

Cooperative Strength



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

You've probably heard the saying, "There's power in numbers." I have to agree. Cooperation is a key word for electric cooperatives and a concept vital to our form of business.

Consumer-owned co-ops like CECA operate under seven key guidelines, including the Sixth Cooperative Principle, "Cooperation Among Cooperatives." In short, electric cooperatives serve their members best while strengthening the overall co-op movement by working together.

At the most basic level, electric cooperatives support one another in times of crisis. If a storm or other disaster hits one of our sister cooperatives, we offer whatever help we can to ensure that service gets restored as quickly as possible. If we need help, our electric co-op "family" will be there for us.

We also collaborate with other co-ops to better serve you, our members, and communities we serve with co-op partnerships and safety education programs.

When it comes to local and statewide issues, electric co-ops in Texas combine forces through Texas Electric Cooperatives, our statewide association. The results show that when small organizations such as electric co-ops use the power of aggregation, we grow in clout, efficiency and economy. By working together, good things happen.

The power of numbers gives us a louder voice at the state Capitol when legislators make decisions that affect us. We also save money through our TEC membership on purchasing poles and equipment. By working through TEC, we lower printing and production costs of this publication through economies of scale.

Nationally, we collaborate with other electric co-ops through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national service organization representing more than 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, public power districts, and public utility districts in the United States. NRECA presents a unified consumer voice, urging lawmakers to create legislation that's in the best interest of electric co-ops. Not only does the organization have the ears of Washington, D.C.'s decision-makers, it also represents cooperative interests before federal regulatory bodies. And through NRECA's Cooperative Research Network, we receive information about new technologies that can help us control costs, improve productivity and deliver superior service to you.

Even if we were in this alone, CECA would still provide you with the very best service at the lowest price possible. But when we pool our resources—work cooperatively—we offer you better value. In addition, by adding our voice to a grand chorus of fellow cooperatives, our message gets heard loud and clear by legislators. And that's the cooperative difference.

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

Cooperatives—Owned by Our Members, Committed to Our Communities



CECA Refunds Capital Credits in August

If you are a member of Comanche Electric Cooperative Association and purchased electric service during 1983 and 1984, you should have received a portion of the \$350,000 distribution that the CECA Board of Directors has authorized for membership refunds.

WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

Unlike investor-owned utilities that generate profits on behalf of shareholders, not-for-profit electric cooperatives return any profits earned to their members in the form of capital credits.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

When you signed up for CECA to provide power to your home or business, you became a member.

Each year, the profits earned by the cooperative are allocated back to members. They are paid out using a first-in, first-out formula and are based on the percentage of electricity used. First-in, first-out means that those who have been CECA members for the longest time are paid first. Because your portion of capital credits is based on power used, the amount allocated varies from year to year.

CECA tracks your investment in a personal capital credits account, and the board of directors evaluates the financial condition of the cooperative to determine whether it may retire or refund capital credits to members. When the board votes to retire the credits, cooperative accountants calculate how much should be paid to each qualifying member.

One key benefit of being a member of CECA is that you are part-owner of the cooperative and share in any margins or profits earned.

If you purchased power from CECA during the years of 1983 and 1984 and did not receive a check, please call Nancy at 1-800-915-2533.



Conservation Matters

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

New Standards, New Savings

BY MEGAN MCKOY-NOE

Cleaning dishes and dirty laundry may not cost as much in a few years, thanks to increased federal energy-efficiency standards.

On average, clothes washers and dishwashers are responsible for 3 percent of a home's electric bill and 20 percent of a home's indoor water use. The U.S. Department of Energy recently boosted the minimum energy-efficiency requirements for the appliances. The improvements are expected to save consumers \$20 billion in energy and water costs through 2030.

Returns on rinse cycles

Thanks to the tougher standards, each household could save up to \$350 in energy costs over the life of a new clothes washer compared with today's

models, according to the Department of Energy.

When these new standards were formed, consumer choice was an important concern, so different styles of clothes washers were considered and standards set to accommodate each. Front-loading washers must use 15 percent less energy and 35 percent less water, while top-loading models must cut energy use by 33 percent and drop water consumption by 19 percent.

Under the new standards, energy-efficiency experts peg water savings to be 10,000 gallons—or 250 baths—for every household, every year.

The changes take effect with 2015 models. This is the fourth time clothes washer standards have been strengthened over the past 25 years.

Dishes don't drain as much

Cleaning dishes drains energy and water; new dishwashers will use 15 percent less energy and more than 20 percent less water—saving about \$100 over the lifetime of the appliance, according to experts.

Improved dishwasher standards are scheduled to start in 2013, marking the third time dishwasher standards have been raised since 1987.

Set standards to save

Energy-efficiency standards cover a wide range of appliances, from refrigerators and air conditioners to microwaves and other electrical equipment. Standards for more than 40 products are being strengthened with the goal to cut \$350 billion from electric bills through 2030. According to the Department of Energy's Building Technologies Program, consumers and businesses already save \$15 billion every year as a result of federal

energy-efficiency standards; they expect the annual amount to double by 2025.

While national standards help consumers save on electric bills, they also help manufacturers avoid a patchwork of different state standards. The Department of Energy notes its revised energy-efficiency standards for dishwashers and clothes washers were developed with help from major manufacturers such as Whirlpool, General Electric and LG Electronics, plus industry advocates, national environmental organizations and consumer groups.

Saving now

While you might not benefit from the new standards until you replace an appliance, there are many ways you can make the most of the energy you use in your current appliances.

- ▶ Run only full loads in your dishwasher and let them air dry.
- ▶ Cover liquids and wrap foods stored in the refrigerator. Uncovered food releases moisture and makes the compressor work harder.
- ▶ Whenever possible, use small electric appliances or a microwave to cook food instead of your oven. A toaster oven uses less than half the energy of a full-sized oven.
- ▶ In the laundry room, wash and dry full loads and use cold water to wash.
- ▶ Clean the lint screen in the dryer after every load.
- ▶ Try air-drying clothes—either outdoors on a clothesline or indoors using a drying rack.

Find more ways to save energy at energysavers.gov.

Megan McKoy-Noe writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



ISTOCKPHOTO | THINKSTOCK

New efficiency guidelines for appliances, including washing machines, could save a household up to \$350 in energy costs over an appliance's life.

Click, Pay, Relax

It's a busy world we live in, and CECA knows that it is hard to get everything done in a 24-hour period. There's the family to take care of, errands to run, bills to pay ... and the list goes on. In addition, someone has to sift through that growing pile of bills on the desk.

CECA is proud to offer an alternative to at least one of those burdens. Members can now receive, view and pay bills online and avoid the hassle and inconvenience of monthly paper bills and checks with e-Bill and online bill pay.

What is e-Bill and online bill pay?

It is a safe and secure alternative to paper billing and check writing. By signing into your account via our website, ceca.coop, members can view and pay bills any time of day or night. There is no fee, no checks to pay for, no stamps to buy.

Why e-Bill and online bill pay?

- It is cost-effective for you and for CECA.
- It helps the environment by saving paper and the resulting garbage.
- It saves mailbox and desk space.
- It's easy and simple to handle.
- You get an online archive of your bills.
- You can view your payment history.
- You can pay online with a check or credit card whenever you please.
- It saves you time and offers peace of mind.

How do I get started?

If you already participate in our online bill pay program, simply visit ceca.coop and click on the "Account Services" tab just below the big green button. On the next page, you will find our e-Billing logo. Simply click on the logo, sign in to your account, and choose the meter(s) you would like to have e-Billed and click the "Continue" button. Then follow the instructions to complete the action. And voila! You now have taken the all-important step of simplifying your life and choosing a green alternative all at once!

If you are not already participating in our online bill pay program, please contact a customer service representative at 1-800-915-2533 for first-time login instructions.



CECA

P.O. Box 729
Comanche, TX 76442

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

HEADQUARTERS

201 W. Wrights Ave.
Comanche, TX 76442

EASTLAND OFFICE

1311 W. Main St.
Eastland, TX 76448

EARLY OFFICE

1801 CR 338
Early, TX 76801

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
*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@ceca.coop.



CONTACT US

CALL US

(325) 356-2533 local or
1-800-915-2533 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

ceca.coop

BRAND X PICTURES



Happy LABOR DAY!

The offices of CECA will be closed Monday, September 3, for Labor Day.

We wish you a happy and restful holiday.

Get Discounts and More with Co-op Connections

As we quickly approach the shopping season, CECA reminds you to not forget your Co-op Connections card when you venture out.

One of the most exciting benefits of the card is the Healthy Savings Discount. Many insurance plans do not include provisions for dental, hearing and vision care, which means many people do not receive these much-needed services. With the new Healthy Savings package, CECA members get no-cost access to six discounted health-benefit areas: prescription, vision, dental, hearing, lab imaging and chiropractic care. Savings include:

PRESCRIPTION—10 to 85 percent discount on prescription drugs at over 60,000 national and regional pharmacies

DENTAL—20 to 40 percent discounts on a range of dental care services

VISION—20 to 60 percent off eyewear

HEARING—35 percent discount off hearing-aid prices at 2,000-plus Newport Audiology Center locations

LAB AND IMAGING WORK—10 to 60 percent off usual charges for MRI, CT and other lab procedures

CHIROPRACTIC—30 to 50 percent off diagnostic services and treatments

In addition to the Healthy Savings Benefits, CECA members can benefit from other national and local deals. National deals can be found at connections.coop.

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE WITHIN THE CECA SERVICE TERRITORY:

Air Temp Refrigeration

Air Temp Refrigeration has been a local institution, serving this area for 55-plus years. Air Temp offers a lifetime warranty on residential heating, air conditioning, electrical and plumbing repairs. We also offer 24-hour service and precision tuneup inspections that ensure a longer, more economical life for your heating and air conditioning equipment. Plus, we can save you money on utilities by installing attic insulation in your home. Our technicians are licensed, insured, bonded and drug-free. For all your heating, air conditioning, electrical and plumbing needs, call Air Temp. Our motto is: "We fix it right, we fix it for life."

▶ 300 Main St., Brownwood

▶ (325) 643-3000

▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. with 24-hour emergency service

▶ airtemptexas@verizon.net

OFFER: \$20 off any heating, A/C, electrical or plumbing service call. (Not valid with any other offer.)

AlphaGraphics

AlphaGraphics is a full-service printing company that offers customers a wide range of print services and the finest quality printing products available anywhere, with affordable options to meet a variety of business printing needs. Whether it's an understated black-and-white document or a full-color catalog or brochure, you'll find a printing solution that meets your project requirements at a price you can afford.

With more than 225 locations in the U.S. and many locations around the globe, AlphaGraphics is a network of highly skilled and knowledgeable people, with cutting-edge technology and equipment that can match the level of speed, flexibility and expertise you require. And should

you need large-scale printed products, AlphaGraphics has the resources to meet your needs.

▶ 400 W. Main St., Eastland and 309 W.

Washington St., Stephenville

▶ (254) 629-2071 and (254) 965-6137

▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

▶ ag-nct.com

▶ us607@alphagraphics.com

OFFER: 20 percent off first order total invoice

C J's Diner

Located on the northwest corner of the Comanche Courthouse Square, C J's offers a full menu of classic Texana dishes—all served in a friendly atmosphere—featuring homemade pies and real home-style cooking. Original hardwood flooring and collectible decorations create a setting that is unmatched in Central Texas. A separate dining room is available for private parties, special occasions and meetings.

▶ 135 W. Grand Ave., Comanche

▶ (325) 356-5330

▶ Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

OFFER: 10 percent off on Monday lunch

Carstens Motor Co.

If you are looking to buy a new or used Buick, Cadillac or Chevrolet, look no further. Carstens Motor Co. has a wide selection of new and used vehicles. The company can also assist you with any service and parts, including engine repairs, and be on hand to help you with financing on your new mode of transportation.

▶ 601 W. Walker St., Breckenridge

▶ (254) 559-2266

▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m.-noon

▶ wes_king@att.net

OFFER: Preferred Pricing discount on any new vehicle purchase

Cool Clear Water

Cool Clear Water is your source for BYOB high-quality, purified water products and ice. They offer a full line of bottles and decorative crocks. Want your water delivered? Cool Clear Water will deliver water to homes and businesses located in Eastland County.

- ▶ 900 Conrad Hilton Blvd., Cisco
- ▶ (254) 442-3131
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-noon
- ▶ h20cisco@yahoo.com

OFFER: 10 percent discount on any bottle and/or crock

Cool Time Refrigeration

Cool Time Refrigeration is available for all your HVAC needs, as well as commercial refrigeration and selling and leasing of ice machines. We are also available for HVAC tuneups and winterization

- ▶ 1173 Highway 2861, Comanche
- ▶ (254) 879-2676
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ▶ cooltimeac.com
- ▶ cooltime@cctc.net

OFFER: 10 percent discount on tuneups

Dollins Pecan Co., Inc. dba Durham Pecan Company

Dollins Pecan Co, dba Durham Pecan Company, offers the finest-quality pecans and pecan products, including a variety of pecan candies such as chocolate-covered pecans, cinnamon glazed, honey-toasted glazed and pecan brittle. The company has been offering Texas freshly shelled pecans since 1928 and offers more than 150 quality nuts, mixes, candies and gift items. Whether you choose from the famous pecans, healthy almonds or delectable chocolates, you are sure to find the freshest in flavor. Durham Pecan Company can also make gift-giving fun and simple with awesome gift baskets filled with treats of your choice. Choose from gift containers, baskets and decorated tins. And be sure to check out the Texas Pecan Cookbook.

- ▶ 111 N. Houston St. and 7200 Highway 377, Comanche
- ▶ (325) 356-5291
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ▶ durhams.com
- ▶ sales@durhams.com

OFFER: 10 percent discount on all retail purchases

Dublin Heating and Air Conditioning

Dublin Heating, Air Conditioning and Electrical provides quality HVAC and electrical service backed with integrity and honesty. We are a licensed and insured company that services both residential and commercial properties. Whether you would like a free estimate on new equipment or maintenance on your existing equipment, we can meet your needs. Call us for any of your residential or commercial needs. We offer 24/7 service on all makes and models of air conditioning and heating equipment. Don't forget, we are also electricians! Whether you are adding an electrical circuit or building a new house, we can wire it!

- ▶ 114 S. Patrick St., Dublin
- ▶ (254) 445-2984
- ▶ Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; 24-hour emergency service
- ▶ dublinheatingandair.com
- ▶ dublinHVAC@gmail.com

OFFER: One-time full-service tuneup: \$49.99

Dye Water Conditioning

Dye Water Conditioning is your local sales, service and rental provider for drinking water systems and water filtration equipment. Call for all your water needs!

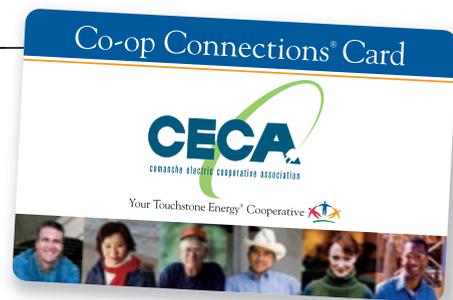
- ▶ 257 Private Road 1835, Cisco
- ▶ (254) 559-1164
- ▶ dyewater@gmail.com

OFFER: 50 percent off basic installation of under-sink reverse osmosis drinking water system (rental or purchase)

Eastland County Newspapers

Eastland County Newspapers is the central hub of operations for five local newspapers within Eastland County: The Eastland Telegram, Cisco Press, Ranger Times, Rising Star and the Baird Star. Serving the area since 1925, these papers strive to emphasize local news and advertising in the towns in which they serve. Call for more information on a particular paper or for publication and advertising deadlines.

- ▶ 215 S. Seaman St., Eastland
- ▶ (254) 629-1707 or 1-888-227-1708
- ▶ Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
- ▶ e-cinc.com
- ▶ ecn@att.net



OFFER: Half price on new local (in-county) subscriptions to any Eastland County Newspaper publication

First Impressions Window Cleaning

We all get dirty windows, and few of us actually enjoy cleaning them. Whether you are preparing for the holidays, in the midst of spring cleaning, or enhancing the look of your home, let First Impressions take this tedious task and make it worry-free. Specializing in residential window cleaning and power washing, First Impressions is guaranteed to give your home a beautiful facelift!

- ▶ Located in Comanche
- ▶ (325) 356-1218 or (325) 356-1219
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ▶ lindabinghamphotography@gmail.com

OFFER: 10 percent discount on residential window cleaning or power washing

Frames and Things

Frames and Things, located in historic downtown Brownwood, was established in 1947, serving the Central Texas area. The store can ship your prints and framed art via UPS. Select your favorite artist or publisher to find your new print choices. The gallery has many framed and unframed prints for your viewing pleasure. There are samples of various framing techniques in our store to help you with your ideas.

- ▶ 408 Center Ave., Brownwood
- ▶ (325) 646-8811
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- ▶ framesandthingsbrownwoodtx.com
- ▶ framesandthingsbrownwood2@verizon.net

OFFER: 10 percent discount on custom framing. (Not valid with another discount offer).

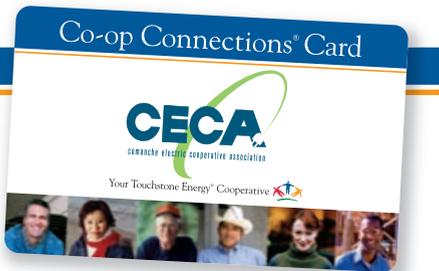
Furniture Depot

Furniture Depot specializes in rustic furniture and home decor. Whether you are looking for a single piece, to furnish an entire room or an entire house, Furniture Depot's got what you need. The store now

Call it
Conservative
Economical
Efficient
Prudent
Sparing
Thrifty
Frugal
Stingy



**Use it, and
 people will call
 you brilliant.**



No matter what you call it, the Co-op Connections card will save you money on goods and services of all kinds—including prescriptions at your local pharmacy. Just take it with you wherever you go. Pull it out anywhere you see a Co-op Connections sticker. And say hello to the savings.

The card is yours. The savings are yours. All because you're a member of CECA. And we're always looking out for you. To learn more, visit ceca.coop.

Special savings, just for you, from CECA.

offers Kenneth Wyatt paintings and Circle E Candles and has a wide variety of one-of-a-kind furniture and home decor.

- ▶ 145 S. Patrick St., Dublin
- ▶ (254) 445-2134
- ▶ Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ▶ furnituredepottx.com
- ▶ furnituredepotdublin@gmail.com

OFFER: King Wing Star Bed (CAM555), includes headboard, footboard and rails, with two-rope door and drawer nightstands (BUR501) for \$699.99 (originally \$819.99)

H&H Handcrafts

Looking for unique items to decorate your home or yard? Don't want to fight the traffic and crowds or wait in long lines? Whether you are looking for items for your home or yard, or looking to purchase unique gifts, H&H Handcrafts is the place to be! The store specialty is handmade yard and patio furniture, handmade yard art, and fine art. H&H Handcrafts also makes custom art and furniture pieces.

- ▶ 407 E. Duncan Ave., Comanche
- ▶ (325) 356-6292
- ▶ Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
- ▶ rhawkins7@verizon.net

OFFER: 20 percent discount on all furniture

Hardin's BBQ

Nothing says Texas like a big plate of barbecue with all the fixins'. And Hardin's BBQ in Eastland says it better than most. Nestled inside the Conoco Station, Hardin's BBQ features the best mesquite-smoked barbecue north of I-20. So stop by and fill your fuel tank and your appetite all in one stop.

- ▶ 3300 E. Interstate 20, Eastland
- ▶ (254) 629-1227
- ▶ Wednesday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Thursday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

OFFER: Buy any plate, get 50 percent discount on the second plate

Hendrick Medical Supply

Hendrick Medical Supply, an affiliate of Hendrick Health System, has been providing durable medical equipment, oxygen and respiratory equipment and supplies for more than 55 years. Hendrick Medical Supply serves patients of all ages within the Abilene and surrounding communities in West and West Central Texas, 24 hours a day.

- ▶ 410 W. Commerce St., Eastland
- ▶ (254) 629-8338 or 1-800-588-8338
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
(Closed noon-1 p.m.)
- ▶ hendrickmedicalsupply.com
- ▶ mchrane@ehendrick.org

OFFER: 15 percent discount on all retail purchases

Lemons' Bar-B-Q

If you are looking for old-time charm and great food, join Lemons' Bar-B-Q, where the best barbecue and fish in Brown County is served. The restaurant offers a comfortable atmosphere specializing in barbecue, steaks and catfish, as well as a reunion hall and catering.

- ▶ 3702 Coggin Ave., Brownwood
- ▶ (325) 646-9655
- ▶ Monday-Wednesday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.;
Thursday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

OFFER: 10 percent discount on any dine-in ticket. (Not valid with any other discount offer.)

Linda Bingham ARTique Studio

A new style emerges from Linda Bingham ARTique Studio through an artful blend of photography with a boutique twist. The studio is open to the public one Saturday a month, and the date is advertised in local media and on Facebook. ARTique Studio is also open 24/7 on etsy.com, store lindabinghamstudio.

- ▶ 1102 E. Milton Ave., Comanche
- ▶ (325) 330-1218
- ▶ lindabinghamphotography.com
- ▶ lindabinghamphotography@gmail.com

OFFER: 25 percent discount on any one item purchased

Riley Studio

Riley Studio is a fine art photography studio that has been serving the area for 12 years. The studio takes pride in capturing memories that will last forever. Riley Studio also offers a variety of framing and matting—shadow boxing, collage matting, canvas and portrait framing, as well as restorations and passport photos. Visit the new studio, located in the historic Switzer house, just off Wrights Avenue.

- ▶ 805 N. Page St., Comanche
- ▶ (325) 356-3199
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; evenings
and weekends by appointment only

- ▶ rileystudio.com
- ▶ rileystudio@verizon.net

OFFER: \$25 sitting fee waived. This includes photography session of your choice, as well as honoring the current children's photography special of \$20 unit print price.

Seal-Tite Insulation

These days you have to be very careful what you put into your home and into the environment. Seal-Tite Insulation is not only safe for your home and future, but also will save money on your utility bills from the moment it is installed in your home. The product could cut your energy consumption by up to 50 percent, thereby decreasing the amount of energy used, and reducing your power bill as well as reducing the waste of our planet's valuable resources. Seal-Tite Insulation offers a 5 percent discount to all cooperative members within a 60-mile radius of its home base. Call for a free in-home estimate.

- ▶ Serving the Central Texas area
- ▶ (254) 967-5891

OFFER: 5% discount on gross total of job

Special Spiritual Designs

Betty Beggs, manager and owner of Special Spiritual Designs, is an experienced designer of prints, greeting cards, posters, advertising, church envelopes and magazine covers. She also does inside spots on larger ads. Tearsheets and copies of originals are supplied upon request. Art has been Betty's passion for the last 11 years. All her art is original, including some digital photos—all priced to sell. Betty is a 2000 graduate of Howard Payne University.

- ▶ 1051 CR 240, Rising Star
- ▶ (254) 725-4485 or (254) 725-7235
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ▶ staph2001@live.com

OFFER: 10 percent discount on all pieces

Spring Crest Carpet and Drapery

Spring Crest Carpet and Drapery is your one-stop shop for all your floor and window needs. The shop features a wide variety of carpet, vinyl, ceramic tile, wood flooring and area rugs, as well as wood and faux blinds, pleated and Roman shades, custom draperies and plantation shutters. Spring Crest Carpet and Drapery offers professional installation and free

estimates and can even help you with your financing needs. The business has been at the same location at 609 S. Main St. in Brownwood for more than 20 years.

- ▶ 609 S. Main St., Brownwood
- ▶ (325) 646-6793
- ▶ Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday
by appointment only
- ▶ troybruce@netzero.net

OFFER: Free installation on five or more blinds; or 10 percent discount on whole house of installed carpet

Sweet Stuff and Coffee

Sweet Stuff and Coffee makes old-fashioned candy with no preservatives, just like Grandma used to make. All the pies and cakes are made fresh from scratch, and the business' goal is to create unique packaging for the candies, which are displayed and packaged in lovely gift tins. Sweet Stuff and Coffee's main product is handmade, old-fashioned candy, specializing in divinity, pralines, peanut pizzaz, caramel, fudge, peanut brittle, pecan brittle, Tabasco brittle and the newest addition, flavored popcorn, packaged up in decorative tins and bags. Candy is made fresh for shipping.

- ▶ 100 E. Williams St., Breckenridge
- ▶ (254) 559-7050 or 1-888-527-9338
- ▶ Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ▶ sweetstuffcandy.com

OFFER: 10 percent discount on all purchases over \$25

To join as a business

Call 1-800-915-2533 or (325) 356-2533 to request a contract to be sent to you. Fill out the contract and send it to CECA, Attn: Shirley, P.O. Box 729, Comanche, TX 76442, or fax it to (325) 356-3038. There is no cost, except the discount you choose to give to the customer, which is a small price to pay for the increase in customer traffic and free advertising.

All questions concerning the card can be answered by contacting Shirley at (325) 356-2533 or 1-800-915-2533.

Short Circuits

Old wiring could be hazardous

Residential electrical wiring changed during the 20th century as new appliances appeared on the scene and electricity evolved from a luxury to a mainstay. More appliances at home led to safety improvements and an increased number of room outlets, leaving older home wiring to play catch-up.

Because a third of American homes were built more than 50 years ago, home buyers and folks living in older homes should be aware of how wiring changed during the last century.



Look familiar? If your home is host to electrical wiring like this, it's time to call an electrician and make some improvements.

The wood frame above plaster ceilings could also become charred by lightbulbs that are too close to the ceiling or higher in wattage than the light fixture's rating.

To avoid such hazards, consumers should understand the limits of home wiring systems. Often, this depends on when a home was built or if the electrical system was upgraded. In other cases, though, telltale signs may indicate a problem.

Anytime you receive a shock from an electrical appliance, outlet or wall switch in your home, it's a warning that you should talk with a qualified electrician. If a fuse blows or a circuit breaker trips right after you replace or reset it, you have trouble somewhere. Flickering or dimming lights could mean loose connections, overloaded circuits, improper wiring, or arcing and sparking inside walls.

In older homes, heat means too much electrical current is being drawn through outlets. If your receptacles or plugs are hot to the touch, you may have an overload. When too much current gets drawn, wires heat up, baking and eventually weakening the insulation.

Older homes often lack an adequate number of wall outlets, resulting in increased use of extension cords, creating additional hazards.

If your home exhibits any of the symptoms of inadequate wiring, arrange for a licensed electrical contractor to do a full inspection and make the necessary repairs.

Electric capacity is a major concern with older wiring systems. Homeowners in the 1930s didn't use a lot of electrical appliances, except for a refrigerator, a few lights and a radio.

An explosion of appliance purchases followed in the late 1940s and early '50s. But the arrival of air conditioning during the 1960s soon rendered many mid-century home electrical systems obsolete. Wiring in residences built as recently as 20 years ago might be insufficient for handling entertainment systems and personal computers.

You should not assume all is well simply because fuses aren't blowing, circuit breakers aren't tripping or you're not receiving shocks or smelling burnt plastic. Inside the walls, wire insulation could be cracking and crumbling, especially if wires are drawing more current than they were designed to handle.



Time To Bundle Up?

Your furry friends may not appreciate a new fur coat, but your water heater just might. Most water heaters have minimal insulation and are often located in unair-conditioned areas. Sound like yours?

If so, adding an insulation jacket can reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent, cutting your water-heating costs by 4 to 9 percent.

Take advantage of mild temperatures to dress up your water heater for winter. Insulating your water heater tank is fairly simple and inexpensive, and you might qualify for one of CECA's ecoPOWR rebates. You can find precut jackets or blankets available from around \$10-\$20. Choose one with an insulating value of at least R-8.

You can probably install a precut insulating jacket or blanket on your electric water heater tank yourself. Read and follow the directions carefully and be sure to leave the thermostat access panel uncovered. Don't set the thermostat above 130 degrees on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket—the wiring may overheat.

You also might consider placing a piece of rigid insulation under the tank of your electric water heater to help prevent heat loss into the floor, saving another 4 to 9 percent of water heating energy.

Contact the Member Service Department at 1-800-915-2533 to see if you qualify for a water heater blanket rebate and for information on all ecoPOWR rebates.

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