



Time Changes Our Energy Perspective



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER RONNIE ROBINSON

Recently, I recalled that in 1975—my last year in college—gas was 34 cents per gallon. Tuition, books and associated fees for 14 college hours was \$198.

Three buddies and myself car pooled. We went to school from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then to work at the peanut mill in De Leon from 4 p.m. to 12 a.m.. We car pooled because we thought we could not afford 35 cents per gallon for as to drive to Tarleton State College 34 miles away. We were

travelling in a blue Vega that got 36 miles to the gallon.

Today we drive SUVs or large pickups that get 12 to 18 miles to the gallon, and pay up to \$4 per gallon for fuel.

General Motors (GM) recently announced that it had lost 27 percent of the market share of car sales last month, compared to one year ago, and was closing plants, retooling and would begin production of smaller and more energy efficient vehicles.

The State of Texas as a whole currently utilizes natural gas 86 percent of the time to produce electricity. In 2001 the price for natural gas was \$2 per MBtu. Today it is over \$10 per MBtu. Likewise, the price per kWh of electricity was 9 cents in 2001 compared to 13 cents today.

I believe that GM, like a lot of us, has realized that moment in time when conservation and energy efficiency will

be at the forefront of our future plans.

As I write this article, Congress is debating climate change, CO₂ emissions, our energy future, power production and transmission issues. Congress must take into account the price of electricity as it debates global warming and the need to meet future transmission and generation additions.

We believe that a combination of conservation, clean coal technologies, improved gas turbines, renewables and nuclear power all must be included in this great debate. And as we go forward, energy conservation, energy efficiency, energy affordability, energy technology, energy supply and transmission must be taken into account during this debate.

We look forward to working with you—our member-owners—to achieve our goal of reliable power at affordable cost.



IT'S TIME TO COME TOGETHER AND CHANGE OUR FUTURE

We have an energy challenge, America.

When it comes to finding solutions, we must meet climate-change goals while keeping costs down and electricity available. America needs a plan. Immediately. Because we all know that our energy needs keep on growing—every day.

Now is the time to have a candid conversation with your elected officials. Together, we can find answers and take action.

Start the conversation today at www.ourenergy.coop.

Comanche Electric Cooperative



Our Energy, Our Future
A Dialogue With America

You Are Invited to a Party

My, how time flies! Seventy years ago, rural farms were in the dark when it came to enjoying the modern-day, time-saving electrical appliances afforded to city residents. That's because it was not considered practical or cost-effective for the big electric companies to run lines to rural areas.

Therefore, Comanche Electric Cooperative was created by a group of rural farmers who wanted more for their families. Today, because of that group of foresighted people, we now have service for our rural families.

This year marks the 70th birthday of Comanche Electric Cooperative, and we want you to help us celebrate. Please join us at the Comanche City Park on August 16 for our 70th annual meeting. Registration and entertainment will begin at 9 a.m. and will end promptly at 10 a.m. The annual business meeting and election of directors will begin at 10 a.m., followed by the presentation of door prizes and a catered meal.

This year's entertainment will be



provided by the New Bluegrass Combination band. This band was formed in 1972 and is composed of five veteran musicians who have played bluegrass, country and folk music for more than 30 years.

Food from Cook's Fish Barn has been an annual meeting favorite for several years now, and you will certainly want to partake of this delicious meal of fried catfish, chicken strips, hush puppies, fries and coleslaw.

In addition to the great entertainment and the wonderful food, we will unveil two exciting new programs that we believe are just what our members have been looking for. Comanche Electric Cooperative is constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of life for our members, and we believe we have found just the thing in these programs. You will definitely want to be on board for these!

It is not too early to mark your calendar for Saturday, August 16. This is one meeting you won't want to miss!



Comanche Electric Cooperative is always thinking of ways to help our members save electricity.

And then we thought, why stop there?

Attend the annual meeting on August 16 for the unveiling of an exciting new program and check out these pages in future issues of *Texas Co-op Power* for more information.

AT COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Conservation Matters!



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Summertime Efficiency

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

Ah, summertime. The birds are singing, the flowers are blooming and the grass is growing. Unfortunately, my electric bill is in full bloom and is growing as well, and the song I'm singing is not that of a happy bird. There's not much we can do about the rising cost of fuel, but there are lots of things we can do to control the amount of fuel we use.

During the summer months, our cooling systems are our largest energy hogs, so this month we will focus on what we can do to help lower our cooling usage, and ultimately, the bottom line on that electric bill.

Replacing an old, inefficient unit with an energy-saving unit is, of course, the best way to lower your bill, but due to the expense involved, it is not an option for most of us. Fortunately, there are many simple and inexpensive measures we can take to ease the burden on our cooling units and our pocketbooks.

Since the hottest place in our home is the attic, we will start there. If your attic is not properly ventilated, it can heat to as high as 130 degrees. With that much heat sitting in your attic, it is inevitable that some of that heat will transfer to the interior of your home. Check your attic temperature on a hot day. If the temperature exceeds 100 degrees, you might want to check into adding additional ventilation.

If you do not have trees around your home, consider planting some, especially on the west side. Tall, mature shade trees help protect your home from the beating it receives from the glaring sun and can reduce its temperature by 10 to 20 degrees.

If you did not check your windows for leakage before the cold months hit, take the time to do so now. Cool air leaking out through drafty windows and doors is just as inefficient energy-wise in the summer months as is cold air

coming in during the winter months. And keep your shades and curtains drawn, especially on the west- and south-facing windows of your home. This can cut in half the heat gain in your home.

Dusty air-conditioning filters force your unit to work much harder, so try to replace them at least once a month. One way to remember to do this is to change the filter every time you pay your electric bill. Programmable thermostats can help you set a schedule for your system to run efficiently, saving you money at the same time. You can save up to \$100 per year by properly using a setback thermostat. Every degree you move the thermostat affects the run time of the unit by about 6 percent. The closer you can set your thermostat to the outside temperature, the less the unit will run. It costs more to maintain your home's temperature than it does to cool it again, so if you will be out of the home four hours or longer, it could be to your advantage to shut the unit off, or set the thermostat to about 82 degrees and the fan setting to auto.

Running ceiling fans does not actually cool the air. It simply creates air movement that makes your skin feel cooler when the circulating air touches it. So by all means, use those ceiling fans. But turn them off when you leave the room or the house.

Figuring out how to be more energy efficient can be a challenge, but Comanche Electric Cooperative is here to help. Our Member Service Team is available for consultations to help you understand how energy is being used and possibly wasted and to help you make informed decisions on how to be more energy efficient. Give the team a call at 1-800-915-2533 if you would like to receive further energy information or would like a free, in-home energy audit.



CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB
AT WWW.CECA.COOP



**Happy
Independence Day!**
Comanche EC will be
closed Friday, July 4,
for the holiday.

Surge Protection Not Just for Storms

It only takes a second for a power surge to destroy your computer, plasma TV or other expensive electronic equipment.

Power surges happen when electricity flow is quickly disrupted and restored or when something sends electricity flowing back into your home. Some power surges are internal and happen every day when large appliances start up and shut down.

The most dangerous and noticeable ones usually happen during storms, when trees topple onto power lines. These surges can cause instant damage to anything plugged into your home's power circuit. But even smaller surges over time can slowly damage your appliances and shorten their useful life.

The most common surge protectors are those that plug into the wall and have multiple outlets, much like a power cord. But not all power strips offer surge protection.

A good surge protector will have an indicator that tells you when a surge

has been blocked. Look for surge protectors with a "joule rating" of 400 to 600. This measures the device's ability to absorb surges.

These can protect your equipment, but only to a certain degree. If the surge is larger than that joule capacity, anything plugged into the protector can be damaged.

The best protection can be found in a whole-house surge protector, which connects at your electric panel. Though they cost \$150 to \$300, these surge protectors will guard against both daily surges and devastating storm surges for all of your home's equipment, and they can handle a much greater surge capacity.

Whether your electronic equipment is big or small, protect it with a surge protector.

For extra protection, turn off and unplug all unused appliances or electronics prior to a storm. If the electricity goes out, turn off the appliances that were in use to avoid a surge when electricity is restored.



**COMANCHE
ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE**

**(325) 356-2533
1-800-915-2533**

**HEADQUARTERS
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Eastland, TX 76448**

**EARLY OFFICE
1801 CR 338
Early, TX 76801**

**OFFICE HOURS
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday
Eastland and Early offices
closed from 1 to 2 p.m.**

**FIND US ON THE WEB AT
WWW.CECA.COOP**

YOUR "LOCAL PAGES"

This section of *Texas Co-op Power* is produced by Comanche EC each month to provide you with information about current events, special programs and other activities of the cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Shirley at the Comanche office or at sdukes@ceca.coop.

COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

WE HAVE A NEW LOOK



In an effort to streamline our look and make it easier to navigate, we have redesigned our website. Our new site is full of energy-saving ideas, conservation tips, products, services and much, much more. We invite you to visit our new site at www.ceca.coop and convey your thoughts and ideas to memberservices@ceca.coop.



Join Comanche Electric Cooperative and Air Evac Lifeteam in an Exciting New Venture That Is Saving Lives.

**Your membership in Air Evac Lifeteam
makes it possible for us to provide
emergency air ambulance service in your community.**

Air Evac Lifeteam is saving lives in your community. Our mission is to make it possible for people living in rural areas to get the life-saving emergency care they need, when they need it. In a life- or limb-threatening medical emergency, a successful patient recovery depends on how much time it takes to deliver that patient to the emergency room.

If you live, work or travel in rural areas, you need Air Evac Lifeteam. By buying a membership, you make it possible for us to be there for you, your family and your community. Air Evac Lifeteam gets you and your loved ones to the right care fast.



Dear Comanche Electric Co-op Member:

Did you know that death rates from life-threatening injuries are three times higher in rural areas than in urban settings? During a medical emergency, time saved can mean a life saved.

As the local air ambulance serving residents of the Comanche Electric Cooperative service area, Air Evac Lifeteam understands the critical aspect of time in treating medical emergencies. For those of us living in rural America, our recovery can depend on how much time it takes to be transported to an emergency room. Air Evac Lifeteam can cut that transportation time in half.

As a member of Comanche Electric Cooperative, you are eligible for a discounted Air Evac Lifeteam membership that not only gives you access to life-saving care, but also removes you from any financial responsibility for the flight.

Annual Membership Fees for Members of Comanche Electric Cooperative

\$50 per one-member household

\$55 per two-member household

\$60 per three-or-more-member household

Air Evac Lifeteam questions? Call 1-800-793-0010.

Why is Air Evac membership important to you? Your membership means that in a life- or limb-threatening emergency, you will have access to the appropriate medical facility ... fast. Our crews of highly trained pilots, nurses and paramedics are ready to go at a moment's notice, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Air Evac Lifeteam cares about you and your loved ones. Our mission is to make it possible for people living in rural areas to get the life-saving emergency care they need, when they need it. Thanks to the support of our members, Air Evac Lifeteam can provide this vital service to your communities ... while providing you peace of mind for you and your family.

Sincerely,

Tara Bradley

Tara Bradley
Air Evac Membership Coordinator
(417) 274-6417

Ronnie Robinson

Ronnie Robinson
General Manager
Comanche Electric Cooperative

Check your July electric bill for further information on how to become a member of Air Evac Lifeteam. Or, log onto our website at www.ceca.coop for a printable application form.