

SPECIAL GUEST COLUMN

Helping ERCOT Balance Power Supply and Demand



**MESSAGE FROM TRIP DOGGETT, CEO
ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL OF TEXAS**

Most Texans know that August is typically our hottest month, which means it also is the month when we use the most electricity to help stay cool.

The state's power producers, Comanche Electric Cooperative, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas and the Public Utility Commission of Texas are working to ensure that there is enough power available to serve Texas' growing demand for electricity during the hottest hours of the hottest days of the year—not only this summer, but also in the future when the demand for electricity appears to be growing faster than the amount of power available to serve it.

Providing reliable electric power is fundamental to ERCOT's mission. The key is to balance the amount we use with the amount being generated—every minute of every day. During last summer's relentless, record-breaking heat—with your help—we were able to accomplish that goal. There were times when the gap between what we were using and what was available was tighter than ERCOT prefers. On seven days last summer, we asked energy consumers to help keep the grid reliable by reducing electric use from 3 to 7 p.m.

Many of you took actions that made a tremendous difference. By setting your thermostats just a couple of degrees warmer in response to our conservation requests, you may have prevented some of your neighbors or yourself from experiencing rotating outages. Those controlled power interruptions are the last in a series of steps we take to maintain a reliable electric grid when the balance between supply and demand is threatened. ERCOT took many actions to reduce the risk of rotating outages last summer, but your help was vital to help keep the power flowing when power reserve margins became too close for comfort.

Even though ERCOT hit a system peak demand of 68,379 megawatts on August 4, 2011, the lights—and, more important, the air conditioners—continued to hum.

This summer, we do not expect the heat to be quite as brutal, and power plant owners will work to make more electric power available during our peak demand periods. But we still will need your help, especially when we experience triple-digit temperatures or have too many power plants go offline unexpectedly.

Here are ways to find out when it is most important to reduce your electric demand:

- ▶ Our free mobile app, which works on iPhones and Android devices, will notify users when supplies are especially tight. Look for the ERCOT Energy Saver app.
- ▶ If you subscribe to ERCOT Emergency Alerts at lists.ercot.com, you will receive an automated email when certain “energy emergency alert” conditions are met.
- ▶ If you use Twitter or Facebook, you can follow our posts to receive notices.
- ▶ When conditions are especially tight, we also will ask the news media to help spread the word.

It is always good to minimize your energy use from 3 to 7 p.m. during the summer. Turn your thermostat a couple of degrees warmer. Avoid using appliances such as clothes dryers and ovens. And, set pool pumps to run late at night or early morning.

ERCOT thanks you in advance for helping us strike a balance for reliable electric power. It will help us all stay cool when it counts the most.



Welcome Aboard, Linda

Please give a big CECA welcome to Linda McNew, the newest member of the CECA team.

Linda and her husband, Rob, have two children and four grandchildren. She enjoys skiing, scuba diving, home-improvement projects, chess and books on tape. Her motto is “Choose Happiness,” and she agrees with Davy Crockett when in 1836 he wrote: “I must say as to what I have seen of Texas, it is the garden spot of the world, the best land and best prospects for health I ever saw, and I do believe it is fortune for any man to come here.”

Linda is CECA's new construction coordinator. In addition to working with members on construction jobs, she coordinates schedules for the staking technicians and is the backup dispatcher. She always has a positive attitude and a smile on her face.

Please feel free to call her for any of your new construction needs. She looks forward to serving you.



Conservation Matters

THE LATEST NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT ENERGY CONSERVATION FROM YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Revealing R-Values

PEEL BACK INSULATION FOR LAYERS OF COST SAVINGS

BY KRIS WENDTLAND

With the summer sun blazing, it may be hard to believe your home needs a coat to help keep you cool, but wrapping your home up in the right insulation can make a big difference in comfort and cost. Just as a coat closet features thin jackets and heavy jackets, different types of insulation, ranked by R-value, exist to maximize efficiency.

R-value reflects the ability of insulation and other parts of your home, like windows, to resist the transfer of heat. The rating depends on material, thickness and density, and a higher R-value indicates more effective insulation. Multiple layers of insulation may be combined for a higher cumulative R-value.

For most of Texas, R-values of 30 to 60 are recommended for the attic, R-15 for walls and R-25 for floors.

How insulation works

Metals and liquids easily transfer heat, making them bad insulators. Air, however, does not conduct heat, making it a strong insulator when isolated in small pockets.

Just as fur keeps animals warm, insulation holds heat in (or out) of a building. Fur is a collection of hair—tiny hollow cylinders. Air fills the cylinders and spaces in-between. The smaller the space for air in between the cylinders and the more spaces there are (longer hair equals more space), the greater the insulation.

Building insulation works on the same principle. Fiberglass insulation, for example, exists as a collection of hollow fiberglass cylinders.

When installing insulation, be careful to preserve the air—the bulk of your home's protection. When 3 inches of insulation is squeezed into a 1-inch



Fluffy mounds of blown-in insulation help cut heating and cooling costs.

space, critical air pockets are eliminated, reducing the actual insulating R-value of the insulation.

The value of R-values

Boosting the R-value of a wall from 0 to R-10 cuts 90 percent of heat loss (or gain) from one side of the wall to the other. This makes an immediate difference you can feel. Adding an additional layer of R-15 insulation (a total R-value of 25) cuts another 6 percent of heat transmission.

Once you've got the insulation maxed out, consider upgrading your windows. A typical single-pane window has an R-value of 0.9. In contrast, a triple-glazed pane assembly with low-emissivity insulated coatings boasts an R-value of 8.3. Based on an electricity cost of 10 cents per kilowatt-hour, a home with 18 single-pane windows could waste \$31.44 in unnecessary expense in a month.

Kris Wendtland writes for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Insulation Installation Safety Tips

When tackling home insulation installation on your own, safety should be foremost. Comanche Electric Cooperative encourages you to follow these tips from the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association on safe insulation installation practices.

WEAR APPROPRIATE CLOTHING. Reduce the chances of skin irritation by wearing a head cover, gloves and clothing that is loose fitting, long sleeved and long legged.

WEAR PROPER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT. Safety glasses and respiratory protection may be necessary, depending on your work environment. The U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Association offers guidelines in its Respiratory Protection Standard.

TAKE CARE IF FIBERS GET ON YOUR SKIN OR EYES. If insulation fibers collect on your skin, don't rub and scratch or remove with compressed air. Instead, lay tape on the skin, adhesive-side down, and then remove it gently, so the fibers are pulled from the skin. If fibers get in your eyes, never rub—flush with water or eyewash solution. Contact your doctor if you have continued irritation.

KEEP DUST TO A MINIMUM. Leave the materials in packaging for as long as possible. Use tools that create the least amount of dust; power tools should have dust-collection devices. Put scrap materials in the trash and don't take equipment too far from the work site.

Congratulations, Ryan

CECA is proud to announce that the grand prizewinner of the Co-op Teens Power Texas Video Contest, sponsored by Texas Co-op Power, is part of a CECA member family.

Congratulations to Ryan Paskewitz and Zephyr High School. As the winner, Ryan received a \$1,500 prize. As the sponsoring school, Zephyr High received a check for \$1,000.

To view Ryan's winning video, go to youtube.com/user/TXCOOPOWER.



Doors: Are Yours Letting IN More Than Company?

If your air conditioner's thermostat is set below 75 degrees and your house is still too hot, it's a good bet that the cool air is leaking out through cracks and holes around windows, or around electrical outlets and penetrations where cable and phone lines enter the home.

Or your home's older exterior doors are energy inefficient.

It's not uncommon for homeowners to overlook the doors when they replace the old, single-pane windows their homes "came with" with double-pane models that help save energy. But just as much air can escape through or around an energy-inefficient old door, even if there's no glass on it.

A new exterior door is likely to fit more snugly and is bound to be better insulated than one that's a decade old.

Older steel doors, for example, often are hollow. Today's improved models have a core of foam insulation and a seal that prevents air from escaping between the edge of the door and its frame when the door is closed. Fiberglass doors are built with interior insulation as well.

And new sliding-glass patio doors, like windows, feature several layers of glass and energy-efficient coatings that keep the hot air outdoors and your nice, cool air inside during the summer.

If you want to keep your old doors, you can stop some of the leaking by applying weatherstripping around them. Or, you can pair your old door with an aluminum, steel or fiberglass storm door with energy-efficient glass and some insulation in the frame.

A caution: If the hot summer sun targets your exterior door for more than a few hours a day, don't opt for a glass storm door. It can trap the heat and damage your door.

When installing additional insulation or other energy-efficient upgrades, contact CECA's Member Service Department at 1-800-915-2533 to see if you qualify for a rebate. Or check out our website at www.cecacoop.com for additional rebates.

CONCERNED ABOUT THE INFILTRATION IN YOUR HOME?

Contact CECA's Member Service Department to receive a free in-home Energy Evaluation.



CECA

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Operating in Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Mills, Shackelford and Stephens counties

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Eastland closed from noon to 1:15 p.m.
Early closed from 1 to 2 p.m..

YOUR LOCAL PAGES

This section of Texas Co-op Power is produced by CECA 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@cecacoop.com.



CONTACT US

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Community Rehab Project Volunteers Lift Up Others—and Themselves

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

“From the outside looking in you can’t understand it. But from the inside looking out, you can’t explain it.”



I’m not sure where that quote came from. Perhaps it’s been used so many times that it has lost its origin. Regardless, it is the best description of the Community Rehab Project that participants could give me. Having said that, let me add that I am not sure there is any way that the words I write will describe the life-changing experiences that occur each year when hundreds of volunteers converge on Comanche County to assist some homeowners with projects that would be difficult, if not impossible, for them to do on their own.

ABOVE: One of the Seven Cooperative Principles that CECA abides by is ‘Concern for Community.’ Community Rehab is just one of the many ways that CECA gives back to the community in the way of donations through the Operation Round Up program.

TOP: Sheldon Scott from Tolar, formerly of Comanche: 'My favorite thing about Rehab is getting to see the progress and change in the homeowners' lives through just a week of redoing their house. Favorite thing I've done so far is roofing. I like to roof. This will be my eighth year. I started when I was in the sixth grade with my grandpa.'

CENTER: Bailey Waller of Seminole: 'What I like about Community Rehab is how you get to go to someone's house and work with them all week, and you get to know them better and you get to show them the love of Jesus Christ. One of my favorite things is getting to go around the neighborhood and talk to people and just share your testimony and get to know them.'

BOTTOM: Catherine Newsome: 'This is my first year, and I came with JBarJ (a country church). I've had a lot of fun at Community Rehab. I just love the opportunity to help somebody and show the love of God at the same time. My favorite thing that's happened so far is getting to know the people on my crew and the worship and coming together as people of God. That is my favorite.'

It all began in 2000 when a small Sunday school group of adults and youths chose to do a local project in preparation for a mission project they were planning to attend. Now that project, which started as a group of 36 volunteers performing maintenance on one home, has grown into one in which hundreds of volunteers are repairing its 194th home. It is led by a steering committee composed of volunteers from Comanche and De Leon.

An exact number of volunteers is difficult to calculate, because so many people donate their time for behind-the-scenes activities: running errands, bringing cookies or water, serving food, cleaning up, etc. Since its inception, more than 3,000 individuals have donated their time to the organization. This year, Community Rehab hosted 240 volunteers from the seventh grade on up. They came from as near as Comanche, and as far away as New Mexico and Oklahoma. The work crews were made up of 14 teams of 10 to 18 people. The number of workers per crew was based on the scope of work to be done.

The crews work outside only and tackle some pretty big jobs as well as some smaller ones. The primary jobs include roofing, windows, siding, paint and lots of wheelchair ramps. Smaller jobs include tree and brush trimming and outside cleanup projects.

No one gets paid to work for Community Rehab. But there are still expenses. Out-of-town volunteers are housed at





FROM TOP: Before and after photos of Dale and Thirza King's house.

'We are just so appreciative of them. We are just so thankful that they got to do that for us. And we got to meet a lot of new people,' Thirza said.

Comanche High School. Lodging expenses include rent paid to the school, food and supplies. Project expenses include buying materials, renting portable toilets, arranging for trash disposal, etc. I guess you could say that the only pay these volunteers receive is a T-shirt they receive at the close of the week.

So how much money does it take for an undertaking this size, and where does it get the funds? This year, Community Rehab raised more than \$60,000 in donations from churches, individuals and businesses, including \$2,500 from CECA's Operation Round Up fund.

This also includes the fee that the young men and women paid to attend. Yes, you read it right: These folks pay \$75 each for the privilege of spending their summer vacations in the sweltering heat, painting, repairing roofs, installing windows and doing myriad other chores—all in an effort to make life easier for someone else.

But these outstanding young folks get much more out of this experience than sore muscles and a sunburn. In their words, they get to "go around the neighborhood and talk to people and get to know them," "see the progress and change in homeowners' lives," and have "the opportunity to help somebody."

There's no end to the stories you will hear at the end of the week, from youths and adults alike. Not one person involved in the project will go away unchanged. By changing the lives of others, they, too, are changed, and each one

makes new friends and new memories that will be with them for life.

The number of homes chosen for the workweek depends on the number of volunteers and amount of money available for materials. For the 2012 Community Rehab Project, more than 50 applications were received, but there was enough money and volunteers for only 15 homes: eight in Comanche, six in De Leon and one in Gustine.

Homes receiving a makeover are chosen based on need, primarily financial need, but other factors are taken into consideration. In March of each year, the call for applications is made

Volunteers worked on a number of projects, primarily painting, roofing and window repair.

through the local media. Applications must be submitted by early to mid-April.

One home selected by Community Rehab belongs to CECA members Dale and Thirza King of Gustine. Just before Dale had a stroke five years ago, the roof in the back part of the house had started leaking. Dale was not able to do a whole lot since his illness, and the leak had steadily gotten worse.

He read about Community Rehab and decided to give it a try. He filled out the application and sent it in. Representatives from Community Rehab came out, assessed the situation, prayed about it and went on their way. A short time later, the Kings received a letter informing them that Community Rehab had accepted their house into the program and that plans were being made to procure the necessary supplies.

On the first day of the project, Thirza was thoroughly amazed when a crew chief showed up with 12 youngsters age 12 and up.

“You’d be amazed at what a bunch of kids can do,” Thirza said. “Most of the time, we had 12 and the crew chief. And all those kids just pitched in here and we had the best time. And they just worked like you wouldn’t believe. Best bunch of kids I ever saw. We really did enjoy them, and we just love the job they did. They did marvelous. You wouldn’t think that a bunch of kids could do that, but they did.”

The crew roofed the house as promised, but didn’t stop there. The patio roof was starting to fall in, so they tore it out and rebuilt it. The paint on the house was starting to look a little worse for wear, so they repainted the house and the trim. There were a couple of broken windows, so they replaced those. Thirza said, “It was a pretty good job for five days, I’ll tell you. They did good,” he said.

Thirza thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship that went along with the hard work. “We had lunch with them every day and joined them for their devotional afterwards. They sent a van for us every evening, and we went into town with them to the school for dinner and a church service. It was really great. We are just so appreciative of them. We are just so thankful that they got to do that for us. And we got to meet a lot of new people.”

If I were to interview the other 14 families who received assistance from the other crews, I’m sure I would have heard much the same story. Many lives were changed in Comanche County that week, not only those whose homes benefited from the hard work, but also the young people and adults who gave freely of their time and benefited as well. Some will even tell you it was the most rewarding experience of their lives and they would be blessed to participate again.

For more information on Community Rehab, visit communityrehabproject.org, or contact the Steering Committee at Community Rehab Project, P.O. Box 387, Comanche, Texas 76442.

