

What it Takes to Get Your Power Back On



MESSAGE FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ROBERT A. LOTH III

WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT, some folks wonder why it takes Central Texas Electric Cooperative so long to turn them back on. Isn't it as easy as a flip of a switch? Unfortunately, it is not. To help members understand the time and effort involved, let's examine the meticulous process of restoring power after an outage.

When an outage is reported, the dispatcher sends linemen to the area to pinpoint the affected location. Once crews arrive, they investigate potential causes. Our crews already know where the fuses and breakers are and which one is predicted to be open. (Fuses and breakers are closed when operative and open when there is an outage.)

When a crew identifies the open device, the dispatcher enters this information into the system, providing an indication on every account affected.

Next, linemen patrol the line that is without power. This could mean driving or walking past miles of line, closely examining every pole, transformer, wire, crossarm and insulator to see if anything is out of the ordinary. The crews also look for animals, balloons, tree limbs and other objects that could be touching the lines. If it is dark, stormy or foggy, weather conditions can make this process longer and harder for our linemen.

Once they locate the cause of the outage, the linemen verify again that the line is not energized before installing grounding devices on the line to ensure their safety. After placing the necessary safeguards, they can begin working to solve the problems—and those can seem endless.

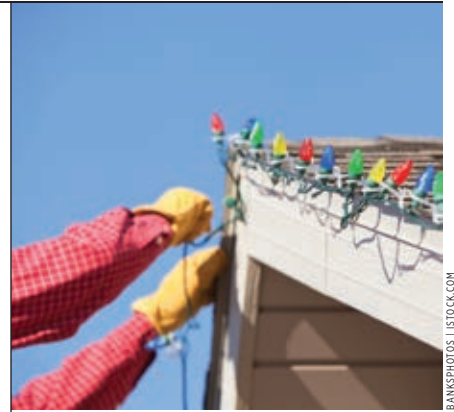
Linemen might have to cut up a tree that has fallen on a line, requiring chain saws and other ground-maintenance equipment. They might need to remove broken lines and string new ones. They might have to remove a broken pole and install a new pole, transformer and other equipment. In that case, linemen must call the co-op office with details such as size and type, then wait while the equipment is delivered.

Also, if a new hole must be dug for a pole, the linemen must call for someone to locate underground telephone or gas lines in the area. This kind of "emergency locate" requires a minimum of two hours to respond to the request, but it might take longer to get a state-certified contractor to check the area for other underground utilities. The linemen are not permitted to dig until the contractor has approved the area for digging. For this reason, our men will often attempt to pull the old pole out of the ground and put the new pole in the same hole.

Once a new pole and equipment are installed, wires spliced back together and any other required repairs made, the grounding devices must be removed from the lines. Then finally, power can be restored.

As you can see, outage restoration is a complicated process, requiring painstaking attention and compliance with many safety measures. It can't be accomplished with just the flip of a switch. But our linemen always work as quickly and safely as possible to ensure that your power returns as quickly possible.

As always, we thank you for your patience and cooperation as we work to restore your power.



Remove Outdoor Holiday Lights Safely

WHEN YOU REMOVE YOUR outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

Suit up. Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home.

Look up. Note whether light strands are touching power lines hanging close to your roof. If they are, do not touch! If they're clear, use extra care when removing. Report low-hanging lines to your electric cooperative.

Unplug. If strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or each other when you start dismantling, you could get a shock.

Be gentle. Don't tug, pull, rip or yank lights loose. Take them down one section at a time and loop the strands around your elbow.

Inspect. Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires and other damage. Inspect decorations after each year's use and throw away any damaged strands.

Take your time. The weather was probably warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January, so you might try to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage shrubs, trees, gutters or eaves—or yourself.

Get help. Consider hiring a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove holiday lights next year. They have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto the roof and up trees, and handle electrical wires.

CTEC Gives High School Students the Chance To Visit Washington, DC

THREE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS from the Central Texas Electric Cooperative service area will be selected to participate in the 53rd annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour, June 7–16. Through this trip, students gain a personal understanding of American history as well as their roles as U.S. citizens.

In 1957, senator and future president Lyndon Baines Johnson inspired the Youth Tour when he addressed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting in Chicago, saying, “If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents.”

Eligible high school students can submit an essay for a chance to win a spot on the trip of a lifetime. Participation is open to high school students who will complete their sophomore year by May 2017. The deadline for essays to be submitted is January 27.

Youth Tour is a fun-filled trip to the U.S. capital with about 150 students and chaperones provided by sponsoring cooperatives from across Texas. The fun starts in Austin, where participants will visit the State Capitol and the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum before departing for Washington, D.C.

Some of the highlights of the agenda include visiting the White House, National Cathedral, Pentagon City Mall, Mount Vernon, Union Station, Smithsonian Institution, memorials, Capitol Hill, Supreme Court and Library of Congress; witnessing a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery and the Sunset Parade at the Iwo Jima Memorial; watching a performance at the Kennedy Center; going on a Potomac River boat cruise that features dinner and dancing; and much more!

All expenses for the three winners on the tour (except personal items such as souvenirs, etc.) are paid by the co-op, and CTEC provides transportation to Austin.

Contest Rules

Essays of 500 words or fewer must be submitted to the CTEC headquarters office in Fredericksburg by 5 p.m., Friday, January 27. This year’s essay must answer the question: **“What would be the biggest challenge you would face without electricity?”** Winning essays are selected by independent judges and will be evaluated on originality, knowledge of topic, composition, neatness and grammar. Two alternates will also be named in the event that a winner is unable to attend the tour. Additional details, information and entry forms are available from your high school or online at ctec.coop.



Central Texas Electric Cooperative

Fredericksburg (headquarters)

386 Friendship Lane
Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Llano

1410 E. St. Hwy. 29, Llano

Kingsland

Nob Hill Subdivision
706 Cottonwood St., Kingsland

Mason

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

Office Hours

8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday

Website

ctec.coop

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Robert A. Loth III

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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



PAUL BRADBURY | ISTOCK.COM

CTEC Offers 25 College Scholarships

TWENTY-FIVE \$1,000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS will be awarded to youths in the Central Texas Electric Cooperative service area in 2017, bringing the combined amount of financial help awarded to area students over the program's 19-year history to \$534,000!

"This is a great opportunity for the co-op to continue doing something to help our membership at really no cost," says CEO Robert A. Loth III. "Using the state's escheated money also assures that at least some of that money comes back into the area and is used for the benefit of our members."

H.B. 3203, a state law passed in September 1997, allows nonprofit electric cooperatives to put unclaimed capital credits funds—previously collected by the Texas comptroller's office for the state's general fund—to use for student scholarships.

Guidelines for 2017 Program

A scholarship selection committee, appointed by the board of directors of CTEC, will choose candidates and alternates for the 25 scholarships to be awarded. Scholarships will be awarded based upon the applicant's eligibility and will be granted to students who attend a recognized Texas institution of higher education. Recipients must carry a minimum of 12 hours or be considered by the registrar to be a full-time student. All scholarships will be mailed directly to the financial aid office of the selected school for the fall 2017 semester.

Eligibility

CTEC will accept and consider scholarship applications from all active members and their immediate families (not just high school students) whose primary residence is served by CTEC. Applicants must be of good character as evidenced by at least two letters of recommendation from teachers, principals, counselors, etc., from the school they currently attend. For applicants returning to school after an extended absence, recommendation letters will be accepted from previous employers, supervisors, ministers, etc. Applicants must demonstrate a coherent degree plan and willingness to pursue a course of higher learning.

How To Apply

For high school seniors, CTEC mails applications and guidelines in early January to area schools where CTEC has meters. For members already out of high school, applications are available at all CTEC offices and can also be downloaded from the co-op's website at ctec.coop. Questions can be directed to Patricia Stehling in Fredericksburg at 1-800-900-CTEC (2832) or (830) 997-2126. Successful applicants will be announced in late April.

Deadline

Completed applications must be in the Fredericksburg CTEC office by 5 p.m., Friday, February 24.



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Keep your rooms warm and bright by washing your windows inside and out.

A New Year's Resolution You Can Keep

GOING ON A DIET THIS JANUARY? Opening a savings account? Joining a gym?

Here's another resolution—and it might be easier to keep for longer than two weeks: Do one thing a month that will make your home more energy efficient.

Here are 12 ideas:

January: Get into the habit of turning your thermostat down by about 10 degrees before your family turns in for the night or leaves home in the morning. You can save as much as 1 percent on heating for every degree you lower the heat for eight consecutive hours.

February: Pull your refrigerator away from the wall and vacuum or dust its condenser and coils. Clean coils prevent your fridge's working parts from overheating.

March: Spring for an annual inspection of your air-conditioning system. It can keep your central AC running smoothly and efficiently all summer.

April: Hire a licensed electrician to inspect your home's wiring system—not every year, but at least once a decade.

May: Wash your windows—inside and out—and open the drapes. The sun can't warm and brighten your rooms if it can't find its way through grimy windowpanes.

June: Trim your hedges. Overgrown shrubs and trees can shade your windows too much and keep the sunlight from warming up your home come winter.

July: Grill your dinner outside and serve fresh, cold salads as side dishes. Giving your stovetop and oven a rest also gives your air-conditioning system a break on hot days.

August: Start running your clothes washer, dryer and dishwasher after dark. That will keep the heat and humidity out of the air—and help out your electric cooperative, too.

September: Get that heating and air-conditioning tech back to your house for a heating inspection. A tuneup can save you as much as 5 percent on your heating bill.

October: Close off your masonry fireplace and resolve not to use it anymore. Every time you use it, your home's heated air flies up the chimney.

November: Seal air leaks around windows, doors and other openings—such as the place where cables and wires come into the wall from the outside—with caulk and weatherstripping.

December: Replace your old holiday lights with LED fixtures, which last years longer and use far less energy.

How To Become a Board Member

MEMBERS INTERESTED in running for a seat on the Central Texas Electric Cooperative board of directors in 2017 should pay special attention to a March deadline: **March 15.** Article III of the CTEC bylaws details the director-selection process and implements several deadlines.

Note the first upcoming deadline: Any person seeking nomination at a district meeting must submit an application and petition signed by at least 10 members in his or her district by March 15. You can obtain an application by contacting the CTEC headquarters office at P.O. Box 553, Fredericksburg, TX 78624, or by calling 1-800-900-CTEC (2832) or (830) 997-2126.

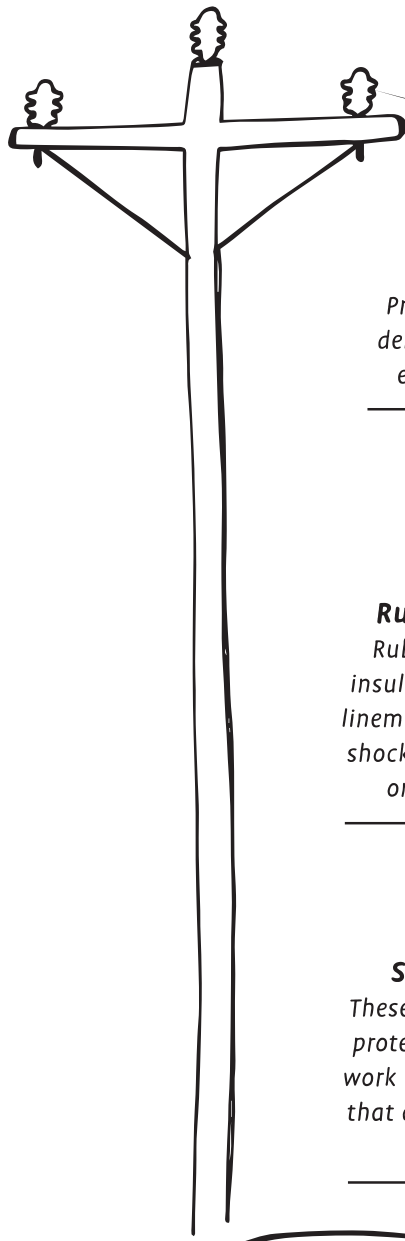
Copies of the CTEC bylaws are available at the CTEC offices in Fredericksburg, Kingsland, Llano and Mason, or online at ctec.coop under the My Co-op tab.



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Linemen Gear Up For Safety

Did you know electric co-op linemen wear special safety gear to protect them on the job? Complete this coloring sheet and learn how they stay safe. Remember to always look up and practice safety when playing outdoors near power lines!



Hard Hat

These hats protect linemen from potential head injuries while working on electrical lines.

Safety Goggles

Protective goggles keep debris out of a lineman's eyes while on the job.

Rubber Gloves

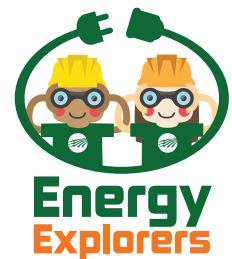
Rubber gloves are insulated and protect linemen from electrical shock while they work on power lines.

Flame Resistant Clothing

Electrical hazards, such as an arc flash, are a potential danger for linemen. Flame resistant clothing keeps them safe!

Steel Toe Boots

These boots provide extra protection while linemen work with heavy materials that could potentially fall near their feet.



Central Texas Electric Co-op

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



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