

# CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,  
President / CEO

## You're More Than a Customer

Author Anthony J. D'Angelo once observed that “without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community.”

To a large degree, this reflects Taylor Electric Cooperative's philosophy toward our consumer-members and the broader community that we serve. As a cooperative, we have a different bottom line. While our priority is always to provide reliable and safe energy, there is another equally important part of this equation: the well-being of our membership.

To us, you're not just a customer—you're a member of our co-op, and without you, we couldn't exist.

In 1939, Taylor EC was founded to fulfill a vital need in our community that otherwise would not have been met. Concerned local leaders came together to build this co-op and bring electricity where there was none.

At that time, members of the community understood we were different because they likely knew someone who helped form Taylor EC. For many people, the circumstances of our founding have been long forgotten, and over time, folks in the community may have come to think of us as simply another energy provider. But we aren't. We're a cooperative constantly evolving to meet the needs of the communities we serve, and we're able to do this because of members like you.

Since our inception, we've sought feedback and engagement from you and the broader community to guide our long-term decisions. This is why we hold annual meetings and other events: to engage with you and obtain your feedback.

That feedback helps guide important co-op decisions that improve and enrich the community. We value the perspective of our elected board members, who are members of the co-op and community—just like you.

We strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently. We're always looking to explore options that will help you manage your energy use. And we always seek to keep pace with the changing energy environment, evolving technology and shifting consumer expectations.

As a local business, Taylor EC has a stake in the community. That's why we support local charitable organizations and offer scholarships to local students. When you support these efforts, you're supporting the community and making it a better place for everyone.

While times have changed since our co-op was founded, our mission and outlook have not. We view our role as a catalyst for good. Working together, we can accomplish great things for our community—now and in the future.



# CEO CORNER



SAVE THE DATE

## Taylor EC's 84th Annual Meeting APRIL 20

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## Consider Upgrading Your Electrical Service

**IF YOUR LIGHTS FLICKER** or go out or circuits blow when you plug in electronics or appliances, your home may need an electric service upgrade. An upgrade can be expensive and complicated, but the alternative is a dangerous, unstable electrical system that can cause shocks and fire. The Energy Education Council's Safe Electricity program has information and tips to make upgrading your electric service easier.

Electricity enters a home through an electric panel fed by power lines. If your electric service seems inadequate, your panel may need to be updated so more electricity can enter your home. Consider getting your electric service upgraded by a professional electrician if any of the following applies to you:

- ▶ You recently remodeled or added a room.
- ▶ You have new large appliances, such as a hot tub, water heater or air conditioner.
- ▶ You plan on charging an electric vehicle.
- ▶ Circuits trip, lights flicker or electronics turn off when you run too many electronics.
- ▶ You live in an older home. Older homes weren't designed to accommodate today's electronics and appliances.

If any of these circumstances apply to you, the first step is consulting a qualified electrician. An electrician will be able to tell you if you need a service upgrade or if your electric service has another issue. Consult several electricians to get different opinions. Ask for references, and choose an electrician based on their qualifications and how much you trust them—not just the price. ■

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## 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)

# Nominating Committee To Meet February 21

Candidate applications due February 2 at 5:30 p.m.

**TAYLOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S NOMINATING** committee will meet February 21 at 10 a.m. to elect candidates for the 2023 board of directors ballot.

Committee members, who each represent a zone within Taylor EC's service territory, will screen and interview applicants to be placed on the ballot. Voting for the director seats will take place at the 84th annual meeting.

If you or someone you know is interested in running for a seat on the board of directors, an eligibility checklist and applications are available at Taylor EC's headquarters.

Applications are due by 5:30 p.m. February 2. Completed applications can be mailed or faxed to the Taylor EC headquarters:

**Taylor Electric Cooperative,  
Attn: Nominating Committee**  
P.O. Box 250, Merkel, TX 79536  
Fax: (325) 793-9680

## Taylor EC Nominating Committee

### Zone 1—Taylor County

Craig Bessent, chairman,  
(325) 692-5937

Colleen Richards, (325) 829-7228

### Zone 2—Callahan, Eastland, Jones and Shackelford counties

Tom Edd Johnson, (806) 928-8872

Ashley Thompson, (325) 529-6643

Dee Vinson, (325) 668-6096

### Zone 3—Coke, Fisher and Nolan counties

Terry Locklar, (325) 320-6349

Jesse Mulanax, (325) 235-4278

Mary Ussery, (325) 798-3645



## Generator Safety

**PORTABLE GENERATORS ARE** a godsend during a prolonged electrical outage—just be sure to use extreme caution while operating them.

- ▶ Never try to power the house by plugging the generator into a wall outlet. This dangerous practice, known as backfeeding, reverses the electricity flow and sends it out of your house, endangering electric workers and your neighbors. If you must connect the generator to the house wiring, have a qualified electrician do it.
  - ▶ Plug appliances directly into the generator or use an extension cord that is rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Check that the entire cord is free of damage and that the plug has all its prongs.
  - ▶ Keep the generator dry and do not use it indoors, in a garage, near open doors or windows, or in rainy or wet conditions.
- Taylor Electric Cooperative encourages you to always practice safety.



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**National Girls and  
Women in Sports Day**  
Wednesday, February 1

**Valentine's Day**  
Tuesday, February 14

**Presidents Day**  
Monday, February 20

**World Understanding  
and Peace Day**  
Thursday, February 23

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## Be Prepared for Power Outages

**CONTROLLED POWER OUTAGES**, like those that occurred in Texas in February 2021, can occur any time of the year—whenever extreme temperatures create demand that overloads the electrical grid. Here are a few tips from the Department of Energy on how you can prepare your home and office to safely navigate such a situation.

Keep a flashlight in each room of your house and in your office. Keep plenty of batteries on hand, too, or consider light sticks or a hand-cranked or shake-charging flashlight that doesn't need batteries.

Have the emergency number for Taylor Electric Cooperative handy in case you need to call.

Keep a cooler readily available to store medications that must remain cold. Keep ice packs ready for the cooler by storing them in your freezer, and if you don't have a cooler, keep the refrigerator and freezer closed for as long as possible during a power outage to keep food from spoiling.

If you use electricity for your water, such as a well with an electric pump, have enough water available to last a couple of days. You should have at least a gallon of drinking water per person per day in your house for drinking and cooking. Nonpotable water uses, such as for flushing toilets, can use water from melted snow or rain barrels.

Have sustainably sourced disposable utensils and dinnerware on hand so you don't need to use water to wash dishes.

Keep the pantry stocked with easy-to-open, nonperishable foods that don't require cooking.

If you buy a backup generator, make sure it's installed by a licensed electrician. Check with your local building codes authority to see if a permit is needed, and ensure the system has an automatic breaker that disconnects your house from the cooperative's electricity lines when it's running. This prevents electricity from leaking back into the grid and making it dangerous for utility workers. Conduct regular maintenance to make sure the backup generator is in good working order.

If you have an outdoor gas grill, keep the gas tank full, or if it's an open-burning grill, make sure to have plenty of charcoal or wood on hand.

Keep a household first-aid kit and a disaster preparedness backpack kit.

Have a household disaster plan that you and your family can follow in the event of an extended power outage or other emergency. ■

## Yummy Ummy Bars

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted
- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk (14 ounces)
- ½ cup chopped peanuts
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup peanut butter chips

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Pour butter into a 13-by-9-inch glass baking dish and sprinkle graham cracker crumbs evenly over top. Pour sweetened condensed milk over crumbs. Top with peanuts, chocolate and peanut butter chips, pressing down firmly.
3. Bake 25–30 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. Cut into bars.

**MAKES 15 BARS**

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

ARZAMASOVA NATALIYA | ISTOCK.COM





MIKHAIL OLYKAYEN | ISTOCK.COM

## Points To Consider Before Replacing Windows

**IF YOUR HOME'S WINDOWS** are very old, and if you can feel a chill when you stand near them when the weather is cold, you might consider replacing them. Just be sure to prepare yourself for a bit of sticker shock when you get your first bid for replacing windows. To help you decide if replacement is the right move, you'll want to consider a few factors.

### Increased Comfort

When you're near a cold surface, such as a window, you can feel chilly even if the temperature inside your home is over 70 degrees. The inside surface of an inefficient, single-pane window will be much colder on a winter night than that of a double- or triple-pane window.

Window coverings are one approach to increasing the comfort level of your home. Curtains and blinds are very effective at reducing radiant heat loss in the winter and can even block some unwanted heat gain in the summer.

Another consideration is the sun. If you have lots of winter sunshine, you should take this into account as you ponder window replacement. Some windows are better at letting the sun's heat into the home than others.

### Appearance and Function

If your windows are older, you may be considering new wood- or vinyl-framed windows for an exterior facelift. But keep in mind that if you own an older home with classic wooden windows, vinyl replacements might look out of place. It's possible to buy new windows that match the style of some older wooden windows, or you could decide to apply a little elbow grease to

get them back into shape. Wooden windows, even if they were built before 1960, can last the life of the home.

If your existing windows don't open or are hard to clean, replacing them might be your best bet.

### Resale Value

Windows are a major point of interest for some prospective homebuyers, which is why we often hear that window replacement is good for resale value. But a 2019 study by the National Association of Realtors found that on average across the U.S., installing new vinyl windows cost about \$22,000 per home but increased resale value by only \$16,500. Only 4% of realtors said that new windows helped close the sale.

### Energy Savings

Companies that sell new windows sometimes advertise greater energy savings than the new windows can actually deliver. The amount of energy you save really depends on the efficiency of your existing windows compared to the efficiency of the replacement windows. An energy auditor can estimate potential savings, but most audits show that there are much more cost-effective energy-saving investments than replacing windows.

On average, according to Energy Star, replacing single-pane windows in a 2,000-square-foot home with Energy Star-certified windows will produce average savings of \$125–\$340 a year, depending on where you live. At this rate, it would take a decade or more to pay off your initial investment. ■

# Working Alarms Could Save Your Life

**IF YOUR HOME** has a fireplace or any gas appliances, you should have carbon monoxide alarms in or near every bedroom.

The CO alarm will react when it senses that carbon monoxide levels in your house are too high, usually because an appliance is malfunctioning. CO alarms do not detect natural gas leaks.

Here are eight tips for ensuring your CO alarms work when you need them:

- 1.** Most warranties cover only five years, so replace your alarms at least that often.
- 2.** Replace batteries at least once a year or when the device starts making a chirping sound. That's usually the indication of a low battery.
- 3.** Test the alarms regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions—often by pressing and holding the test button for 20 seconds.
- 4.** Install CO alarms at least 10 feet away from sources of humidity like showers and bathrooms, where steam can trigger false alarms.
- 5.** Place a CO alarm on every level of your house and at the top of the basement stairs, even if there are no bedrooms on those floors.
- 6.** Do not put an alarm in the garage or kitchen or a room with a gas furnace.
- 7.** If your alarm goes off too often, it probably means it's too close to a fireplace, gas furnace or stove. It also could mean that your gas appliances are not burning the fuel completely. If you see a yellow or orange pilot light, that could be the case. Call a plumber to check it out.
- 8.** Leave alarms plugged in all year, not just during heating season. Your gas stove, clothes dryer and water heater are potential sources of dangerous leaks. And a running vehicle in the garage can cause deadly gas buildup in the home. ■



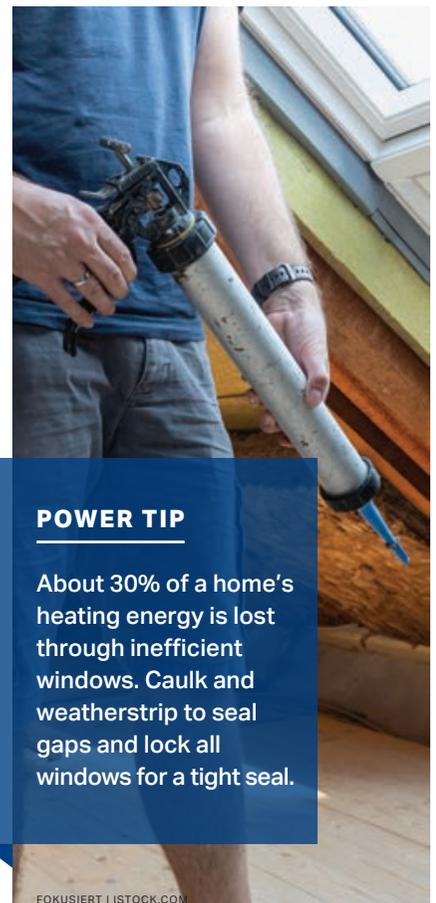
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## DID YOU KNOW?

The American Red Cross offers emergency survival kits, from first-aid kits to survival backpacks, for sale at [redcross.org/store](https://www.redcross.org/store).

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## POWER TIP

About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip to seal gaps and lock all windows for a tight seal.

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