

Find Out What's Behind the Power



MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT/CEO RYAN BARTLETT

MANY OF YOU MAY NOT KNOW THAT I BEGAN my professional career as an electrical engineer. As an engineer, I was responsible for improving system reliability, determining root causes of problems and implementing solutions. Along with this, I stayed current on education and industry training. Active learning kept me informed of changes and abreast of emerging technologies.

As president and CEO of Taylor Electric Cooperative, I feel that staying informed is more critical now than ever before. My job is not only to understand all aspects of the cooperative business but also to ensure that Taylor EC is on the leading edge of innovation—now and in the future. I stay current on developing technologies that improve reliability and advancements to substation design, and I continually focus on safety standards and new methods for engaging members.

One area that I am most passionate about is member education and engagement. Our members are the force by which we progress, and with growth and change, there comes quite a bit of new information. To keep our membership better informed about Taylor EC, we created a new page on our website called Behind the Power. Behind the Power is a hub of educational content for our membership.

The first section of the page highlights featured topics for

the month. In the second section, as you scroll down, you can search by topic to find a variety of interesting videos, links and articles. I hope you take a few moments to explore the different topics and get familiar with the page as we will continue to post new content and update information throughout the year.

Behind the Power has answers to many of the questions you may have, including how some of our equipment works, home energy usage information and how we give back to the community. If you need a short video to present to a class on how to be safe around electricity, Behind the Power has that, too!

It is vital to our success here at Taylor EC that our members remain informed and educated about their electric cooperative. We want you, our members, to know what is important to our business and how our system works, to understand electrical safety and to be empowered to make informed decisions about energy efficiency. We want you to be informed of all Taylor EC does for our communities and know of our efforts to educate children on why it's so important to stay clear of downed power lines.

Our business is changing more rapidly than ever before, and our goal with Behind the Power is to keep you informed of developments that may affect you as a member of Taylor EC. I appreciate you being a member, and look forward to serving you for many years to come.



Fighting To Keep the Lights On

DO YOU KNOW WHAT SQUIRRELS, LIGHTNING AND TREES HAVE IN COMMON? EACH CAN knock out your electricity.

Taylor Electric Cooperative works hard to keep your lights on, but unfortunately, Mother Nature always seems to find ways to cause power outages.

An electric co-op's job of keeping the power flowing 24/7 calls for maintaining a complex network of poles and wires. But it also means battling the unpredictable. The top three troublemakers for electric reliability are trees falling on power lines and other interferences from vegetation, lightning strikes, and animals going about their daily routines—especially squirrels chewing on electrical equipment and snakes getting into substations.



Humans contribute to power outages as well, with vandals deliberately damaging electrical equipment and drivers crashing into utility poles.

Chasing Perfection

Numbers collected from electric utilities show that power in the U.S. is incredibly reliable. According to these figures, the average American has electricity at the flip of a switch 99.97% of the time.

But Taylor EC always seeks to do better. Among the techniques employed to foil critter catastrophes are snake barriers around substations, buzzard

shields on transmission towers and mesh coverings on wood poles that thwart woodpeckers.

We also have extensive right-of-way programs that keep vegetation away from power lines—including clearing underbrush, publicity campaigns and asking people not to plant trees where they can fall onto power lines. These efforts are aided by software that forecasts tree growth and shows where to concentrate our efforts.

Storms and squirrels present continual battles for your co-op—that won't change—but decades spent building, maintaining and updating our grid means your power is as reliable as ever. We aim to make sure your power keeps arriving as it should.

Making Technology Work for You

Improvements to our electric system allow Taylor EC to keep tabs on it remotely, which means we know immediately when something goes wrong or if there's an outage. But whenever you increase reliability with technology, there's always a potential for vulnerabilities.

Taylor EC has programs in place to help protect against a range of cybersecurity threats, a team of information technology pros and continual cybersecurity training for employees.



Taylor Electric Cooperative

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

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.

Don't Be Fooled

ELECTRIC UTILITY SCAMMERS ARE CONTINUALLY SWITCHING UP their games (and lies) to try to get your money.

One of the most common tricks scammers now use involves a spoofing app that they use to create a fake caller ID to trick co-op members into thinking a call they are receiving is coming from their co-op or another local number. Your caller ID will show some variation of “Taylor Electric Cooperative” or come from a local number, seemingly giving scammers instant credibility.

They will tell members they are late on paying their bill and need to do so in the next couple of hours or their electricity will be disconnected. They then tell the member to head to a local store to purchase a reloadable debit card and call back with the card information. Or they directly ask for credit card or bank account information.

The scammers don't stop there. Some swindlers encourage members to deliver them cash in person at a meeting spot or come to the member's front door and claim they need to read their meter for money.

If you receive a call, email or visit from anyone claiming to be a co-op employee and asking you for money, immediately report it to the cooperative—using the co-op phone number you look up yourself. Never call a number given to you by a potential scammer to verify the request for money; giving you a fake number is another common scheme, and the call will be answered by the scammer's team.

Taylor EC will never:

- ▶ Call from an out-of-state number.
- ▶ Have a technician call you to say he or she is coming out to disconnect power.
- ▶ Request a cash payment at your home or business.
- ▶ Threaten a service disconnection on holidays or weekends.

If you experience any of these things, give us a call and let us know so we can warn other members about the scam.

It is unfortunate that we feel obligated to encourage you to be suspicious, but we care about our members, and it's important to Taylor EC that our members not be taken advantage of.



KEEP THESE TIPS IN MIND to keep your money where it belongs:

- ▶ **If someone claims** to be from your electric cooperative and pressures you for immediate payment or personal information, hang up and call your co-op using a phone number you look up.
- ▶ **Never give your Social Security number**, credit card number or banking information to any caller, no matter whom they claim to represent.
- ▶ **Delete suspicious emails** saying you must act immediately to verify or provide personal information. Do not click on any links in these emails.
- ▶ **Delete any emails** from utilities and companies you don't have a relationship with.
- ▶ **Do not respond** to suspicious emails. Responding often results in even more spam and scam attempts.
- ▶ **Don't give in to high-pressure** tactics for information over the phone or in person.



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Energy Efficiency for the Modern Family and Its Devices

IF YOU ARE STRUCK BY THE NUMBER OF SCREENS, REMOTES, GAMING CONTROLS, charging stations and cords that have become fixtures in your home, you are not alone. Ninety-five percent of Americans have a cellphone, and 50% of U.S. homes have a gaming system. Nearly 80% of adults own a laptop or desktop computer, while approximately half own tablets.

Consumer electronics, smart home appliances and technology have steadily transformed our homes and lifestyles and created new implications for energy efficiency.

Use Smart Technology To Manage Energy Savings

So how can we save energy when we are using more electronic devices than ever before? The answer may lie with some of those same devices that have become indispensable to modern living. In many cases, energy conservation is a touch screen away as more apps enable you to monitor energy use.

From your mobile device, you can now control your thermostat, appliances, water heater, home electronics and other devices. One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat. Using your mobile device, you can view and edit your thermostat schedule, monitor energy use and make adjustments accordingly.

You can also ensure efficiency by purchasing Energy Star-certified appliances. New washers, dryers and dishwashers allow you to program when you want a load to start. This means you can program your tasks for off-peak energy hours.

Old-School Energy Savings for New Devices

Of course there are time-tested, old-school methods of energy efficiency that can be applied to electronic devices. Computers, printers, phones and gaming consoles are notorious “vampire power” users, meaning they drain energy (and money) when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off or placed on a timer.

Top 5 Ways To Boost Outdoor Efficiency

COULD YOUR GARAGE, SHED, BARN OR other outdoor building use an energy efficiency boost?

Try these tips to save energy and money:

1. The same rules apply for outdoor buildings as houses: Add insulation, install energy-efficient windows and seal ductwork.
2. Unplug power tools and battery chargers at the end of the season.
3. Install an insulated door and seal the sides and bottom to reduce air leaks.
4. Install motion sensors on outdoor lights.
5. Look into LED retrofit kits for outdoor security lights. They cost more upfront, but payback takes five to 10 years, and LEDs can last up to 20 years.



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