The Value of Co-op Careers

MESSAGE FROM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ROBERT A. LOTH III

THE COOPERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL serves both an economic and a social purpose. Central Texas Electric Cooperative operates on a nonprofit basis so that we can pass along the best electric rates to you, our members. In addition to providing this service, we care about our members and the communities we serve, and we want you to be involved in our business. At Central Texas EC, our employees believe in the cooperative difference.

Over the next several years, our country will see a major shift in the professional landscape. Many businesses are already noticing this change as the Baby Boomer generation moves into retirement and their children and grandchildren—the "millennial" generation—begin to move into the workforce and advance in their careers.

NRECA

As electric cooperative employees retire, new workers are finding rewarding careers.

The millennial generation is the largest population of adults to move into the workforce since the Baby Boomers. They are highly educated and, after weathering a recession while trying to break into the workforce, they are motivated by the ability to gain work experience that can turn into a meaningful and rewarding career.

Driven by values and attracted to a company's strong mission and culture over salary and compensation, millennials are uniquely suited for careers at their local electric cooperatives. Central Texas EC's dedication to our community and our focus on people, not profits, make it an ideal work environment for such individuals seeking to develop meaningful careers.

Simultaneously, within the next five years, 20 percent of America's electric cooperative employees will be eligible for retirement. We are looking to future generations to move us forward and to help us prepare for an evolving global economy and the changes that will come with new policies and regulations, both in the environmental and security sectors. We need people who will help us do this while ensuring that we remain true to our mission: providing safe, reliable and affordable electric service, and improving the quality of life for our members.

Whether you're ready to start your career or make a career change, take a closer look at electric cooperatives. There are electric co-ops located in 47 states—and of course, plenty are right here at home in Texas.

Building and strengthening our community has always been our top priority. Building the next generation of employees is now critical to maintaining the success of our mission and our business model. To learn more about electric co-op careers, visit ctec.coop or touchstoneenergy.coop.

Attend Your Co-op District Meeting

BE A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER. Attend and participate in your district's meeting in the first two weeks of June. Meetings start promptly at 6:30 p.m. Here's the schedule:

MONDAY, JUNE 1—DISTRICT 6
(San Saba County area)
Cherokee High School Cafeteria

TUESDAY, JUNE 2—DISTRICT 3
(Mason/McCulloch/Menard/Northern Kimble counties area)
Cafeteria at the Mason Junior High campus
Director Nominee Election

THURSDAY, JUNE 4—DISTRICT 2
(Kerr/Real/southern Kimble counties area)
NEW LOCATION: Ingram Elementary School Cafetorium

MONDAY, JUNE 8—DISTRICT 4
(Llano County area)
Llano High School Auditorium
Director Nominee Election

TUESDAY, JUNE 9—DISTRICT 1
(Kendall County area)
Comfort High School Cafeteria
Director Nominee Election

THURSDAY, JUNE 11—DISTRICT 5
(Gillespie/Blanco County area)
Fredericksburg High School Auditorium
Director Nominee Election

Member meetings will be held in each district, but only Districts 1, 3, 4 and 5 will elect a candidate for the board of directors. Districts 2 and 6 will still meet to exchange information between co-op management and members. An important video will be presented that explains current issues affecting CTEC members.

NOTE: Kerr County members will meet at a new location this year due to construction at Ingram High School. The District 2 meeting will be at the Ingram Elementary School Cafetorium at 125 Brave Run in Ingram.

Please remember to check the May issue of Texas Co-op Power to see what district you're in, and bring the registration card from that issue to your meeting to expedite registration. Each member attending will receive a $10 bill credit. See you at the meeting!

The best place for a cord that looks like this is the trash can.

U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION

Putting Safety First This Month

And throughout the year

IT'S JUNE—AND CENTRAL TEXAS EC is celebrating National Safety Month. Safety for our members and employees is our top priority year-round, and now is a good time to take an even closer look at the importance of safety.

This year, we're focusing on electrical safety in the home. Electricity is the cause of more than 140,000 fires each year, resulting in more than 500 deaths, 4,000 injuries and $1.6 billion in property damage, according to Electrical Safety Foundation International.

There are many measures you can take to ensure the safety of your loved ones. Use these helpful tips to safeguard your home.

In the Kitchen

- Ensure that all countertop appliances are located away from the sink.
- Keep all appliance cords away from hot surfaces. Pay particular attention to cords around toasters, ovens and ranges. Cords can be damaged by excess heat.
- The top and the area above the cooking range should be free of combustibles, such as potholders and plastic utensils. Storing these items on or near the range may result in fires or burns.

Light the Way to Safety

- The wattage of the bulbs you use in your home should match the wattage indicated on the light fixtures. Overheated fixtures can lead to a fire.
- Check lamp, appliance and extension cords to make sure they are in good condition—not damaged or cracked. Do not attempt to repair damaged cords yourself.
- Extension cords should not be used to provide power on a long-term or permanent basis. Have additional outlets installed by a professional to provide power where needed.

Be Prepared

- Nearly two-thirds of fire deaths result from fires in homes without working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be located on every level of your home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area.
- Test smoke alarms every month. Batteries should be replaced at least once a year. All smoke alarms should be replaced at least every 10 years.

Central Texas Electric Cooperative

Fredericksburg (headquarters)
386 Friendship Lane
Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Llano
1410 E. State Hwy. 29, Llano

Kingsland
Nob Hill Subdivision
706 Cottonwood St., Kingsland

Mason
983 N. U.S. Hwy. 87, Mason

Office Hours
8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday

Website
ctec.coop

Emergency Contact

To report electric service interruptions, please call the Central Texas Electric Cooperative office in your area at the numbers listed below:

FREDERICKSBURG AREA
(830) 997-2126
1-800-900-CTEC (2832)
including Gillespie, Kendall, Kerr, Blanco, Real and Kimble counties

LLANO AND SAN SABA AREAS
(325) 247-4191

THE LAKES AREA
(325) 388-4542
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(325) 247-4191
after business hours

MASON AREA
(325) 347-6314
including McCulloch, Menard and Kimble counties

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Always treat a downed wire as if it's energized because there is no way for you to know by looking whether it is hot or not.

Electrical Fact and Myth: Know the Difference

WHEN IT COMES TO ELECTRICITY, you have to know the facts. They might save your life one day. Here are some common electrical myths proved false:

Myth: Once an electrical line is down, it is dead.

Fact: The electric current does not always turn off when a power line is down. Even if lines do not show signs of life (arcing, smoking, buzzing, popping), they can still hold a dangerous electrical current. Always treat a downed wire as if it's energized because there is no way for you to know by looking whether it is hot or not. Just stay away, and keep others away.

Myth: All power lines are insulated.

Fact: Most power lines actually are not insulated. The coating on the lines is mainly for weatherproofing and will not offer any protection from the electrical current. Even if a power line is insulated, its insulation can crack due to weather, reducing its safety. No matter the case, it is never safe to touch a power line.

Myth: There is no need to worry about power lines when digging a hole.

Fact: Always call 811 before you dig to have a professional come to your home and locate buried public utility lines, free of charge. No matter the size of a digging project, if you come into contact with a buried power line, you could be electrocuted or seriously injured.

Myth: It is safe to work around a power line at home as long as direct contact is not made.

Fact: Electricity can jump, or "arc," from a line to the nearest conductor—which could be you. Always keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet from power lines. This goes for ladders, pool skimmers, pruning poles and any other equipment. Always be aware of where power lines are so you do not risk electric shock. If you are planning to trim trees or attempt any do-it-yourself project near power lines, always call professionals for the job instead.

Myth: It is safe to remove the third prong from a plug.

Fact: The third prong is a safety feature designed to reduce the risk of shock or electrocution. That prong grounds the electrical current. If the outlet is only fit for a two-pronged plug, replace the outlet with a three-pronged one—or, even better, a ground-fault circuit interrupter outlet, which prevents electric shocks.

Myth: Tires insulate my car from electrical dangers.

Fact: If a wire falls on your car while you are in it, the tires do not keep you from being injured by the electricity. The vehicle is the path to ground for the electrical current, so while you remain in the car, you are safe. As soon as you step out of the car, you become the path to ground and are in immediate danger.

If you find yourself in a situation where your car has hit a utility pole or power lines have fallen onto or near it, stay in the car and warn others to stay away. Wait for a utility crew to cut the power to the lines. Only exit the car if it is on fire.

Make sure to not touch the ground and the car at the same time. Jump from the car, keeping your feet together, and hop away from the scene.

Geared Up for Safety

CAN YOU IMAGINE WORKING A JOB that requires you to lift heavy equipment and perform detailed tasks near deadly high voltage? Now imagine doing this 40 feet in the air and, sometimes, in extreme weather. This is the life of a lineman.

These brave individuals answer when called—and they do so to ensure that you are provided with safe, reliable electric service. But how do they stay safe when working in these conditions? Central Texas EC linemen are required to wear personal protective equipment, or PPE, to keep them safe at all times when on the job.

Let's take a look at a lineman's PPE:

Fire-resistant clothing. While our linemen do everything possible to prevent them, unexpected fires can happen. Fires typically occur with an arc flash, an explosion that results from a low-impedance connection to a ground phase in an electrical system. Fire-resistant clothing will self-extinguish, thus limiting burn injuries.

© MIKE BARNS

Linemen are required to wear personal protective equipment, or PPE, to keep them safe at all times when on the job.

Insulated gloves. Linemen must wear insulated rubber gloves when working on any type of electrical line. These gloves provide protection against electrical shock and burns, and are tested at 30,000 volts. Protective gloves, usually made of leather, are worn over the insulated gloves to protect the rubber from punctures and cuts.

Hardhat. No matter how tough or "hardheaded" our linemen are, they still need protection. Insulated hardhats are worn at all times to protect them from blows and falling objects.

Steel-toed boots. These heavy-duty boots are typically 16 inches tall and designed with extra support in mind. The height of the boot shields linemen from gouges, and serrated heels provide a better grip when climbing poles. The steel toe provides sturdier support and protects from objects that could potentially damage a lineman's feet.

Safety goggles. Linemen must wear protective goggles or glasses, whether working on electrical lines or clearing rights-of-way. This protects eyes from loose debris and other hazards.

These items make up a lineman's basic PPE. While working on electrical lines, lineworkers also may be required to wear equipment belts, tool pouches, safety straps and other types of equipment. A lineman's gear usually weighs about 50 pounds. That's a lot of extra weight when climbing a pole in hazardous conditions.

The next time you see a lineman, be sure to thank him for keeping the lights on. But more important, thank him for the difficult—and often dangerous—work he does, day in and day out.

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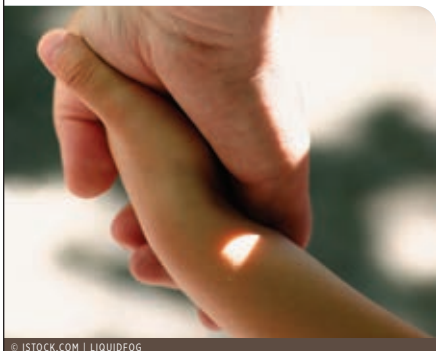
Power Tip

Having your AC inspected by a professional before you fire it up for the summer can save you money and headaches in the future. A serviceperson should check the motor, blower, drain line, coils, operating pressures and temperatures, return and supply lines, refrigerant levels and the air filter.



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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person: He believed in me. *—Jim Valvano*

Harding Wins Trip to Washington, DC

Editor's note: This essay earned Kaitlyn Harding, a student at Cherokee High School, a trip to Washington, D.C., in Central Texas Electric Cooperative's Government-in-Action Youth Tour Contest. Her essay is the third in a series of winning compositions that will be printed in Texas Co-op Power. The views expressed in this essay are not necessarily those of Central Texas Electric Cooperative.

The essay was written on this theme: "Many people take getting electricity for granted; they flip the switch, and it's there. But the process of delivering reliable electricity involves a team of experts in management, engineering and operations, accounting, customer service, information technology, equipment operation, human resources, vehicle maintenance, public relations and more."

The essay was required to answer the question: "What type of career can you see someone having at an electric co-op, and what advantage would working for a local co-op provide?"

BY KAITLYN HARDING

SINCE ITS DISCOVERY BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, electricity has grown and developed into a very complex necessity in our lives. Many people do not fully understand how complex electricity has become. The general knowledge obtained by most people about electricity is that when a switch is flipped, the lights come on, or when a phone is plugged in, it begins to charge. An electrical co-op requires a complex variety of jobs that help deliver electricity to our home and community.

A job that I could easily see someone having at an electrical co-op would be working in the customer service department. As a worker in customer service, one would have to talk to people who are having trouble with their electricity and help solve the problem. Often the people having trouble will become angry easily and say harsh or rude things out of their anger. A customer service worker would have to be level-headed as well as patient. He or she would also have to have knowledge of electricity in order to help the customer.

Being a worker at an electrical co-op has many opportunities to benefit oneself as well as the others around. Working at a co-op gives many chances for all workers to come together and make decisions about how the co-op is run and how the electricity runs through the town. Because the co-op is local, any changes and decisions made would most likely directly affect the electricity running through the workers' home, and helping decide what is changed about this electricity would directly benefit a worker at a co-op.

In a fast-paced world like the one we live in today, time and money are looked at as things that people cannot get enough of. As a customer service worker, one would have a general knowledge of electricity; therefore, when one has troubles in his or her own house, he or she would know what to do in that particular situation. Knowing how to fix one's own problems could save a person time and money that he or she could use elsewhere.

An electrical co-op consists of an extremely complex web of people, all with many unique skills contributing to multiple jobs that directly affect many businesses throughout the town as well as the homes of the workers and others. Working as a customer service attendant in a local co-op means that one would be working with a close group of people as well as making decisions that affect the whole town. Having a job that would allow one to make decisions that affect a large group of people as well as oneself, or a job that equips one with the skills to fix one's own problem within his or her own home, would be extremely rewarding. A person with this job would appreciate the rewards, benefits and life skills that come with being a customer service worker at a local electricity co-op.


WE KEEP THEM UP HERE FOR A REASON.
STAY CLEAR OF DOWNED POWER LINES.
Helping members use electricity safely: That's the power of your co-op membership.
Learn more from the experts themselves at *TogetherWeSave.com*.
Central Texas Electric Co-op
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner