

# CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,  
President / CEO

## Merry Christmas from Taylor EC

**T**HE HOLIDAYS ARE a time of reflection. I'm grateful for my own family as well as my co-op family at Taylor Electric Cooperative. We're driven by a sense of mission and purpose, and our team feels a strong connection to our community and our members because we live here too.

While many of our community-focused programs and activities ramp up this time of year, we have several programs and services in place to help our members year-round. I'd like to remind you about some of these offerings in hopes you'll find them beneficial.

We hope you'll take advantage of our smartphone app which empowers you to monitor your electricity usage and pay your energy bill through your phone.

Our Operation Round Up program helps our local volunteer fire departments in our community. By simply choosing to round up your electric bills to the next whole dollar, you can help your neighbors.

Through members' generous donations over the years, we've been able to give \$943,100 to our local volunteer fire departments. If you'd like to participate in our Operation Round Up program, please contact us at 325-793-8500.

One of the most important investments we make is in our local youths. Taylor EC has awarded more than \$100,000 in scholarships to local students through the years. And each year, through our Government-in-Action Youth Tour program, we send high school juniors and seniors to Washington, D.C., for an immersive weeklong experience of democracy in action.

At the heart of all of these programs is you—the members we proudly serve. Looking back, I'm grateful for so many wonderful community partners and for the positive impact we can continue to make.

This holiday season, I wish you and your loved ones peace, joy and prosperity. Speaking on behalf of our team at Taylor EC, I know the future will be bright because of you.



# CEO CORNER



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## Surprise Kids With Electric Toys Under the Tree

THE “BEST TOYS” LISTS for the holiday season include a few items that teach about electricity or use it to operate. Here are some child-tested favorites.

**National Geographic kits.** The Potato Battery Kit teaches kids about electricity as they build a potato clock with a voltmeter. The Coin Powered Flashlight is an experiment that shows children how to make a battery with coins. They can watch the electric circuit in action when they turn on the flashlight. Astounding Science Experiments teaches little ones about electrical engineering. The series includes several other science kits.

**Kidzone Electric Vehicle Bumper Car.** This motorized ride-on mini bumper car for kids lets them drive around while colliding with everything that gets in their way.

**Razor Miniature Dirt Rocket.** This scaled-down, electric-powered dirt bike is recommended for children 7 and older. For outdoor off-road adventures, the bike features rear-wheel drive for weight and balance control, which helps with safety and stability.

**Little Tikes My Real Jam Electric Guitar Music Toy.** A realistic electric guitar, case and strap lets your little one pretend to be a rock star. It includes four “superstar play modes” that play music while your child pretends to strum.

**Electronic Ride-On Excavator.** A little “driver” can move the excavator with his or her legs and slide the levers to operate the motorized digger. The toy has sound effects to mimic a construction rig and includes a 6-volt rechargeable battery and charger. ■

## Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

### CONTACT US

226 County Road 287, Merkel, TX 79536

P.O. Box 250, Merkel, TX 79536

Phone (325) 793-8500

Web [taylorelectric.com](http://taylorelectric.com)

### 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

Richard Petree, At-Large

Kathryn Rainey, Zone 3

Gay Simmons, Zone 3

**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](http://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](http://taylorelectric.com)



Check us out at

[TexasCoopPower.com/taylor](http://TexasCoopPower.com/taylor)



HALFPOINT | ISTOCK.COM

## Store Electric Decorations Safely After Christmas

**EVERY YEAR AFTER** the holidays, you carefully zip your artificial Christmas tree into a waterproof bag. You lovingly place your precious ornaments into padded boxes. You neatly fold your leftover wrapping paper and stack it in a plastic box so it will come out fresh and ready next December.

But are you jamming tangles of electric light strands into a box that's a little bit too small? And how about the extension cords that let you plug your tree into an outlet that is way too far away for a regular cord to reach?

It's a good bet that those extension cords are still plugged in.

Once this holiday season is over, take as much care with electrical cords as you do with the family heirlooms that help make your holidays special. Here are five ways to keep your light strands in good shape and prevent them from becoming next winter's fire hazard.

As you take down each strand of lights, inspect it for broken or burned-out bulbs. Replace the bulbs and discard any strands with frayed or damaged cords.

Label each strand of lights to remind you where you like to

hang it. A year is a long time to remember those details.

Pack up all extension cords along with the decorations. Extension cords are designed for temporary use and are not safe for continual use.

Invest in a storage wheel designed for string lights and a bag sized for the reels. That will keep the cords from tangling, the bulbs from breaking, and the weather and bugs from ruining your lights. Or, instead of a reel, use a rectangular piece of cardboard with a slit cut in one end. Slide one end of your lights in the slit and then wrap the strand around the cardboard and slide the end into the slit. Your lights will remain tangle-free until next year.

Remove batteries from decorations before you put them away. You use the decorations only for about one month every year, and the batteries likely won't last until next December, even if they're dormant. Plus, batteries can corrode and leak all over your packed-up electric toys and decorations. ■

# Merry Christmas From Your Co-op's Member Services Team

**TAYLOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** employs local people who serve our members. Even with technology in place empowering you to address most matters online, your co-op still has smiling faces behind its counters and at the other end of our phone lines—something you may appreciate even more during the Christmas season.

Our member services team is solely responsible for assisting Taylor EC members with their electricity inquiries. As the face and voice of our co-op, this dedicated group is always ready to help. That personal connection when signing up for service, learning about rebate opportunities or having your billing questions answered is what this caring bunch enjoys most about their jobs.

Many of them are Taylor EC members themselves, sharing power lines with the membership. So when your electricity goes out, so does theirs. They do everything they can to provide the best service possible for your best interests and their own because we are all members. Meeting members' needs in the quickest and safest way is their No. 1 goal.

You may be interested to know that when these amazing men and women aren't helping Taylor EC members, they're taking their children to 4-H meetings, attending Friday night football games and simply enjoying their community over the holiday season.

Taylor EC is committed to the people we serve, and our member services department exemplifies that commitment. Not only do they strive to help, they also work to make sure our members know we are all Taylor EC family.

As family, you're always welcome to give us a call or stop by your cooperative offices to ask questions about your electric service or just to say merry Christmas. ■



DRAGONIMAGES | ISTOCK.COM



RON BAILEY | ISTOCK.COM

## Pecan Pie Muffins

- 1 cup chopped pecans**
- 1 cup brown sugar**
- ½ cup flour**
- ½ teaspoon baking powder**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium-size bowl, stir together pecans, brown sugar, flour, baking powder and salt.
2. Add melted butter, eggs and vanilla to bowl and stir to mix well.
3. Spoon batter into a foil-lined muffin pan. (Batter will stick to regular paper muffin cups.) Fill each cup about ¾ full. Bake 20–25 minutes.

**MAKES 12 MUFFINS**

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

# Merry Christmas

From Taylor Electric Cooperative

Our offices will be closed Friday, December 23, and Monday, December 26, in observance of the holiday.

## Watch Out for Fa-la-la-la Fakes

**WHETHER YOU'RE BUYING** lights to trim the tree or power tools to wrap as gifts, beware of bogus bounty this holiday season.

Many home products are illegally counterfeited, placing the purchaser—or the recipient of the perilous present—in danger of using faulty electrical equipment that doesn't meet safety standards.

As you do your holiday shopping, inspect your purchases for a mark from a reputable product safety testing organization, like CSA International or UL. Here are some tips to help you spot illegal counterfeiting.

If the product has an unbelievably low price, it's probably a fake. Compare the prices and warranties of similar products.

Touch and examine the product. Counterfeits are often light and feel cheaply made.

Check for misspellings or unclear printing on labels, packaging and instructions.

Poorly designed or unclear packaging with only partial illustrations could be a sign of a fake.

Look for missing items in the product box and for items that appear different from those described on the packaging.

Don't count on the retailer to weed out the offending merchandise. Even reputable vendors can be duped. ■



AQUARTS STUDIO | ISTOCK.COM



CHARLES MANN | ISTOCK.COM

## Don't Ignore Your Water Heater

**YOU PROBABLY NEVER** see it, but your water heater works hard all year round to make sure your family can take hot showers, rinse caked-on food off of dishes and wash your clothes at any temperature you choose.

During the winter, however, the water heater works even harder. Cold weather means it has to spend extra energy to heat water. Extra showers, laundry and dirty dishes during the holiday season mean heating more tanks of water to keep up.

So don't ignore it. Like any appliance, your water heater needs attention and maintenance to stay in good working condition.

**Take a look.** Most homeowners don't look at their water heaters until there's a problem, but a glance every now and then could keep those problems at bay. If the outside of the tank is rusting or if water is leaking from it or you see rusty water stains on the floor surrounding it, call a plumber right away.

**Reset the temperature.** It's easier than you think to accidentally raise or lower the temperature setting on a water heater, just by knocking it with a mop while you're cleaning the floor, for example. Verify that the appliance is set to 120 degrees. You'll notice a difference in the water temperature in the shower if it's too low or too high.

**Insulate the water heater.** Insulating the pipes and tanks will keep heat inside the tank and prevent it from escaping into the air. Consider investing in an inexpensive water heater blanket, usually made from foil or fiberglass. It will help the tank maintain a consistent temperature. A tip: Leave it on year-round.

**Call for service.** An annual flush will remove sediment and minerals that can build up in the tank and reduce the water heater's efficiency and life span. ■

THURSDAY

20

APRIL

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SAVE THE DATE

**Taylor Electric  
Cooperative's  
84th Annual Meeting**

April 20, 2023



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## Notice of Deadline for a Place on the Election Ballot

**NOTICE IS HEREBY** given that applications for a place on the Board of Directors for Taylor Electric Cooperative, Inc., regular election ballot may be filed during the following time:

### Filing Dates and Times

**Start Date:** January 2, 2023

**End Date:** February 2, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.