

## MEMBER RIGHTS

### **I. Rates and Service Information**

YOU MAY, EITHER BY PHONE OR BY PERSONAL VISIT TO THE COOPERATIVE'S BUSINESS OFFICE LOCATED IN QUITMAN, TEXAS, REQUEST COPIES OF ANY PORTION OF THE COOPERATIVE'S RATE AND SERVICE TARIFFS. A NOMINAL REPRODUCTION FEE CAN BE CHARGED FOR EACH COPY AND POSTAGE WILL BE ADDED IF THE COPIES ARE MAILED.

### **II. Meter Testing**

As provided by the rules of Wood County Electric Cooperative (WCEC), you may request a test of your electric meter if you believe that the meter is not accurately reflecting your actual electric consumption. In the event you request a test more often than once in four years and the meter is not defective, you will be required to pay a charge of \$25 for the test.

### **III. Outstanding Bills**

Under the tariff of this Cooperative, you have sixteen (16) days from the date of the bill to pay an outstanding bill before it is delinquent. However, if the sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) day falls on a holiday or weekend, the due date will be the next regular business day. An additional ten (10) days is allowed before it is disconnected for nonpayment. The cooperative will charge a late fee of 5% after the sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) day.

### **IV. Termination of Service**

Your electric service may be discontinued after proper notice for the following reasons:

- A. Failure to pay your outstanding bill within 26 days of issuance.
- B. Failure to meet the terms of a deferred payment plan or to pay a delinquent account.
- C. Failure to comply with deposit or guarantee arrangements.
- D. Violating the Cooperative's rules for the use of service that interferes with the service of others or the operation of nonstandard equipment after the Cooperative has made every attempt to notify you and remedy the situation.

Your electric service may be discontinued for the following instances without notice:

- A. Where a known dangerous condition exists, for as long as the condition exists.
- B. Where service is connected without proper authority by a person who has not made application or who has reconnected service without authority following discontinued service due to nonpayment.
- C. In instance of tampering with the Cooperative's meter or equipment, bypassing same, or other instances of diversion.

The Cooperative will either mail or personally deliver a written notice of termination at least ten (10) days prior to the date of disconnection. Disconnection will only occur during regular business hours.

If you are seriously ill or will become more seriously ill as a result of termination of service, you may have your physician call or contact the Cooperative within sixteen (16) days of the issuance of the bill to report your condition. The physician must provide a confirmation letter to the Cooperative within twenty-six (26) days of the issuance of the bill and the Cooperative will refrain from terminating service for sixty-three (63) days from the issuance of the bill unless a lesser period is agreed upon. If you make a request to avoid termination under this provision, you must enter into a

deferred payment arrangement. If disconnection is required and the day falls on a holiday or weekend, service will not be disconnected until the next regular business day.

## **V. Service and Billing Disputes**

If you disagree with the Cooperative regarding any aspect of the Cooperative's service, you may request a supervisory review. The Cooperative will promptly investigate the case and report the results back to you. If the billing dispute is not resolved by such review, you may appeal to the Board of Directors of WCEC. While such appeal or other resolution of a dispute is pending, you may avoid termination of service by paying the average of your monthly bill for the past twelve (12) months, as determined by the Cooperative. In the event the dispute is not resolved within sixty (60) days, you must keep current all subsequent bills; the total balance is due including the disputed amount. The results of the supervisory review must be provided in writing to the customer within ten (10) days of the review, if requested.

## **VI. Alternate Payment Plans**

As a member of the Cooperative, you have a right to request alternate payment plans.

*Deferred Payment Plan:* If you have not been delinquent in paying your bill more than two times in the last twelve (12) months and are unable to pay your entire bill, you are qualified for a deferred payment plan. Such plan requires that you keep all subsequent bills current and pay monthly an amount not to exceed one-third of the outstanding amount. You may, but are not required to, sign this agreement, and if you do not fulfill the terms of the agreement your service may be terminated under standard termination procedures. Such breach of the agreement voids your right to a deferred payment plan or renegotiation to avoid termination. The Cooperative is not required to offer this arrangement if you have had service for less than three months.

A deferred payment plan may include a five percent (5%) charge, but will not include a finance charge. The Cooperative may assess a one-time penalty not to exceed five percent (5%) on each delinquent commercial, industrial, or residential account. A deferred payment plan may be made by visiting the Cooperative's office or contacting the Cooperative by telephone.

*Average Billing Plan:* The purpose of this plan is to provide qualified Residential customers/members, the opportunity for a monthly budget payment method. The following are the qualifications/limitations:

- A. Customer must demonstrate an acceptable credit rating.
- B. Customer must request to be billed under this Average Billing Plan.
- C. Customer must have a current 12 month billing history.
- D. Customer must agree to have account bank drafted.
- E. Customer must have zero balance.

## **VII. Service Reconnection**

If your service is interrupted for any of the reasons listed under Section IV, you may re-establish service when all outstanding and delinquent bills are paid and any required deposit is paid, or upon execution of a deferred payment agreement, other evidence of payment guarantee is provided, or the violation of service rules has been corrected. The normal office hours for reconnection are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. After normal hours, the reconnect fee is increased as per the tariff.

## **VIII. Meter Reading**

If you would like information regarding the proper method for reading your electric meter instructions

are available online at [www.wcec.org](http://www.wcec.org) located under the Member Service tab or printed copies are available upon request.

## **IX. Deposit Policy**

If you have been a residential member of the Cooperative anytime within the past six (6) months and maintained that service for at least twelve (12) consecutive months, you will not be required to pay a deposit unless:

- A. You have been delinquent in paying your electric bill on more than four (4) occasions in that twelve (12) month period.
- B. Had service disconnected for nonpayment.

Credit worthiness of applicants that are not currently receiving electric service from the Cooperative will be determined by utilizing the services of a third party credit rating bureau.

If you are a current member 65 years of age or older, a deposit will be waived if you do not have an outstanding debt with the Cooperative.

New members 65 years of age or older, can send in a Letter of Credit or submit to a credit check.

The deposit shall be equal to 2.4 times the average monthly cost of electric service, or 1/5 of the average annual billing for a particular service address. Deposits accrue interest at an annual rate in accordance with Texas Utilities Code §183.003 (Vernon 1998). Interest will be paid to you when the deposit is returned or credited to your account. The Cooperative will not pay interest on deposits refunded within thirty (30) days. In some instances, an additional deposit may be required if:

- A. The average of the customer's actual billings for the last twelve (12) months is at least twice the amount of the initial deposit collected.
- B. A disconnection notice has been issued for the account within the previous twelve (12) months.

## **X. Financial Assistance**

If you are unable to pay or are in need of financial assistance, a list of agencies that may assist you in paying your electric bill are located online at [www.wcec.org](http://www.wcec.org), located under the Member Service tab, or printed copies are available upon request.

## **XI. Nondiscrimination**

Your Cooperative provides electric service without discrimination as to a member's race, nationality, color, religion, sex, marital status or handicap. Credit history shall be applied equally for a reasonable period of time to a spouse or former spouse who shared the service. Credit history maintained by one must be applied equally to the other without modification and without additional qualifications not required of the other.

## **XII. Cooperative Office & Business Hours**

Wood County Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
501 S. Main St., P0 Box 1827, Quitman, TX 75783  
(903) 763-2203 or 1-800-762-2203

Offices are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Mobile Center Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

For a listing of Mobile Center locations go to [www.wcec.org](http://www.wcec.org) located under the Member Service tab.

### **XIII. Special Services**

The telephone number for the teletypewriter for the deaf in Texas is 800-735-2989, Texas Relay.

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