

COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EDITION



YOU'RE ALREADY A MEMBER
OF YOUR **ELECTRIC CO-OP**



PLUG IN

TO YOUR **ACTION NETWORK**

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

— A NOTE FROM —
ALAN LESLEY



Dear Friends,

We at Comanche Electric Cooperative strive to meet your energy needs by providing you, a member-owner of the cooperative, with safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

Unlike other utility providers, our business is based here in our local community, where our board members, managers and employees, along with our families and friends, live and work. Your cooperative invests in the electrical and community infrastructure needed to provide you with a great quality of life.

Our local approach to meeting your energy needs is an “all-of-the-above” strategy, where no option is taken off the table, to produce a cost-effective and reliable power supply that CECA member-owners can afford. Together, fossil fuels and renewable energy sources can produce a power supply that is safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible.

Laws and regulations from Austin and Washington, D.C., directly affect our ability to meet your energy needs. Flawed mandates can be particularly harmful to member-owned cooperatives like ours.

We ask that you consider joining your Texas Cooperative Action Network. You can stay up to date on pressing state and federal issues affecting your electric bill by completing the information form on the back cover and returning it. You may also visit ComancheAction.coop to sign up for the network online.

Signing up is free, and we won't send you any excess information. Most important, we'll never share your private information with a third party.

Like a good neighbor, CECA will keep you informed and suggest opportunities for you to take action through the Texas Cooperative Action Network, when needed, to help protect your quality of life.

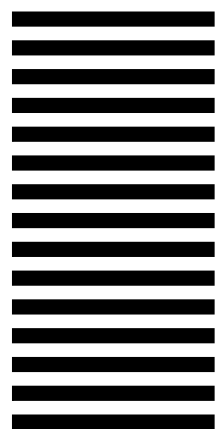
Together, we're stronger.

Alan Lesley
ALAN LESLEY

General Manager
Comanche Electric Cooperative



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AUSTIN TX 78701-9815



Fill out this card, detach it and return it by mail, OR visit ComancheAction.coop to join instantly!

Together, We're Stronger



STAY INFORMED AND STAY INVOLVED

Join thousands of electric cooperative members across the state
in a grassroots effort to fight for safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

Fill out this card, detach it and return it by mail,
OR visit ComancheAction.coop to join instantly!

FULL NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

PREFERRED PHONE NUMBER

We respect your privacy. Your personal information will remain confidential and will never be used by or distributed to any third party.



A POWERFUL ALTERNATIVE

A community of proud voices
deserves to be heard!

Join your **Action Network** and
start making a difference today.

Engage in Your Cooperative



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

IN 2012, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the trade association representing approximately 900 electric cooperatives in 47 states, released a report titled, *The Electric Cooperative Purpose: A Compass for*

the 21st Century. A blue-ribbon task force of co-op leaders from across the country arrived at the conclusion that an electric cooperative's purpose is to "power communities and empower members to improve the quality of their lives."

Comanche Electric Cooperative is a member of NRECA and firmly believes that you, our members, need to be at the heart of everything we do. We are proud that we are different from investor-owned utilities, where the primary purpose is to generate profit for their stockholders.

Cooperatives are different. Co-ops enjoy the support of people from all walks of life. We operate in every type of business from agriculture, housing and finance to health care, food, technology and many more. Co-ops can be found from the most rural to the most urban areas.

While the co-op must, of course, generate enough revenue to cover costs, profit is not our motive. Serving you and your neighbors is our No. 1 priority.

As *The Electric Cooperative Purpose* report noted, "Our story is about ordinary people who banded together to improve the quality of life by providing electricity to our community when no one else would do it." But that was 78 years ago when Comanche EC was founded. As we look to the future, we once again need your active participation to determine the future of our co-op.

We welcome your input on what we can do to ensure that we meet your needs. You can provide us that input in several ways: You can attend the co-op's annual meeting, vote on co-op matters, and ask questions of cooperative staff and management. You can call us at 1-800-915-2533, or contact us via memberservices@ceca.coop with questions, comments and suggestions. And you can talk to any Comanche EC staff member when you see them during community events.

One thing you can absolutely count on: We will never move to Mexico or China like so many other companies have done. We will always be local—right here, ready to listen and ready to serve our members.

*Cultivating a
Brighter Future
Through Our Youth*



See Pages 21 and 22 to find out how CECA benefits the youths
of our communities through our youth programs.



Could You Use \$1,000 for College?

COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE IS COMMITTED to giving back to the communities that we serve, and what better way to do that than to support our youth, the future of our communities?

CECA will award four \$1,000 Scholarships for Excellence and two \$1,000 Operation Round-Up Scholarships to students who plan to pursue an academic degree or certification from an accredited university, college, junior college, technical school or other postsecondary educational institution. Scholarship payment will be made directly to the college, university or school.

Scholarship Requirements

- ▶ An applicant must be an active member of CECA or still claimed as a dependent of parents or legal guardians who are active CECA members.
- ▶ An applicant must have maintained a minimum 2.50 cumulative grade-point average on a 4.0 scale.
- ▶ Winners will be chosen based on two criteria: financial need (60 percent); and leadership, community and school activities (40 percent).
- ▶ The total scholarship amount awarded per student will be \$1,000. CECA will pay \$500 for the fall semester upon receipt of voucher, invoice or official letter providing proof of enrollment.
- ▶ Recipient is required to submit proof of spring enrollment and sustained 2.00 GPA from fall semester to qualify for remaining \$500.

How To Apply

Applications can be found:

- ▶ On our website at ceca.coop;
- ▶ In your school counselor's office;
- ▶ By email at memberservices@ceca.coop; or
- ▶ By contacting the Member Services Department at 1-800-915-2533.

Deadline for applications is March 25.

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

EARLY OFFICE

1801 CR 338
Early, TX 76801

EASTLAND OFFICE

1311 W. Main St.
Eastland, TX 76448

OFFICE HOURS

Comanche Office: Monday-Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Early Office: Monday, Wednesday and
Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed
from 1 to 2 p.m.

Eastland Office: Tuesday and Thursday
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

General Manager

Alan Lesley

Board of Directors

Randy Denning, District 1
Pete McDougal, District 2
Ruby Solomon, District 3
Monty Carlisle, District 4
Troy Stewart, District 5
Loren Stroebe, District 6
Phil Taylor, District 7

Report an Outage

CECA crews are available 24/7 in the event of a power quality issue by calling 1-800-915-2533.

Contact Us

CALL US

1-800-915-2533 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

www.ceca.coop



facebook.com/CECA.coop

The Trip of a Lifetime



Sierra Gordon, left, and Reagan Bills presented the winning speeches during CECA's Government-in-Action Youth Tour Contest. Gordon and Bills will meet June 8 in Austin with approximately 100 students from across our great state of Texas. After touring the state capital, they will then fly to Washington, D.C., where more than 1,700 students from all over the country will converge on our nation's capital for an extensive tour of our government, history and culture. They will meet U.S. representatives and senators; explore museums, memorials and monuments; meet student leaders from nearly every state; hear dynamic leaders on Youth Day and have many more exciting adventures.

REAGAN BILLS AND SIERRA GORDON will represent CECA on the all-expense-paid Government-in-Action Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. The trip will take place June 10–17.

Bills and Gordon were chosen by independent judges for their presentation skills and knowledge of subject on the topic of communication.

Bills is the daughter of Mark and Holly Bills. She is a sophomore at Early High School, where she is involved in National FFA Organization, competing in farm skills, public speaking and land judging. She is also a member of the Key Club and the Austin Avenue Church of Christ youth group. She enjoys hunting and fishing, as well as cooking and baking. Bills also volunteers her time at the Brownwood Regional Medical Center. Upon graduation, she plans to attend Texas Tech University, where she would like to study medicine, with the dream of one day becoming either a pediatrician or an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Gordon is a home-schooled junior from Zephyr and the daughter of Jerry and Kay Lynn Gordon. She takes dual-credit classes at Howard Payne University. She is heavily involved in 4-H as the Brown County 4-H council chairman and a district officer, and she shows her goats. Gordon is an active member at Coggin Avenue Baptist Church and will be going with the mission team to Kisoro, Uganda, over spring break.

The Government-in-Action Youth Tour has a long and rich

history, dating back to 1957 when then-Sen. Lyndon Baines Johnson addressed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting in Chicago. The senator and future president declared, "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."

Consequently, several Texas electric cooperatives sent groups of young people to work during the summer in Johnson's office. By 1959, the Youth Tour had taken hold with 130 students nationwide attending the trip.

Today, more than 1,700 students from all across America take part in the Youth Tour experience each year. This trip gives students the opportunity to watch history come alive as they explore museums, memorials and monuments with other students.

CECA proudly continues to carry on the tradition by sending two students on the all-expense-paid trip each year. They meet student leaders from nearly every state and hear dynamic leaders on Youth Day. Bottom line, they make friendships that will last a lifetime and are part of a group that has more than 50,000 national alumni from every walk of life, including U.S. senators and CEOs.

Please join us in wishing these two young women the trip of a lifetime!

Cooperative Principle 7: Concern for Community

CECA EMPLOYEES FREQUENTLY PRESENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS to area organizations. If your organization is interested in hosting a CECA professional presentation, contact the Member Services Department at 1-800-915-2533.



Left: CECA staff presented arcing demonstrations for each of the Texas Department of Transportation offices in the CECA service territory and for its regional safety training.
Right: CECA Member Services Representative Riley Hilliard spoke to the Comanche Kiwanis Club concerning advancements in solar power.



STEFAN POPOV | ISTOCK.COM

We Need Your Recipes!

CECA IS CURRENTLY compiling recipes for the *CECA Member Cookbook, Volume II*. We can't do it without you! Please share your latest and greatest recipes to be included in our newest edition of the cookbook. Recipes can be sent to CECA, P.O. Box 729, Comanche, TX 76442, or emailed to sdukes@ceca.coop.

CECA/SHIRLEY DUKES

Operation Green Up

Come **GREEN UP**
your act
with us!

CECA is
offering you
an oppor-
tunity to increase
your energy efficiency
and beautify your property.
Help us make our planet a
better place.



Get a free Bald Cypress seedling (While supplies last)

Join CECA at one of our offices on the dates listed below:

Comanche Office: Friday, April 22nd, 7:30 AM-4:30PM
Early Office: Friday, April 22nd, 7:30 AM-1:00 PM & 2:00 PM-4:30 PM
Eastland Office: Thursday, April 21st, 8:00 AM-4:00 PM



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

BEGINS AT 2 A.M. SUNDAY,
MARCH 13. REMEMBER
TO SET YOUR CLOCKS
AN HOUR AHEAD.

ANYA IVANOVA | ISTOCK.COM

WINTER STORM GOLIATH

THERE IS JUST SOMETHING ABOUT A SNOW OR ICE STORM that is beautiful and majestic. At least, it is until you have to work in it or clean up after it! In the electric utility business, everyone knows snow and ice can have a devastating effect on the electric grid. The added weight on the system can snap poles, causing major outages and extremely expensive repairs.

When Winter Storm Goliath made its way into the Panhandle and upper regions of the Texas border and into Oklahoma, it brought snow up to 20 inches deep in some parts of Texas. In Vernon, Texas, and in Tipton, Oklahoma, home of Southwest Rural Electric Cooperative, approximately 1,700 poles were lost due to ice and wind, leaving seven substations and more than

7,000 meters without power for an extended period of time.

In true cooperative fashion, on December 28, 2015, CECA sent five trucks and a crew of six men to Vernon to assist SWRE with repairs. On Monday, January 4, that crew came home, and another crew took its place.

“The worst part was not the snow,” said CECA Service Lineman Adam Tally. “It was when the snow melted and froze back, leaving the lines on the ground iced over and almost impossible to pull back up.”

All CECA crews were back home by January 9. At that time, not all SWRE meters were back on, but all residences had power.

CECA line crews worked long, hard days. “We were up most mornings by 5,” said First-Class Lineman George Campbell, “and we worked till dark. By the end of the day, we were ready to fall into bed as soon as our supper was over.”



CECA/SHIRLEY DUKES

Pay Your Way

Have you ever wished you could have complete control over how much power you consume each month? Well, now you can, with CECA's new *Pay Your Way* prepaid metering program.

How does *Pay Your Way* prepay work?

New and current residential members may be eligible to qualify for the CECA *Pay Your Way* prepay program.

New members pay a \$120 initial payment to establish a *Pay Your Way* prepay account. This amount consists of a \$20 CECA membership fee, a one-time \$50 connect fee and a \$50 credit applied to the *Pay Your Way* prepay account.

Existing members may have the option of converting to a prepay account. Deposits on an existing account will be applied toward any outstanding balance, with the remaining amount applied to the *Pay Your Way* prepay account as a credit. Existing members with billed or unbilled account balances may either pay the existing balance or may qualify for the cooperative's debt management system.

Existing CECA members must begin the *Pay Your Way* prepay program with a minimum of \$20 credit on the account. *Pay Your Way* members are not eligible for levelized billing.

Billing

Once a *Pay Your Way* prepay account is established and a credit balance is realized, the member's home energy usage and the availability charge is recorded and charged daily to the account. The credit balance is reduced daily by the amount charged until either the balance is exhausted or additional payments are made to the account.

How do I manage my *Pay Your Way* prepay balance?

You may choose to receive periodic courtesy notifications of account balances via text messaging and/or email. Failure to receive these notifications does not release you from payment obligations. You may modify or change notification settings for the *Pay Your Way* prepay account or check balance information via:

- ▶ Phone, by calling 1-800-915-2533.
- ▶ The cooperative's online bill-pay site at ceca.coop.
- ▶ The cooperative's free bill-pay app, available at your app store.
- ▶ Stopping in at any local cooperative service office during the hours of operation. A list of the office locations and times

of operation is available on the CECA website at ceca.coop, or on Page 21 of this publication.

▶ Mail. However, mailed payments may take several days to be received and posted to your account.

If you need assistance, please call our office directly at 1-800-915-2533. Someone will be available to answer your questions 24/7.

Enrollment

To enroll in the CECA *Pay Your Way* prepay program, complete and submit an enrollment form to any local CECA service office.

Forms can be obtained by contacting a Member Services Representative at 1-800-915-2533.

Applicants must have a membership application and paid fee on file with the cooperative.



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Your Trees and Power Lines

WE ALL LOVE OUR TREES. At CECA we even encourage you to plant them to provide shade for your home and to increase the efficiency of your air conditioning in the summer and your heating in the winter.

But those same trees can become a nuisance to the electric cooperative when they encroach on our lines. They can also be a nuisance to you and your neighbors when they cause power outages and blinks.

The Right Tree in the Right Place

Planting the right tree in the right place can increase the property value and energy efficiency of your home, and minimize property damage and power outages caused when trees come into contact with power lines. When planting a new tree, consider where you are placing it and what the tree will look like in 10 or 20 years. Look up from the proposed planting site and see if there are wires overhead or nearby.

Also, don't forget to check for underground utilities prior to planting. Call 811 at least 48 hours before starting your work.



TOUCHSTONE ENERGY PHOTO GALLERY

Keeping You Safe and the Lights On

Trees growing near power lines can be a safety hazard and are a leading cause of power outages. Power lines are easy to overlook and can pose serious electrical hazards if unnoticed. Strong winds and storms can topple trees or shatter branches that pull down power lines and cause outages. Sometimes, even if heavily damaged, lines remain energized with the potential to electrify trees and nearby objects.

To “cut back” on potential tree-related problems, CECA maintains an aggressive vegetation management/tree trimming program.

If you have a tree that appears to be within 10 feet of any utility equipment, call CECA to send someone out to evaluate the site.

Trimming Future Problems

To prevent future problems when planting trees, bushes or shrubs, look up first to see where overhead power lines may hinder future growth. Remember, the legal setback for trees and other plants is 15 feet.

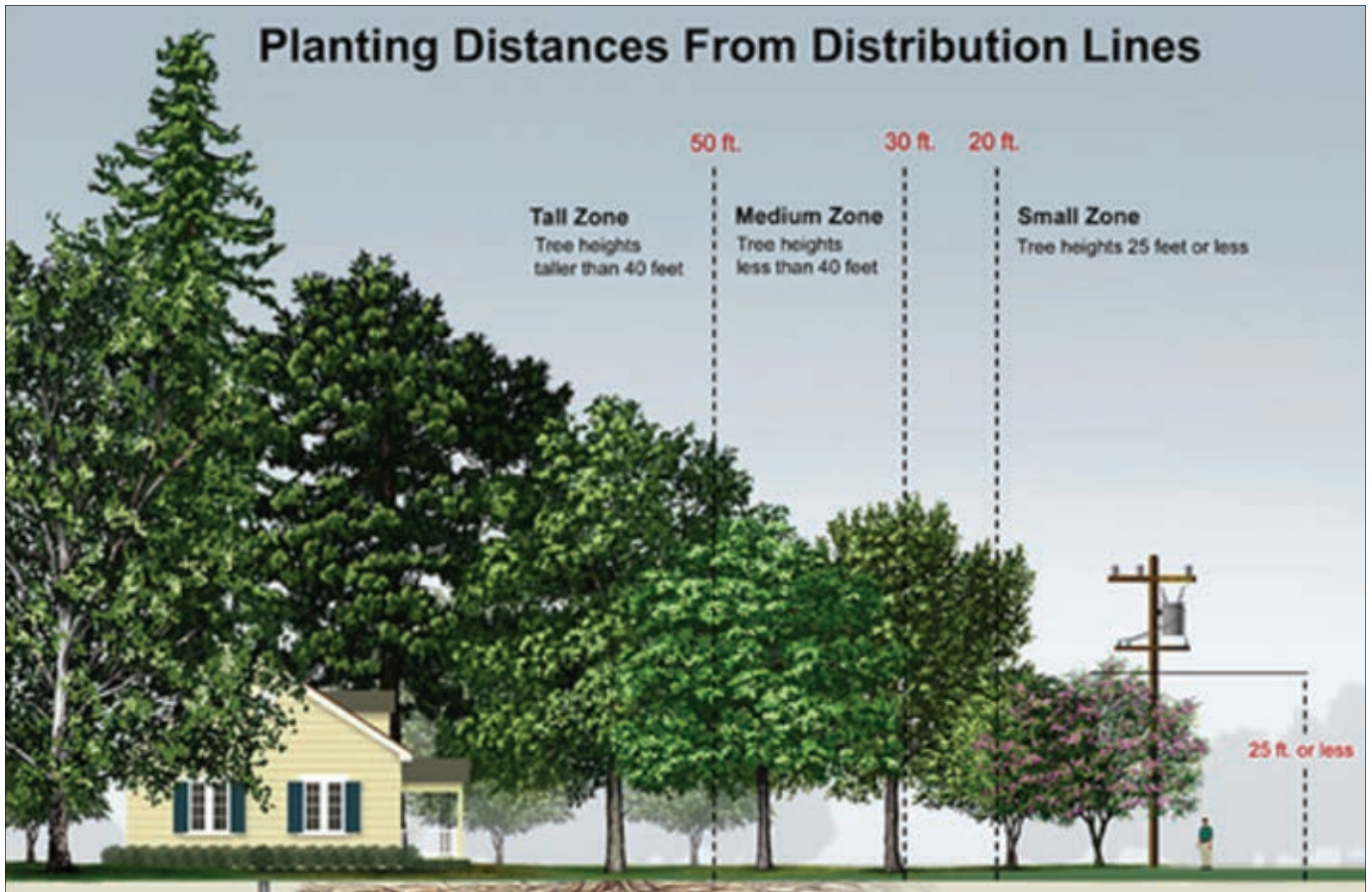
Many tree varieties can grow 8–10 feet per year and will grow to be 15–100 feet tall and 30–50 feet wide. Choose tree varieties with care and plant with power lines in mind.

With careful planning and regular maintenance, you can help prevent trees and shrubs from growing near power lines, lessening the need for trimming. That can save CECA and you, the member, thousands of dollars in unnecessary expenses.

To report trees that might cause a problem, call 1-800-915-2533. Thank you for your help as we work together to keep a safe, reliable and affordable supply of power flowing to your home or business.



TOUCHSTONE ENERGY PHOTO GALLERY



CECA maintains a 15-foot easement on each side of the utility power lines. Trees encroaching upon this easement are subject to trimming and/or removal.

Contact Us If You Are Unsure!

CECA receives many calls and emails from landowners related to tree trimming or vegetation control practices. If you are unsure as to whether trees are safe to trim, contact the CECA Member Services Department at 1-800-915-2533. A representative will evaluate your individual situation and assist you in finding a solution.

Know What's Below—Call Before You Dig

When planting trees or doing projects around your house, digging without knowing where underground utility lines are buried can be risky. When underground lines are damaged, vital services and everyday conveniences can become disconnected, not only for your home, but sometimes for whole communities. Don't risk harming yourself, your family or your neighbors.

When planning an excavation project, dial 811 at least 48 hours (two working days) before you plan to start your work. They will notify most underground utility providers, who will send professional locators out to mark the approximate location of their utility lines. Then you can dig confidently, knowing the utilities will not be disturbed. The call is simple and free, and it's the law. Know what's below. Call 811 before you dig.



Tree Trimming Tips

- ▶ Make sure to always look up and down for nearby overhead or underground power lines or equipment before you cut down trees or trim branches.
- ▶ Treat all power lines as if they are energized. Never climb or attempt to handle a tree that has a limb caught in a power line. You may not see any visible evidence that the tree is "electrified" or dangerous.
- ▶ Make sure to maintain required clearances between equipment and power lines.
- ▶ If a fire starts from a fallen power line, notify the fire department and CECA. Stay away from the site of the electrical hazard. Make sure others stay clear of the line and treat it as if energized.
- ▶ Do not use water on or near a fallen power line.