

CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,
President / CEO

Send Solar Swindlers Packing

Solar energy is booming as many homeowners turn to harnessing the sun's rays to produce their own electricity using rooftop solar panels.

But with the increasing popularity of solar power, some businesses are taking advantage of the surge in consumer interest. While many solar companies are genuine and truly want to help consumers with a successful solar installation, there are bad actors to watch out for.

You've likely heard a story or two about solar vendors who promised rooftop panels that would generate enough electricity to power an entire home. Then, after the homeowner has paid thousands of dollars for the installation, the panels don't work, and the vendor is nowhere to be found. Sadly, this story has been the reality for many consumers. Remember, if you have any questions, you can always count on Taylor Electric to provide you with helpful, honest advice.

If you're interested in solar panels for your home, consider these tips before installation to avoid getting swindled:

Visit TaylorElectric.com/energy-services and request a solar audit. A trusted energy advisor with Taylor EC will reach out to you and help answer any questions you may have. We want you to feel confident about any decisions you make about your home energy use, especially decisions around generating electricity at home.

Collect quotes from at least three solar companies to ensure you're getting a competitive deal. As with any

major purchase, research is key, so thoroughly read customer reviews for each of the three solar vendors and check that they're listed on the website of the Texas Solar Energy Society, txses.org.

If you speak to a solar vendor and they use high-pressure tactics—like an offer that's only good for 24 hours—run! Any reputable solar company will recognize that you need time to review a proposal and consider your decision.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. So if a solar company is making promises that sound unachievable and outlandish, they probably are. Remember, if you have any questions, you can always count on your electric co-op for advice.

Finally, when it's time to review and sign a solar contract, make sure the language is clear and easy to understand. Ensure any verbal promises are included in the contract.

Going solar is a major decision that can cost tens of thousands of dollars, so before signing anything reach out to Taylor EC and allow us to help you make the best choice for your family.



CEO CORNER



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Mail-In Ballot Notice

MEMBERS WHO CANNOT attend Taylor Electric Cooperative's annual meeting April 21 can cast their ballots through the mail. Each cooperative member is entitled to one vote.

Absentee ballots are available upon request. Call (325) 793-8500 to have a ballot sent to your home or business. You will receive a prepaid envelope for the ballot return. Absentee ballots can be requested beginning March 3 and must be postmarked by 5:30 p.m. April 7 to Taylor EC headquarters. Absentee ballots will be deposited in a secure ballot box, which will be opened by election administrators. ■



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**Taylor EC's
83rd Annual
Meeting**

April 21, 2022

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Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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President/CEO

Ryan Bartlett

Board of Directors

Cecil Davis, Board Chairman, Zone 1

Leland Robinson, Board Vice Chairman, Zone 1

David McFall, Secretary-Treasurer, Zone 2

Garland Carter, Zone 2

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Kathryn Rainey, Zone 3

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24/7

**Outage
Hotline**

For information and
to report outages,
please call us.

LOCAL

(325) 793-8500

HANDY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

ONLINE

taylorelectric.com

TAYLOR ELECTRIC APP

Available on your Apple or Android device.

BY PHONE

(325) 793-8500

Payments credited immediately.

IN PERSON

Hours Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Merkel 226 CR 287, Merkel 79536

Abilene 7966 Highway 83, Abilene 79602

Payments credited immediately.

DROP BOX

Merkel office at front gate.

Abilene office next to first door on the left.

Payments credited next business day.

PAY STATIONS

• Cash Saver, 155 Sayles Blvd., Abilene

• United Supermarket, 2160 Pine St., Abilene

• Check Express, 906 E. Broadway Ave.,
Sweetwater

Payments credited next business day.

VISIT US ONLINE

taylorelectric.com



Check us out at

TexasCoopPower.com/taylor



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Co-op Outage Maps Keep You Informed

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES across the country use a powerful tool to aid power restoration and keep you informed during an outage. Outage maps are just what they sound like: a graphical representation of an outage displayed on a map of your electric co-op's service area.

The typical map will show where the outage is and, depending on the system's capability, include information such as the number of members without power, locations of crews (or their estimated time of arrival) and expected time of restoration.

Behind the map is a sophisticated system that provides the data needed to populate the graphic. This technology is considered part of the smart grid because it improves control, reduces outage length, increases reliability and provides information to employees, co-op members and the public.

Maintaining an accurate outage map starts with devices on the co-op's lines that can report their status to the cooperative, meaning they can indicate whether there is power at a meter. This data flows back over power or fiber-optic lines to a computer at the co-op. There it's analyzed, and the results are presented to the engineering and operations team for action.

Here's an example: Something causes a fault in the lines that blows a fuse or trips a circuit breaker. The cause could

be a gust of wind dropping a branch on a line, a furry critter deciding the brush around the transformer looks like dinner or a car hitting a pole.

The piece of equipment nearest the fault signals that it can't see anything down the line—or that it has “tripped.” Software then determines the extent of the outage, collecting information from other devices to determine where the flow of power stops. Once it has completed its detective work, the system generates a map showing the extent of the outage. (Of course, your co-op's employees can operate the program rather than waiting for the computer.)

Because of the power of the information contained in these maps, co-ops are making them available online so members can quickly check if their co-op knows their power is out and when it's expected to be restored—rather than waiting in a phone queue to learn about their power outage from a member service representative.

Outage maps are a great example of how co-ops work to keep members informed about their service. ■

March Challenge: Save More Energy

SPRING IS NEARLY HERE. While you're waiting for warmer weather, challenge yourself and your family to spend the last days of winter saving energy, even though it might still be frosty outdoors.

Consider making a game out of saving energy: Challenge your children to compete with each other to form energy-saving habits and to "catch" each other wasting energy.

Create a checklist for the contest and dream up a great prize for the winner. Some challenges:

Turn off the light every single time you leave a room.

Unplug appliances like TVs and computers at bedtime.

Don't leave phone chargers plugged in when there's no phone attached.

Switch off bathroom fans once the steam has cleared after a shower.

Wear sweaters and socks around the house so you can set the thermostat a bit lower.

Open exterior doors only to enter and exit the home; don't hold them open if you're not ready to walk through.

Turn off the TV and sound system when no one is watching TV. Don't leave the entertainment system powered up all day for background noise.

Take quick showers instead of baths to conserve the energy it takes to heat water.

Open blinds to let in the warm sunshine when the weather is cold and close the blinds to block heat when it's hot outside.

Keep the refrigerator door closed. Open it only briefly to retrieve food so the cold air stays in.

Do homework next to a window with natural light instead of turning on a light.

Turn off the water when brushing teeth to save water. ■



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Reuben Quesadillas

½ cup Thousand Island dressing
4 burrito-size flour tortillas
12 ounces corned beef, sliced thin
1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
2 cups sauerkraut, drained
½ teaspoon pepper (optional)

1. Spread 2 tablespoons of dressing on each tortilla. Divide corned beef equally between two tortillas, then sprinkle each with half of the cheese. Top each with half of the sauerkraut and pepper, if using, then place tortilla on top of each.
2. Heat a griddle over medium heat. Use cooking spray if needed, and grill the filled tortillas, one at a time, 4 minutes on one side, then flip and grill 4 minutes longer.
3. When quesadillas are done, slice each into 6 pieces.

SERVES 4

TCP Find this and more delicious recipes online at [TexasCoopPower.com](https://www.texascoopower.com).