extension cords used with generators are rated for the proper load and have three-pronged plugs. The cords should be inspected for damage, such as cuts and worn insulation, before use.

Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.

Make sure fuel for the generator is stored safely—away from living areas, in properly labeled containers and away from fuel-burning appliances.

Before refueling, turn the generator off and let it cool down.

Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times. Many generator components are hot enough to cause burns during operation.

A generator is a temporary power source. Use it only when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



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Peach Salsa

- ½ cup white vinegar
- 6 cups peeled, pitted and chopped peaches
- ¼ cups chopped red onion
- 4–5 jalapeño peppers, stemmed, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and finely chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped cilantro, loosely packed
- 2 tablespoons honey
- ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- 1½ teaspoons ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

1. Combine all ingredients in a large, stainless steel saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring constantly, then reduce heat and simmer gently, stirring frequently, until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.

2. Refrigerate salsa until cold. Keeps up to 1 week in refrigerator.

3. Serve with tortilla chips or as a condiment for fish or chicken tacos.

► Makes about 6 pints.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at **TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM**

Recognizing a Tradition of Service

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING NEW RECENTLY IN TEXAS CO-OP POWER: POWER OF Our People, a series of recurring short profiles that highlight community helpers in Co-op Country. This initiative, found in the Currents section of the magazine, seeks to recognize and honor electric cooperative members who uphold cooperatives’ rich legacy of volunteerism through selfless acts and thoughtful dedication to various causes.

Their commitment to serving others reflects an ethos that we at Taylor Electric Cooperative strive to emulate—helping others to strengthen our community as a whole and as a worthy objective unto itself.

Whether through ongoing efforts such as Operation Round Up or participation in food drives and Relay For Life, our goal is to give back to the community at least a fraction of what we’ve received from it. So it’s doubly gratifying to read about all the good things members of this cooperative and others are doing. We delight in their stories, and their sterling examples inspire us to do more here in our own backyards.

You can find this month’s honoree on Page 7. If you know of a fellow co-op member—and we bet you do—whose humanitarian acts deserve a bit of spotlight, please let us know about them. The ideals of altruism and service run deep in co-op territory and co-op history, and we want to showcase their ambassadors’ good works every chance we get.

Send your nominees for Power of Our People to people@texascooppower.com. Whatever your nominee’s cause, we look forward to sharing his or her story and inspiring readers to pay it forward in their own ways.

Play It Cool

Tips to help you stay comfortable this summer

DURING SUMMER MONTHS, ENERGY BILLS

tend to creep up a bit—or, in some cases, a lot—but keeping your home comfortable amid the heat doesn't have to break the bank. Some energy-saving solutions are low-cost, while others require a bigger investment. Using either strategy, you can be more comfortable and have lower energy bills this summer.

The first step is to reduce your home's solar gains—the heat energy it collects from the sun. Since most solar gains originate through your home's windows, awnings are an effective solution. They can reduce solar heat gain by as much as 65% on south-facing windows and 77% on west-facing windows. You can also try less expensive solutions on the outside or inside of your windows, like reflective films and solar screens. Heavy window coverings also work and have the added benefit of reducing heat loss in winter.

Attics can be a major source of heat gain. These areas can become extremely hot and radiate heat through the ceiling and into your living space. Adequate insulation and abundant venting through the roof, gable or eaves are the solutions.

Another important step is to seal air leaks around windows, doors, plumbing and wiring penetrations.

Excess heat can also be generated inside your home—and at your expense. Here are some simple steps you can take to minimize this:

- ▶ Make it a habit to turn off lights and TVs in rooms that aren't in use.
- ▶ Incandescent lightbulbs generate a lot of heat. Replace them with LEDs.
- ▶ Unplug devices when you aren't using them, including chargers, computers, monitors and other electronics. Many of these devices draw phantom loads, even when they're not in use, which generate heat.
- ▶ Maintain appliances for peak efficiency.
- ▶ Set your water heater temperature to no higher than 120 degrees.
- ▶ Set your refrigerator thermostat to no lower than 38 degrees.
- ▶ Insulate your home's hot water pipes.



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▶ Minimize use of your oven, and don't run the dishwasher or washing machine until it is full.

Now that you've worked on keeping heat out of your home and minimizing the heat generated inside, let's look at how to make the inside air cooler. That starts with your air conditioning system.

If you have central AC, make sure it's working efficiently. Replace filters regularly, and make sure supply registers are open. AC systems need to push an adequate amount of air into the supply ductwork to function properly.

If you do not have central AC, window units can be an efficient solution if they are Energy Star-certified and only used to cool part of the home part of the time. Make sure to seal any openings around the window unit.

The least expensive way to cool yourself is air movement. A ceiling or portable fan can make a room feel up to 10 degrees cooler, but fans cool people—not rooms. Turn them off when you're not in the room.

When the night air is cool and not too humid, exchange your hot air for cool outdoor air by opening windows and turning on fans throughout the house. A permanent (but more expensive) option is to install a whole-house fan.