

Weathering the Storm

Natural disasters leave safety issues in their wake



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

FLOODS. WIND. RAIN. WHEN

Mother Nature wreaks havoc on the power grid, a host of hazards often follows. That makes safety—always a top priority for Comanche Electric Cooperative—a major concern even after a storm blows through.

Creating a culture of safety is incredibly important to electric co-ops because some of our employees face hazardous situations daily. We also want to ensure the safety of those we serve—our members.

Every region of the state deals with its own types of weather problems. Here's a look at the most common storm byproducts that create safety risks for your cooperative and its members.

Floods

Beyond the hazard that floodwaters pose to drivers, water can turn an already tricky situation into a deadly one if you attempt to work with electrical equipment that's wet or submerged.

Last year, when floods ravaged South Texas, electric co-ops lost precious infrastructure. Lineworkers had to improvise creative solutions to restore power needed by homeowners and businesses to pump out water and make repairs. Because of the dangers, co-ops urged members to exercise caution and call a licensed electrician before beginning cleanup efforts. One critical piece of advice given was to not use electrical appliances that had been wet until they had been examined by a qualified service repair dealer.

When high winds accompany rains that produce flooding, downed power lines are a real possibility. Stay away from water near power lines.

Tornadoes and High Winds

Tornadoes are common in Texas and can leave wide swaths of destruction behind—snapping utility poles like twigs and reducing transmission towers to heaps of twisted metal. Power outages often result.

Downed power lines pose the greatest electrical risk after a tornado or bout with high winds because you can't tell whether they still are energized. Always assume downed power lines are

live. Keep at least 35 feet away from downed lines and anything touching them.

If you find yourself close to downed lines, shuffle away in small steps, with your feet together, touching the ground at all times to prevent electrocution.

Prolonged power outages spur increased use of portable generators, which can be deadly if misused. Most people get hurt by operating the machines too close to or even inside their



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homes, which allows carbon monoxide to filter throughout living areas. Most generators emit deadly levels of the gas within minutes.

In addition, if you plug your portable generator into a wall socket, it can threaten co-op lineworkers by producing backfeed that unexpectedly re-energizes power lines.

Backfeeding is a deadly serious issue for electric co-op lineworkers. Portable generators should never be plugged into a home's wall outlet, and permanent generators must have a transfer switch installed. Call Comanche EC if you plan to install an emergency generator.

2018 Annual Meeting of the Membership

THE WORD “COOPERATIVE” IN THE NAME of any business means it operates a little bit differently from other organizations.

Like any nonprofit cooperative business, an electric cooperative belongs to the people who use it. So you and your neighbors who buy electricity from Comanche Electric Cooperative actually own the business.

More than 100 million Americans belong to some sort of cooperative. The cooperative business model is followed successfully in the banking, food, agriculture, housing and insurance industries, among others. More than 900 electric utilities are organized as cooperatives, serving approximately 12 percent of the U.S. population.

As a member-owner of Comanche Electric Cooperative, you’re encouraged to attend your co-op’s annual meeting and vote for the members of the board of directors. This year’s annual meeting will be held October 13, 9 a.m.–noon, at Comanche City Park. Look for details in the October issue of *Texas Co-op Power*.

Whether a co-op’s members are its customers, employees or residents, they have an equal say in what the business does—along with an equal share in the profits. Like other cooperatives, Comanche EC is focused on providing the best service possible—not making a profit at your expense.



Happy Labor Day! We will be closed Monday, September 3, for the holiday. As always, crews will be on standby in the event of an emergency.



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.–4:30 p.m.

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

Eastland Office: Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.–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
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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

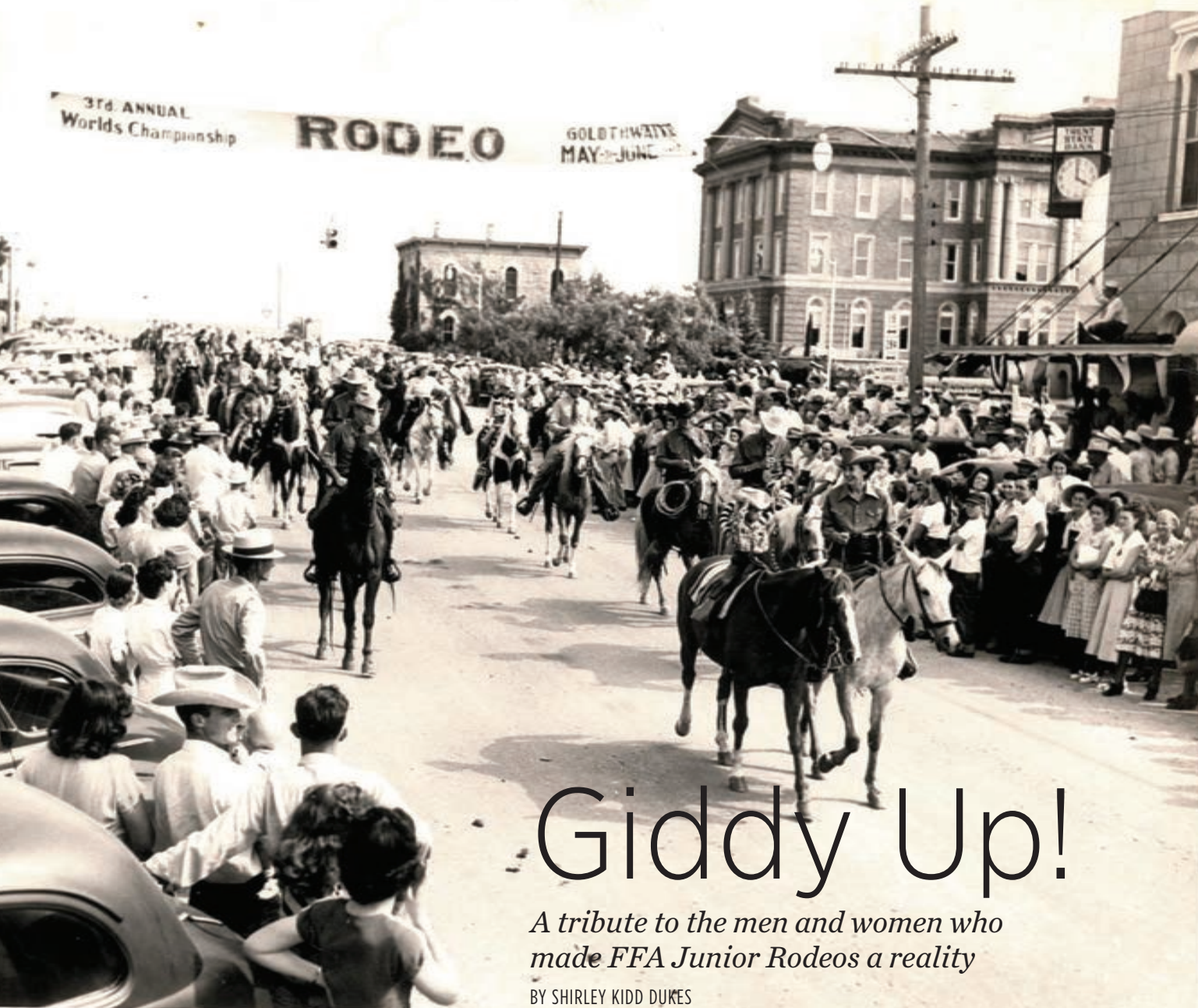
1-800-915-2533 toll-free

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Giddy Up!

A tribute to the men and women who made FFA Junior Rodeos a reality

BY SHIRLEY KIDD DUKES

LYNN MOSIER BEGAN RODEOING WHEN HE WAS 7. HIS SISTER, Vicki Mosier Lackey, started when she was 9. Gaylon Jernigan started when he was in first grade. And Annette Duncan Burkman has rodeoed her whole life. Some 75 other people who assisted with or attended the first Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion have similar stories to tell. All agree that if it weren't for the community members of previous generations who gave freely of their efforts and assets to the cause, most of them would never have had the opportunity to participate in the sport—nor be blessed with so many wonderful memories.

The group founded a committee to record the history of the Central Texas Future Farmers of America and Junior Rodeos. The project was the brainchild of Mosier, a former resident of Mullin.

“When I retired in 2000, I had it in my mind,” Mosier said. “My friend, Bubba Fowler, turned me on to this book, *Trail Drivers of Texas*. I read that book, and it's compiled [of] letters ... by people that drove cattle up the Chisholm Trail. I thought possibly we could do a book on the history of the FFA rodeos that started back in the '50s and try to remember some of the

people ... that started it and provided us with the opportunity to do that. There were so many men and women that made this rodeo happen with little money and lots of hard work.”

FFA, originally called Future Farmers of America, emerged from a 1926 Virginia program to offer farm boys “a greater opportunity for self-expression and for the development of leadership.” About 20 years later, FFA rodeos were established, mostly through the dedication and hard work of volunteers within participating communities.

With no fees to enter or ride, FFA rodeos were events that any child could participate in as long as he or she had a horse to ride. Of course, many would-be competitors at that time did not have their own horses and had to ride pasture horses. Ultimately, this would be just one of many instances in which local community leaders stepped up to give these kids a hand, making it possible for them to take part in the competition and be part of something big. “I thought this history was going to be lost,” Mosier said, “so I made a few phone calls. My hope was to get people to send us letters about their rodeo experience and about the people that provided them with that opportunity.”

Opposite: The Third Annual World Championship Rodeo Parade, 1948, on the main street of Goldthwaite. Photo courtesy Annette Duncan Burkman.



Right: Foundation Committee members of the first annual Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion, from left, Vicki Mosier Lackey, Lynn Mosier, Annette Duncan Burkman, Brenda Jernigan, Connie Mitchell McDougal and Gaylon Jernigan. Seated is Pete McDougal. Photo courtesy *The Goldthwaite Eagle*.

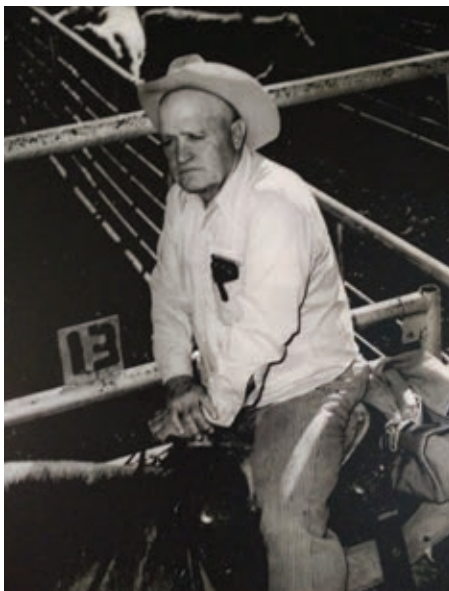
Mosier, like many of his peers, did not have his own horse until he was in sixth grade. His rodeo career in 1954 consisted of the greased pig race and riding around the arena on Trixie, a horse he borrowed from a local man named Clyde Jones. His first real taste of rodeo was in 1958 at the Blanket Rodeo, when he answered the call for young boys to ride calves. Thinking it would cure him of rodeo fever, Mosier’s dad allowed him to ride.

“I came out, and the calf threw me over his head, stepped in my belly with both feet, and when I got the air back in me, I got back in the stands, and my daddy decided it was a good time to break me, so he made sure we went back the next night,” Mosier said. “I didn’t ride my calf that night, but I didn’t get hurt. I’d never done anything that exciting, and by the time I got home, I knew I had to be a bull rider.”

Jernigan has a similar story. His own horse would buck him

off in the grand entry, so he began his rodeo days on a horse named Glory that was loaned to him by “Toss” Coffey, a well-known figure in the rodeo world of Central Texas. A member of the Zephyr community, Coffey announced the youth rodeos of the area for 50 years. Born in 1918 as Lowell W. Coffey, he could be seen as a small boy riding his big white horse. Unable to pronounce his name correctly as a child, when asked his name he would reply, “I am the Tossey boy,” thus gaining the lifelong nickname “Toss.” After high school, Coffey joined the U.S. Army, and upon returning from World War II, he held several positions, most of them in the ranching business. But most people remember him for his generous donation of time and effort to the youths of the community, particularly in the rodeo arena.

Burkman’s story is a little different. An only child of farming and ranching parents, she had her own horse and was rid-



Far left: Lowell W. “Toss” Coffey was well-known as an announcer at local rodeos and for lending his horses and equipment to young people who did not have their own.

Left: “Toss” Coffey announces the Brownwood FFA Rodeo in 1966. Photo courtesy Pete and Connie McDougal.



John Smith is honored with leading a grand entry into the Mullin Rodeo Arena. Photo courtesy of Leon Sutherland.



In remembrance of David Miller, pictured at a Gustine rodeo around 1968 or 1969. Photo courtesy of Pete and Connie McDougal.



Blanket Rodeo team, 1968, from left, Floyd Benson, Freddie Schoen, Jerry Damron, Guy Chambers, Cindy McClain, Connie Mitchell McDougal, Lynn Mitchell, Larry Damron, Teddy Schoen and advisor Charlie McDaniel. Photo courtesy Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion members.

ing at an early age. “It wasn’t always fun,” Burkman said. “The days were long, but it taught you how to ride. [Rodeo] was your reward. You work all day, you get the barn full of hay, and we MIGHT go to a rodeo tonight.”

While dreaming of being a trick rider with all of the beautiful trappings, Burkman began her career riding barrels. Her dad had friends over on Sundays to rope, and before long, she was roping with the boys. However, at the time, rodeos did not have roping events for girls. And while girls could participate in FFA rodeos, they could not be members in FFA chapters, and many events were not open to girls. Burkman soon advanced from FFA rodeos to Junior Rodeos.

After high school, Burkman attended Angelo State University then Texas Tech University, where she had the rare opportunity at the time to participate on the college’s rodeo team. She continued to rodeo after college, riding barrels until she was 55. She never became a trick rider, but rodeo has shaped her life, and she has no regrets. Like the other committee members, she gave credit to the older generation who helped them all get their start. “People were so kind and obliging that they saw a kid in need and helped kids out,” she said.

Similarly, Lackey gave credit to her mentors John and Ima Jean Smith. John Smith would load eight to 10 kids, and how-

“I’ve done a lot of things, but nothing was ever like this thing when I was a kid. I have no memory of anything else that was this important to me. Because I loved it, I just loved it.” —Lynn Mosier

ever many horses he had room for, in his pickup with sideboards, and they would head off to the local rodeo. The group the Smiths mentored considered Ima Jean their “Rodeo Mama.” If the Smith trailer was full, Lackey would persuade her uncle and aunt, Glynn and Ila Mae Calder, to haul her and her horse, Tom Dooley, to the rodeo.

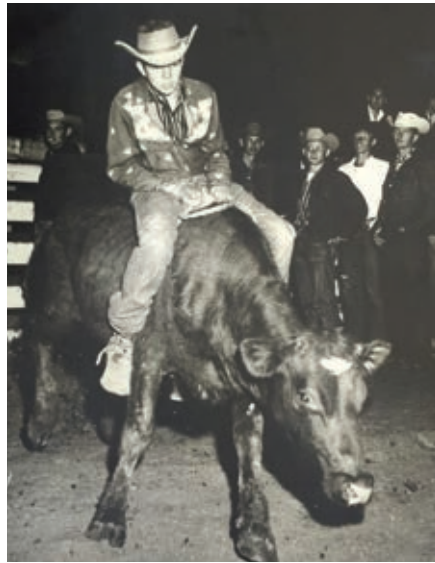
A favorite story of Lackey’s springs from an accident she was in at the Bangs Rodeo. She was taken by ambulance to the Brownwood Hospital, where her brother Lynn visited her after he rode his bull. The first thing he told her was that he had been so worried about her that he bucked off his bull. The second thing he told her was that “when Mama and Daddy get here, you better act like you’re not hurt or we will never get to go to another rodeo again.” Lackey said, “We loved it that much.”

Lackey estimated that the first annual Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion brought together approximately 75 rodeo hands from the 1950s–1980s. But in planning and coordinating the event, she believed they probably touched base with at least 100 cowboys and cowgirls. The 13 towns represented at the reunion were Bangs, Blanket, Brady, Comanche, Elm Grove, Goldthwaite, Gustine, Lometa, Mullin, Richland Springs, Rochelle, San Saba and Zephyr.

The Foundation Committee hoped the event would accomplish a double purpose: to give former rodeo contestants a chance to



Stone Shipman resting after a hard day of penning calves. Shipman gave a lot of young men a start in rodeos by buying roping calves and leasing them to the boys. Photo courtesy of Nita Frazier.



Jim Switzer riding in the Blanket Rodeo. A Switzer has ridden in every Blanket rodeo since its inception 65 years ago.



Taylor Duncan was an important figure in the organization of FFA rodeos. His daughter, Annette Duncan Burkman, believes he was the first Rodeo Association president when Mullin started holding invitational rodeos in 1959.

meet and reconnect after so many years and to honor the mentorship of the community members who were so instrumental in the formation and success of FFA and Junior Rodeos. This year's inaugural event was a resounding success, allowing for renewed friendships, fellowship and the sharing of stories that honored those who supported the event's attendees decades ago.

The success of the first reunion justified planning another gathering. The second annual Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion will be held June 1, 2019, at Goldthwaite Municipal Airport, 265 State Highway 16, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., or "whenever people leave." Mark your calendar now so you don't miss this great event, which will include a chuck wagon meal cooked by Bubba Fowler. Check the Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion Facebook page prior to the event for scheduled photoshoot times. More information can be found on the Facebook page, where the committee also encourages you to post

your own stories and photos. To contact the committee, call Lynn at (325) 247-3895 or Vicki at (325) 667-7379. The mailing address is: Vicki Lackey, 1251 CR 232, Gustine, TX 76455.

Mosier's original plan was to take the stories people sent in and make them into a book. He soon realized that this was easier said than done. It became evident that he would have better luck employing technology and using the web to collate people's memories. Former rodeo contestant Tana Osbourne Schilling offered to put together a Facebook page, and sister Vicki Lackey agreed to maintain it. Mosier hopes that, after people check out the page, they will post their stories to help keep the history of youth rodeos alive.

And though Mosier has decided he may have to give up his dream of compiling a collection of stories, this author has hope. I have faith in his perseverance, and with the help of those reading this story, I believe he can do it!



Lynn Mosier, 1966



Annette Duncan Burkman, 1963



Wynona Wasserman Head and Vicki Mosier Lackey, 1963



Gaylon Jernigan, 1962

Right: Snapshots from the first annual Central Texas FFA/Junior Rodeo Reunion.



1956 Blanket Rodeo winners, from left, Robert Smith, Jim Switzer, Jim Edgar, Sherry Reeves, Annette Duncan Burkman, Pat Madison, two unknown winners and the presenter, who is believed to be a Damron.



Bangs Rodeo winners, 1965, from left, unknown (Breakaway), Jane Spiller Penn (Rescue Race), Buddy Corder (Bull Riding), Harolene Heath (Senior Barrels), Joey Ranne (Tie Down and Ribbon Roping) and the Allen girls (Junior All Around and Rescue Race).



A few of the remaining founders of Mullin FFA Rodeo in 2000: Maurice White, Glynn Sanders, Carl Hohertz, A.R. Whisenhunt, John Smith and Bill Murray.



Will Solar Work for Your Home?

THE NEWS AND MAILBOXES ARE FULL OF INFORMATION ON THE benefits of solar power. But is it truly affordable and right for your home?

To find the answer, most homeowners first should determine whether their primary motivator in installing solar is the environment or their pocketbook.

If it's the environment, then home solar installations may be worth pursuing. If it's your pocketbook, given current technology and pricing, it's unlikely you will ultimately save money with a solar installation. Your electricity bill will go down some, but it won't disappear, and the cost of installation and maintenance can take quite a while to recoup.

Photovoltaic, or PV systems, collect solar energy through panels, and the PV panels convert the energy into electricity.

Many homeowners today gravitate to a PV system in which panels are installed on a roof in an array, or in a ground-mounted system. The panels generate power, which is then channeled through an inverter that feeds electricity into the home, back to the electric grid or to a battery system where it is stored for future use.

Several factors affect how cost-effective it would be to install a solar power system for your home. Once you have done your research, you can use the calculator at pwwatts.nrel.gov to estimate how much production and value a PV system on your home could yield.

Another path is to find a qualified solar contractor to provide an estimate for a PV system. Look for contractors who are certified with the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners. Choose your contractor carefully—some only intend to sell a system and will provide inaccurate information about savings and benefits.

When you call contractors, they typically will ask several questions to determine if your home is a good candidate for solar. If it is, they will likely be able to provide an estimate.

To complete an estimate, the contractor will need to determine the size of the

system, which will depend on several factors, including:

- ▶ Your current and anticipated electricity needs.
- ▶ Roof area, orientation and pitch (15–40 degrees is ideal).
- ▶ The amount of sunlight your home receives per year.
- ▶ The amount of shade, dust, snow and/or other factors that can block sunlight.

It is also a good idea to get multiple estimates.

Before you make a final decision, consider these questions:

▶ How does the investment in a PV system compare to upgrading the energy efficiency of your home? Efficiency upgrades can sometimes yield more bang for your buck and make your home more comfortable. A home energy audit can help you answer this question.

▶ Is there a better way to invest in solar energy? Many co-ops offer community solar programs, which can produce solar electricity at a lower cost than residential systems.

Before signing a contract, please contact Comanche Electric Cooperative's member services department at 1-800-915-2533 or memberservices@ceca.coop to verify savings claims and confirm that the installation will connect safely to our system.

