

**WOOD COUNTY**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



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# MEMBER'S MANUAL

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## Ways to Contact us:

**E-mail:** [info@wcec.org](mailto:info@wcec.org)

**Phone:** 903-763-2203

**Live Chat:** [www.wcec.org](http://www.wcec.org)

**Mail:** P. O. Box 1827  
Quitman, TX  
75783

**FOR THE FASTEST OUTAGE REPORTING  
CALL: 1-866-415-2951**



**Wood County Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
501 S. Main Street  
Quitman, TX 75783

## **WOOD COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Connecting the community since 1938, the mission of Wood County Electric Cooperative (WCEC) is to provide reliable electric service at a reasonable rate. WCEC is a non-profit distribution electric utility cooperatively owned by the members who receive service from the cooperative.

The first line was energized on October 7, 1938, and chartered under the Electric Cooperative Corporation Act in Article 1528b of the Texas Civil Statutes. The Electric Cooperative Corporation Act can now be found in Chapter 161 of the Texas Utilities Code.

The cooperative is democratically run by member- consumers who elect fellow members to serve as the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors consists of seven members who provide a geographic representation of the cooperative's service area.

WCEC adheres to these seven guiding principles:

- Voluntary and Open Membership
- Democratic Member Control
- Member's Economic Participation
- Autonomy and Independence
- Education, Training, and Information
- Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- Concern for Community

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

Every October WCEC holds an Annual Meeting where members are updated on the challenges, opportunities, and operations of the co-op. It's an opportunity for all members to remain informed.

WCEC represents people working together for people, not profit. That's why your participation is vital to the co-op's success. The member-elected Board of Directors guides the direction and policies of WCEC to always put members first.

Like all cooperatives, the strength of our organization is found in its membership. You can play a part in keeping WCEC a successful cooperative by being an active member through Annual Meeting attendance and voting in elections.

## **EASEMENTS AND RIGHT-OF-WAYS**

Easements are legal documents granting one party, such as WCEC, specific and limited rights to enter and perform certain functions on another party's property. Easements granted to WCEC give us the right to enter and exit property to build the power line for which the easement was granted, improve an existing power line, inspect and maintain the power line, or operate any equipment on the power line. In addition, the easement allows WCEC to cut or trim any trees or vegetation that interferes, as deemed by us, with safe and reliable operations. WCEC strives to work with property owners on this, as well as with routing of new power lines.

## RIGHT-OF-WAY CLEARING

When landscaping property, members should not plant trees and shrubs in positions that will encroach on the right-of-way clearance. For distribution lines, clearance is 15 feet on both sides of the lines (30 feet total) all the way to the ground. For secondary lines (the lines leading to your meter), 4 feet on either side of the lines, all the way to the ground, should remain clear. Importantly, members should never build or place structures in the right-of-way or underneath power lines.

## IN CASE OF OUTAGE

**Outage Reporting:** In the event of an outage, our goal is to restore power quickly and safely. If service is interrupted, the first thing a member should do is check the fuses and breakers at the location. If those are operating, then report the outage to the cooperative via one of the following methods.

**Important Note:** Your current telephone numbers must be on file with us for these to work! The computer identifies your account via your mobile and/or landline numbers. If they are not found, the systems will not work.

**Telephone Hot Line 1-866-415-2951:** To avoid a busy signal during high volume call times, this computerized system accepts unlimited calls simultaneously. It's simple to quickly input outages and get help dispatched. Before dialing, have your account number handy, or know the phone number associated with your account. Then dial toll-free: 1-866-415-2951 and follow the prompts.

**Outage Texting at 85700:** Your mobile number must be in our records. Then it's simple to enroll:

- Just Text: WOOD to the number 85700.
- Reply to the returned text with the correct option that matches your address.
- If you get the message, "Your location is unknown", it means we do not have your mobile number in our records and you'll need to call us so we may input it.
- Once enrolled, save 85700, in your mobile contacts as **Outage Texting** so it will be handy. As a tip, put these instructions in the contact details and then when you have an outage just text us that you are out of power, or ask for a status.

Action	Text this word to 85700
Report an Outage	out
Get Outage Status Update	status
Un-enroll from outage texting	stop

**Telephone Member Services:** In instances where you need to report your outage directly to a member service representative, call us at (903) 763-2203 or toll free at 1-800-762-2203. If there's a high volume of calls, there may be a busy signal or a wait.

**Outage Information:** A real time outage map is available 24/7 at wcec.org. Just click the Outage Center button on wcec.org. This comes in handy following wide-spread storm related outages and allows you to follow our restoration progress.

## CAPITAL CREDITS

Capital credits set cooperatives apart from for-profit electric providers. These are each member's share of the cooperative's margins (annual revenue minus expenses). After our books are closed at the end of each year, we calculate and allocate each member's share based on how much electricity the member has purchased that year.

A member's capital credits in the cooperative continue to build up as long as a member continues to buy electricity from WCEC.

The cooperative uses members' capital credits as a source of capital for operations and improvements, as authorized by the by-laws. This allows the cooperative to continue to provide low-cost reliable service. Each year the Board of Directors reviews the financial status of the cooperative and decides if it's prudent to return a certain amount of capital credits to members in the form of cash as bill credits. This is called "retiring" capital credits.

Capital credits are not like money in a bank account or an amount owed. They are also not payable on demand. They simply represent the member's allocated credits, which are paid out from time to time as authorized by the Board of Directors.

When a member disconnects service it's important for them to inform the cooperative of a forwarding address, so any future cash payments can be received.

## CONNECT AND DISCONNECT INFORMATION

### Request for Service

To become a member and obtain electric service from WCEC, an individual or entity must agree to the terms and conditions of WCEC.

### Service Connects and Reconnects

Each application for service requires a \$30.00 connect fee.

### Service Disconnect

There's no charge for a service disconnection. A member is responsible for all kWhs registered on the meter through the date the meter is disconnected. After a member notifies WCEC of the desired disconnection date, a final bill based on the meter reading at the time of disconnection will be sent.

### Warning

Illegal reconnection of a service after it has been disconnected for any reason is a dangerous practice and an illegal act. Texas law provides punishment by fine, imprisonment, or both, for tampering with an electric meter in any way.

## CONSUMER PRIVACY

At WCEC we understand that a member's trust is our most important asset. To preserve that, we want you to understand our information practices. Our privacy policy applies to members receiving electric utility service and any additional services from WCEC. We collect personal information about you from the following sources:

- Applications and forms you submit to us
- Your transactions with us
- Consumer reporting agencies

We disclose some personal information to trusted service providers and governmental entities. Through contracts with these third party service providers, we restrict the manner in which they may use personal information we provide about you. For example, electric bills are mailed by a third party vendor. We are also required by law to notify counties of the name and address of new electric service connections. We may disclose information about you to other governmental entities, such as reporting capital credit retirements to the IRS or by complying with subpoenas requesting information. We do not sell member information to third parties.

We restrict our employees' access to personal information about you to those individuals who need to know certain information to conduct business with you. In addition, we maintain physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards to protect the confidentiality and security of our members' personal information.

If you cease to be our member, for example you no longer receive electric service from us, our information protection practices will continue to apply to the extent that we retain information about you that was collected while you were a member.

At any time, if you believe that personal information about you within our control has been accessed by unauthorized persons, please contact us immediately. Call us at (903) 763-2203 or e-mail [info@wcec.org](mailto:info@wcec.org). You may also direct your privacy-related comments or questions to:

Wood County Electric Cooperative  
Attention: Member Services  
P.O. Box 1827  
Quitman, TX 75783

## LEVELIZED BILLING

### Make Your Budgeting Easy

Levelized Billing eases budgeting and guards against big changes in monthly electric bills. When you sign up for Levelized Billing, you'll be billed the average amount over your previous twelve month history and your payments will be made automatically from your bank account. Anyone who has been a co-op member for at least a year and has a zero current balance is eligible for the plan.

First, monthly billings are determined by adding your current bill plus the preceding eleven bills, dividing the total by twelve, and adjusting for nominal growth factor. This amount becomes your “average” bill drafted from your bank account. The draft is made on your choice of the following days—the 5th, 12th, 19th, or 26th. You’ll be mailed a standard bill each month with the amount drafted, amount of your current usage, your meter reading dates, and other pertinent information.

Qualifications to participate in this options include: 1.) Membership of at least one year; 2.) Acceptable credit history; 3.) A current zero balance; 4.) Acceptance of bank draft for bill payment.

Participants can withdraw from the plan at any time. The account will be drafted a final time for any unbilled amount, or we will refund any amount over collected.

## **PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Bills are due and payable upon receipt. Members have 16 days after the billing date on the bill to pay. After, the bill is deemed past due a 5% late fee will be added to the account, and an electric service termination notice is mailed. A member then has 10 additional days to pay the bill to avoid service disconnection due to non- payment. Failure to receive a bill does not exempt a member from payment.

We recognize there may be mitigating circumstances causing a late payment. Therefore we highly encourage all members to call us to discuss special payment options to avoid disconnection of service.

## **PAYMENT OPTIONS**

### **Bank Draft**

WCEC offers bank draft service for payment. Given permission, the cooperative can draft an account each month for the amount of the electric bill. Many use this service because it eliminates much of the paperwork involved in paying their electric bill. WCEC offers four draft dates – the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th of each month. For more information, contact the Member Service Department.

### **Online Bill Pay at WCEC.org**

There are several online options for bill payment. Using the account number printed on the bill, members can create a secure user ID to access their account(s) either by account number or user ID. Once other valid data is submitted, an activation link will be generated and sent to the member’s e-mail address.

Once online, a member may pay by credit card or e-check and may also sign up for auto-pay through a credit card or bank draft.

### Mobile Bill Pay App

WCEC's app allows members to connect and pay their WCEC bill any time from any compatible smartphone or tablet. From the app members can view account information including current bills and payment history. This app allows members to make secure payments and set up e-mail or text alerts for bill due dates. It also lets users contact WCEC and it includes a handy map to our headquarters.

To get the free app, just search for "Wood County Electric Cooperative" in the Apple Store or in the Android Market and then download it.

### Prepay

With prepay, members pay for electricity as it is used. Purchases can be made monthly, weekly, or even daily. Prepay allows members better cash flow management by enabling them to purchase only the electricity needed, when they need it. To learn more about the prepay option visit [www.wcec.org](http://www.wcec.org).

### Credit Card

WCEC accepts payments via Visa, Discover, and MasterCard. Payments may be made online 24/7, or by telephone via a live representative on weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Telephone payments can also be made electronically, after hours. Payments at our headquarters in Quitman are accepted weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and at our Mobile Unit from 9:30a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

### Drive-Thru and Night Depository

At the Quitman location there is a drive-thru available during regular office hours, and after hours, payments may be dropped in the night depository for posting the next business day.

### WCEC Mobile Convenience Center

The mobile office offers the same conveniences as the main office. Transactions can be completed there in person with WCEC member service representatives. Weekdays, it's stationed at one of five different cities as listed below:

DAY	CITY	LOCATION
Monday	Van	First Methodist Church
Tuesday	Mt. Vernon	My Dollar Plus
Wednesday	Hawkins	City National Bank
Thursday	Winnsboro	Brookshire's
Friday	Grand Saline	Economy Drug

## RATES AND EXTENSION CHARGES

The base rates listed below are adjusted upward or downward monthly depending on changes in the Cooperative's cost of wholesale power called the Power Cost Recovery Factor (PCRF). The PCRF amount is identified and shown on each bill.

## RATE SCHEDULE

### Schedule A

(Single-Phase Consumers less than 50 KW)

Customer Charge, per month	\$17.00
Energy Charge, per kilowatt hour	\$0.06667
Minimum Bill	\$17.00

### Schedule GS

(Three-Phase Up to a Maximum of 50 KW Demand)

Customer Charge, per month	\$35.00
Energy Charge, per kilowatt hour	
First 1500 kWh	\$0.06710
Over 1500 kWh	\$0.0520
Demand Charge, per KW	
First 10KW	No Charge
Over 10KW	\$5.50/KW
Minimum Bill	\$35.00

### Schedule LP

(Single or Three Phase Consumers Consistently Over 50 KW Demand)

Customer Charge, per month	\$140.00
Demand Charge, all KW of demand	\$7.00 K/W
Energy Charge, per kilowatt hour	\$0.03858

Minimum Monthly Charge will be the greater of the following:

- (1) A charge of \$1.15 per KVA of installed transformer capacity
- (2) The demand charge
- (3) The monthly minimum specified per contract

### Schedule Security Light

(Security Light ONLY Accounts)

New Installation	\$37.00
<b>Unmetered</b>	
Standard LED arm lamp	\$8.00 per month
Power Flood LED lamp	\$13.30 per month
Large LED arm lamp	\$13.30 per month
<b>Metered</b>	
175 Watt MV lamp	\$3.00 per month
100 Watt HPS lamp	\$3.00 per month
Standard LED lamp	\$6.80 per month
400 Watt MV lamp	\$7.54 per month
250 Watt HPS lamp	\$7.54 per month
Power Flood LED lamp	\$10.00 per month
Large LED arm lamp	\$10.00 per month
Pole Rental, 2 poles max per light	\$0.75 per month
Nonrefundable pole installation	\$150.00 per pole

Note: All mercury vapor and High Pressure Sodium Lamp options are closed to new customers.

<b>Line Contribution</b>	<b>Charge</b>	<b>250' Credit Allowance</b>
Overhead Single Phase Primary and/or Service	\$6.00/ft	\$6.00/ft
Overhead Multi-Phase Primary and/or Service	\$8.00/ft	\$8.00/ft
Underground Single Phase Primary	\$8.00/ft	\$6.00/ft
Underground Multi-Phase	\$10.00/ft	\$8.00/ft
Single Phase Bore (Typical)	\$8.00/ft	\$0.00/ft
Single Phase Bore (Under Highway)	\$24.00/ft	\$0.00/ft
Multi-Phase Bore (Typical)	\$10.00/ft	\$0.00/ft
Multi-Phase Bore (Under Highway)	\$36.00/ft	\$0.00/ft
<b>Right-of-Way Clearing</b>	<b>Charge</b>	
Heavy Timber	\$10.00/ft	\$0.00/ft
Light/Medium Timber	\$5.00/ft	\$0.00/ft

Condemnation Cost  
All expenses initial \$10,000 escrow

For any conversion of existing service (overhead to underground or vice versa), the above charges apply, plus the depreciated original cost of any existing line and facilities, less the estimate value of salvage, plus the estimated cost of removing them.

### **Member Pre-Pay Service (SmartPower) Schedule SP**

Available to:

1. Single Phase individually metered consumers utilizing Form 2s meters and subject to all established Terms and Conditions of Membership.
2. Service under this schedule is not available to three- phase service, CT metering, or to households where a member of the household is sustained with medical life support equipment.

### **Type of Service**

Single-phase, 60 cycle at available secondary voltage.

### **Net Monthly Rate**

Member Charge      \$18.00 per month  
Energy Charge      6.667¢ per kWh

### **Minimum Charges**

The minimum monthly charge for a permanent single- phase service is \$18.00.

### **Power Cost Recovery Factor Charge**

The above rates will be increased or decreased pursuant to the provisions of the Cooperative's Power Cost Recovery Factor (PCRF).

### **Franchise Cost Adjustment**

For service rendered within the incorporated limits of a municipality that charges the Cooperative a franchise fee to serve members within the municipality, the Cooperative will calculate and apply the applicable franchise cost adjustment.

## **ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

**Proper Wiring** - Wiring should be installed and serviced to National Electrical Code by a qualified electrician.

Every home should have at least 100-amp service, with 200-amp service for electrically heated homes. For mobile and manufactured homes, service equipment must be located in sight from, and not more than 30 ft. from the exterior wall of the serviced home.

**Water And Electricity** - Never operate any electrical appliance or tool while standing in, or touching water. Never use any electrical appliance while in a bathtub or near a water-filled sink.

**Tall Equipment** - Always look up and locate power lines. Antennas, metal ladders, grain augers, and irrigation pipe are all excellent conductors of electricity and pose a significant danger if raised near power lines.

Always lower extendable metal arms, booms, etcetera, on farm machinery before transporting on public roads, and while working. Be aware of and stay clear of power lines.

**Power Lines Are Energized** - Treat all power lines as energized including downed lines. Stay clear and contact the cooperative. If you come upon an accident where a power line is in contact with a vehicle, stay clear and do not attempt rescue. If people are inside the vehicle, instruct them to stay in the vehicle. Contact the nearest police department. If there is danger of fire, instruct the occupants to jump clear of the vehicle, being sure not to touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

**Know What's Below** - Call before you dig! Call toll free to 1- 800-DIG-TESS (344-8377), or simply dial 811.

**Generator Safety** – Only operate a generator outdoors and never connect a generator directly to household wiring. The only safe way to directly connect a generator is through a double pole, double throw transfer switch, which must be installed by a qualified electrician and approved by WCEC. The transfer switch closes the path of electricity between our lines and your main electrical panel and opens the path between the generator and the main panel. Opening the main breaker to isolate household wiring from co-op wiring is neither legal nor safe. Connecting a generator in an unauthorized manner may create back feed, or electrical energy going from the house to utility wires, creating severe risk for electrical crews. Also, if the utility wires are re-energized while a generator is connected via house wiring, the generator could explode and catch fire. Make sure the generator is connected to an appropriate electrical ground following the guidelines of the National Electrical Code and the generator instructions.

## IMPORTANT NEWS

WCEC offers many important and beneficiary programs such as youth leadership camps, scholarship programs for both youth and adults, and contests. We continually introduce programs and features for our members. Be sure to follow us on FaceBook, and sign up for our E-Newsletter at [www.wcec.org](http://www.wcec.org). You'll always be among the first to know about the latest news, contests and events, programs, and service options.

## OPERATION ROUND UP

All co-ops adhere to the seven cooperative principles, including "Concern for Community." Operation Round Up is the perfect embodiment of this. The idea and process is simple. Monthly electric bills are rounded to the next dollar, and that change is used by non-profit organizations to do good work in the community.

If a member's bill is \$185.43, the bill would be rounded up to \$186.00 and the \$0.57 goes to help local non-profit entities through the Wood County Electric Charitable Foundation. The average cooperative member will only donate about \$6.00 a year. The maximum amount a member can contribute annually on an account is \$11.88.

Each donation is a very small amount from each member, but when added with donations from across the cooperative's membership, the impact to our communities will be significant.

This is a voluntary program. Upon joining, a member's first account is automatically opted in. Any member may add additional accounts, or opt out of the program completely. To make any changes, just call us at (903) 763-2203.

## STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or a letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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