



MESSAGE
FROM
CEO/GENERAL
MANAGER
TREY TEAFF

Thank a Lineworker on April 12

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

So on April 12 this year, Wood County Electric Cooperative will honor the dedicated people who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on. Connecting a new member, restoring power after inclement weather and keeping your lights on is all in a day's work for our hardworking line crews.

They go through long hours of field training and classroom work to understand how our electrical delivery system works so that when there is a problem, they'll know how to fix it. Fixing outages often means going out in tough conditions, often at odd hours, to tackle potentially dangerous problems to keep our community powered.

Their dedication and sacrifice should be celebrated and appreciated.

To mark Lineman Appreciation Day, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in 2015 unanimously adopted this resolution:

"Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents, and; Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

"Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day ... to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America's electric cooperatives."

Co-ops everywhere proudly acknowledge all electric lineworkers for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety.

We invite our members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do. You can use the hashtag #ThankALineman to show your support on social media, or even better, tell the next lineworker you see how grateful you are for the men and women who power our lives. ■



LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

April 12

When you find
yourself in the dark,
we've got your back.

WOOD COUNTY
ELECTRIC CO-OP



FRANCESCO MOLI FOTOGRAFO | ISTOCK.COM

Call a Licensed Electrical Contractor

MAYBE YOU'VE HEARD before that you need to hire a licensed electrician for electrical upgrades and repairs. But maybe you've also heard that someone with a journeyman license is good enough.

That's false. Your electrical contractor should be fully licensed through the state for a variety of reasons.

Electrical contractors are "licensed to engage in the business of designing, installing, erecting, repairing, or altering electrical wires or conductors to be used for light, heat, power or signaling purposes," according to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. "This includes the installation or repair of ducts, raceways, or conduits for the reception or protection of wires or conductors and the installation or repair of any electrical machinery, apparatus, or system used for electrical light, heat, power or signaling."

To obtain an electrical contractor license, a prospective company must employ a licensed master electrician. The licensed master electrician can be the business owner.

Additionally, obtaining an electrician's license ensures that the holder has undergone a criminal history background check. This helps keep consumers safe, as these professionals enter homes and businesses to conduct repairs and improvements.

Hiring a licensed electrical contractor for repair work protects homeowners because electricians licensed by the state are required to have insurance. Licensing requirements also ensure that electricians stay up to date on current technology, safety guidelines, and building and safety codes.

Any licensed contractor in Texas must have their company name and Texas electrical contractor license number on both sides of their work vehicle and on business letterhead, proposals and invoices.

You can verify licensing by doing a search on the TDLR website at www.tdlr.texas.gov/licensesearch or by calling 1-800-803-9202. ■

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**Report
an
Outage**

**CALL TOLL-FREE
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866-415-2951

DOWNLOAD THE APP

Search for MY WCEC

in the App Store or

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ABOUT WOOD COUNTY EC

Founded in 1938, WCEC owns and maintains more than 5,140 miles of line to provide electric service to over 38,000 meters in parts of nine counties: Camp, Franklin, Hopkins, Rains, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Van Zandt and Wood counties.

MEMBER BENEFITS AND SERVICES

- Online account access and bill payment
- Paperless E-Bill services
- Free bill-paying app
- Visa, Mastercard and Discover accepted
- SmartPower prepay electric system
- Scholarships and youth programs
- Safety and energy conservation programs
- Operation Round-Up community grants

MY WCEC

Your cooperative, in the palm of your hand, our free app gives account access 24/7. See usage graphs, get alerts, estimate upcoming bills, pay your bill and quickly report outages. Free in the App Store and Google Play, search for My WCEC and download.

VISIT US ONLINE

wcec.org



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

April Is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

EACH APRIL, the National Safety Council observes Distracted Driving Awareness Month to heighten awareness about the dangers of driving while using cellphones—handheld or hands-free.

An estimated 26% of crashes involve cell-phone use, making distracted driving an important topic for all drivers.

Driving is one of the most dangerous things most people do. It involves moving a heavy object at high speeds around obstacles such as people and other vehicles.

To prevent tragedies due to distracted driving, the U.S. Department of Transportation urges drivers to:

- ▶ Turn off electronic devices and put them well out of reach before starting to drive.
- ▶ Set a good example for young drivers. Talk with your teens about responsible driving and model responsible behavior.
- ▶ Speak up when you are a passenger and your driver uses an electronic device while driving. Offer to make the call for the driver so his or her full attention stays on the road.
- ▶ Always wear your seat belt. Seat belts are the best defense against unsafe drivers. ■



Knowledge Is Power Saved

IF KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, then knowing the average home's top five energy users can help homeowners save power.

The top five energy users in U.S. homes, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, are:

- ▶ Space cooling, which accounts for 13% of energy use.
- ▶ Lighting, 11%.
- ▶ Space heating, 9%.
- ▶ Water heating, 9%.
- ▶ Refrigeration, 7%.

Together, these make up almost half the monthly energy bill in a typical home. By adjusting household habits around each energy user, you can start conserving electricity and saving money in your home.

Adjust the Temperature

During cold weather, set your thermostat to 68 degrees. During warm weather, set it to 78 degrees. Clean the filters of your heating, ventilating and air conditioning system. Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors.

Save on Lighting

Take a fresh look at the lighting in your home. If you still use incandescent lighting, your lightbulbs are operating inefficiently. Replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified LEDs can amount to noticeable savings on your electric bill.

Heat Water Efficiently

Wrapping your electric water heater with an insulating blanket is almost as important as insulating your roof and walls. For additional efficiency and savings, insulate exposed hot water lines and drain 1–2 gallons of water from the bottom of your tank annually to prevent sediment buildup.

Chill Out

If considering an appliance update, a new, Energy Star-certified fridge will use at least 15% less energy than noncertified models. Regardless of its age, don't keep your fridge too cold. Recommended settings are 35–38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for freezers. ■



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Beware of DIY Electrical Work

A **QUICK SEARCH** on YouTube yields do-it-yourself instructional videos on almost any topic, including electrical repairs and upgrades. Although it might be tempting to tackle electrical work on your own, there are risks to consider when attempting projects involving electricity. Botched electrical jobs could lead to electric shock or electrocution, fires, or legal trouble.

For the technical jobs below, be safe and hire a licensed electrician. Don't try this at home.

Replacing a Breaker Box

A breaker box might need repairs if lights on the same circuit flicker or fuses short out because of heavy voltage loads. Watch out for warning signs such as buzzing, crackling or sizzling sounds coming from the electrical panel; a panel that is hot to the touch; or lights that dim when an appliance is turned on. Trusting a licensed electrical contractor to replace a breaker box helps ensure that the electrical panel is working properly and according to industry standards, local codes and your home's electricity requirements.

Rewiring Your Home

Some signs that your home might need rewiring are circuit breakers frequently tripping, fuses blowing out or switches becoming charred or discolored, buzzing sounds, and burning smells. When it comes to rewiring, having the job done by a

trained, licensed professional who follows electrical codes ensures that legal issues don't arise from inspections or insurance situations. Not to mention it'll keep your home safe from fire dangers caused by faulty wiring.

Choosing Cables and Wires

Using the right wiring and cables for a project is key to keeping your devices, equipment and appliances operating properly and safely. Improper materials can lead to overheating and short-circuiting. Choosing cables and wires should be left to professionals who know the right pairings.

Upgrading Outlets

Sometimes outlets need to be added to a home or existing ones replaced to protect against fire, electric shock and electrocution. Upgrading outlets from the basic variety to those with ground-fault circuit interrupters or other technologies can bring a home up to code and increase resale value. But such a project should be left to a professional so that installation is done correctly.

Remember: Just because a YouTube video or other online tutorial makes electrical repairs or upgrades look easy, it doesn't mean that it should be a DIY project. When in doubt, leave electrical work to the pros. ■