

Stay Cool Through Heat's Homestretch



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER BRAD BIERSTEDT

SUMMER'S SWELTER HAS ENGULFED MOST OF THE STATE BY NOW, with its warm mornings and scorching afternoons. It's especially important during this time of year to stay cool, but you don't have to spend a lot to stay comfortable throughout these languid few months.

The most effective way to beat the heat is to stay indoors and harness the combined cooling power of air conditioning and fans. Fans help you feel cooler and allow you to set your thermostat higher, saving you energy and money. Better yet, install a programmable thermostat to increase the temperature when you're sleeping or away from home. Automating energy-saving behaviors can have a big impact on your electricity bill and takes one small thing off your mental daily to-do list.

To keep cool air inside your home, use caulk and weatherstripping around windows and doors. And close curtains and blinds during the hottest part of the day to keep solar heat outdoors.

In the evenings, once the heat has likely at least modestly relented, shake off the day's torpor and enjoy a picnic or cookout in your backyard or perhaps at a park. Cooking outdoors keeps heat from the oven and stove out of the

kitchen, lessening the burden on your home's cooling system. If you do opt to cook indoors, try using a slow cooker, air fryer or pressure cooker to minimize energy use and avoid adding residual heat to the air in your home.

Indoors or out, wear lightweight, breathable fabrics and drink plenty of water. Try to limit outdoor work to morning hours, before it really heats up. Take frequent breaks and avoid caffeine and alcohol, which can cause dehydration.

Know the warning signs of heat exhaustion, which include dizziness, fatigue, nausea and muscle cramps. If you begin experiencing these symptoms, stop what you're doing and get somewhere cool immediately. Left untreated, heat exhaustion can progress to heatstroke, which can be fatal.

Finally, as the heat crests over these next several weeks, please keep a watchful eye on friends and neighbors, especially those who are elderly, ill or lack access to cool places of respite. We can weather the heat best when we all work together.



Nighttime Energy Use Helps Reliability

INSTEAD OF RUNNING YOUR DISHWASHER right after dinner, consider waiting until bedtime to turn it on. Same with the clothes dryer. And how about charging your phone and other rechargeables while you sleep?

Most people use their electric appliances at the same times every day: early in the morning, when they're getting ready for work; right after dinner; and at midday. That means there's a lot of demand on a limited amount of electrical capacity all at the same time.

In the summer—when everyone's also running their air conditioner—that can tax the electrical system. It can even bring about a rotating outage, although that's rare. But it could put so much pressure on the system that new power plants will be needed, and that's expensive.

A better solution: Spread your energy use out. Do the laundry and the dishes at midmorning, while everyone else is at work, or late at night, when most people are sleeping.





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Summer Sun Brings Out Solar Scammers

CONSUMERS HAVE GOOD INTENTIONS WHEN THEY INSTALL SOLAR PANELS ON THEIR homes, but we are hearing reports that some solar companies and their sales representatives do not. They're not making good on their promises. In response to disreputable companies giving false guarantees, purposely installing undersized systems and knowingly soliciting unbuildable systems, the Solar Energy Industries Association launched an education campaign to protect solar customers and offers these guidelines.

Here Comes the Sun

Ask friends, family and neighbors for references when shopping for a solar installation company and check on a company's history through state and local consumer protection agencies, such as the Better Business Bureau, before signing any agreements. You should also compare bids from several companies, paying special attention to:

- ▶ The expected performance of the equipment and size of the panels.
- ▶ The full cost of installation, including any building or electrical permit fees.
- ▶ Whether the system is guaranteed to produce a certain amount of energy.
- ▶ What warranties apply to the equipment and the installation's workmanship.
- ▶ Also check with Karnes Electric Cooperative and your homeowners association, if you belong to one, for any restrictions or regulations on solar panel installation and maintenance.

Good Day, Sunshine

"Solar is still a new power choice for millions of Americans, and it's critical that we cultivate a well-informed customer base," said Abigail Ross Hopper, SEIA president and CEO. "By doing their homework and making use of these tools, consumers and stakeholders alike will feel confident and comfortable in the decision to go solar."

Industry experts predict that more than 3 million homes will have some sort of solar installation by 2021. That creates a lot of opportunity for scammers. Make sure to do your research before installing solar panels, and if you think a solar company has taken advantage of you, contact an experienced attorney for help.

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.



Karnes Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 7, Karnes City, TX 78118

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Brad Bierstedt

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COOPERATIVE OFFICES

Main Office

1007 N. Highway 123, Karnes City

District Office

1824 W. Goodwin St., Pleasanton

Pay your bill and view your account summary at karnesec.org.

Karnes Electric Cooperative is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

Contact Us

For information and outages during office hours

(830) 780-3952 Karnes City
(830) 569-5538 Pleasanton
1-888-807-3952 Toll-free

To report a power outage after 5 p.m. and on weekends and holidays

(830) 780-3952

Coy City, Ecleto, Floresville, Gillette, Goliad, Karnes City, Kenedy, Runge, Three Rivers, Tilden and surrounding areas

(830) 569-5538

Charlotte, Christine, Pleasanton, Poteet, Verdi and surrounding areas

FIND US ON THE WEB
karnesec.org



Don't Touch That Dial

IT'S SO TEMPTING TO TURN THE THERMOSTAT DOWN TO FREEZING COLD WHEN YOU walk into a warm house on a hot day. Don't do it.

Setting the thermostat at a very low temperature won't cool your house any faster than setting it to the temperature that you regularly use to feel comfortable.

In fact, lowering the thermostat beyond the temperature you desire only makes your air conditioner run longer, not faster. You could end up paying more money for an uncomfortably chilly house.

Here are a few other energy-saving tips for summer:

- ▶ Install a smart thermostat. It will "learn" your family's habits and adjust temperatures accordingly, setting the temperature higher for hours when the house is empty and lower during your at-home hours. It takes less energy to recool your home when you return than it does to keep it cool while you're gone.
- ▶ Set the thermostat at 78 degrees. You'll save about 15% on your cooling bill versus a 72-degree setting.
- ▶ Use ceiling fans (rotating counterclockwise) to provide additional comfort, but only run them when the room is occupied. Fans cool people, not rooms.
- ▶ Change or clean your heating, ventilating and air conditioning system's filter. Changing your air filter keeps the air in your home cleaner, improves cooling performance and lengthens the life of your HVAC system. Filters should be cleaned or replaced at least every three months (or more often, depending on system requirements). High-quality HEPA filters will yield the best results.
- ▶ Keep lamps and other heat-emitting devices—like TVs and large electronics—away from the thermostat. Most appliances heat up when you use them, so they can trick the thermostat into "thinking" the air is warmer than it really is, causing your HVAC system to keep running when the house is already cool.
- ▶ If you let the morning sunlight into your bedroom to help you wake up naturally, it could add to your energy bills during the day if you leave the blinds open for too long. Before you leave the house for the day, close your curtains and window shades to keep the sun's heat out.
- ▶ If you use room air conditioners, fit them snugly into window frames.

Fire Safety Helps Keep the Lights On

SUMMER FUN OFTEN MEANS USING FIRE outdoors—and that can lead to brushfires, which can cause power outages.

Along with endless other safety concerns, heat from brushfires can damage electrical lines and equipment, causing major power problems. Even smoke and ash can cause a high-voltage transmission line to trip, leaving sections of the power grid without electricity.

Arid summer weather increases the chance of wildfires, but so do unsafe practices.

When building a campfire, keep a bucket of water nearby to control a spreading fire. Surround the fire pit with rocks, not wood, and clear away leaves and other flammable materials that can quickly spread the flame. Never leave a campsite with a burning fire. Quench the fire with water to ensure the damp ashes cannot relight.

If you're grilling on a charcoal grill or building a campfire, take extra care to completely extinguish embers and flames before leaving them unattended.

Snuff the burning coals in your charcoal grill by placing the lid on the grill and closing its vents. Most grills have a vent both on the lid and under the kettle. Leave it closed for at least 48 hours to ensure there is no fire danger.

Keep the power going and your community safe by practicing fire safety this summer.



TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Preparing for Hurricane Season: June 1–November 30

EVACUATION PLANNING: When a hurricane threatens, listen for instructions from local officials. If they call for an evacuation in your area, get going without delay.

- ▶ **Discuss evacuation plans** with your family **before** hurricane season, June 1–November 30. Make a checklist of what you need to do before you leave town and review it.
- ▶ **Monitor NOAA Weather Radio**, local TV and radio broadcasts during storm season.
- ▶ **Prepare an emergency supply kit** that includes a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, extra eyeglasses, bottled water, nonperishable food, dry clothes, bedding, insurance information, important documents, medications, copies of prescriptions and special products for babies, seniors, medically fragile family members and pets.
- ▶ **Learn evacuation routes** before storm season. When there's a hurricane in the Gulf, keep your gas tank as full as possible. Expect traffic delays in an evacuation.
- ▶ **Register with the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry online at stear.dps.texas.gov or dial 211 to register if you have a disability or medical needs, or if you simply do not have transportation.** Gulf Coast residents in evacuation zones who have a disability or medical needs who do not have friends or family to help or do not have transportation should register with STEAR in advance.

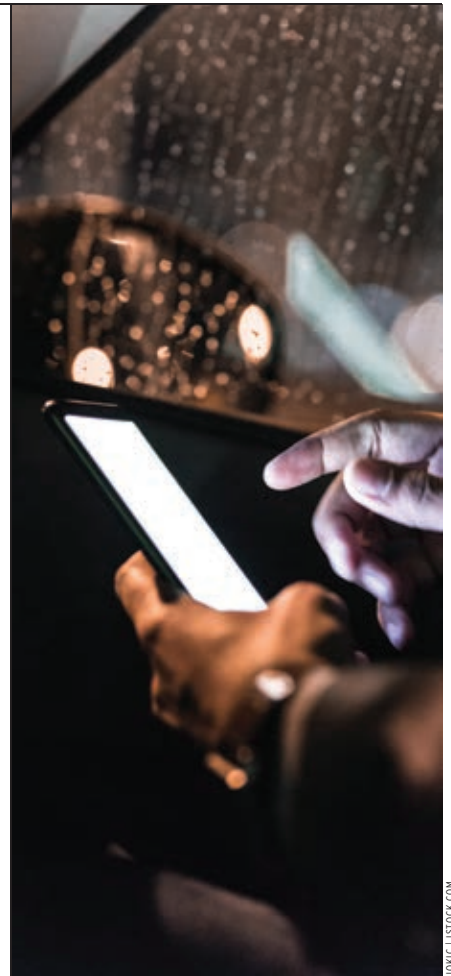
DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

Directrices para Huracanes

Preparando para la temporada de huracanes desde el 1 de junio hasta el 30 de noviembre

EVACUACIÓN EN CASO DE HURACÁN: Cuando exista una amenaza de huracán, escuche las instrucciones de funcionarios locales. Cuando llamen para una evacuación en su área, sálgase del área lo más pronto posible.

- ▶ **Discuta los planes de evacuación** con su familia **antes** de la temporada de huracán, que empieza el 1 de junio y termina el 30 de noviembre. Haga una lista de lo que usted debe hacer antes de salir de la ciudad y revísela.
- ▶ **Escuche la radio** y televisión durante la temporada de huracanes.
- ▶ **Prepare un equipo de emergencia** que incluya un radio, linterna, repuesto de baterías, anteojos extras, agua embotellada, alimentos no perecederos, ropa extra, ropa de cama, información de seguro, documentos importantes, medicinas, copias de recetas medicas y productos especiales para bebés, las personas mayores, miembros de la familia médicamente frágiles y mascotas.
- ▶ **Aprenda sus rutas** de evacuación antes de la temporada de huracanes. Cuando haya un huracán en el Golfo, mantenga el tanque de gasolina lleno. Esté consiente de que habrá demoras de tráfico.
- ▶ **Puede regístrase con el State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry vía su página web, stear.dps.texas.gov, o llamando al 211 para registrarse si usted tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas o si simplemente no tiene transporte.** Los residentes de la Costa del Golfo en zonas de evacuación con una discapacidad o necesidades médicas quiénes no tienen amigos o familiares para ayudarles o no tienen transporte deben registrarse con STEAR por adelantado.



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Join the Foul-Weather Friend Team

STORMS OR ACCIDENTS CAN STRIKE AND knock down or damage power lines, trees and electrical equipment. We—the folks at your electric cooperative—need to know as soon as possible when our equipment is downed or damaged.

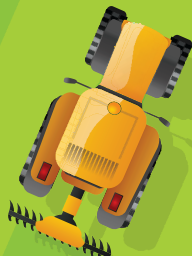
That's when you can help us because you might come across the problem before we learn about it.

So please call Karnes Electric Cooperative immediately when you see a problem on our lines. We'll send a crew out right away.

Remember that only experienced, professional line crews can fix such problems, but we need as many folks as possible to help us locate them. You're our eyes in the field.

Please join our foul-weather friend team to spot hazards. Your help is invaluable to us!

Tips for a Safe Harvest



Harvest season brings hard work and can be exhausting, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous (even deadly!) when working near overhead power lines. We urge farm operators and workers to keep the following safety tips in mind:



Use care when operating large machinery near power lines.



Inspect the height of equipment to determine clearance.



Always keep equipment at least 10 feet away (in all directions) from power lines.



Remember to lower extensions when moving loads.



If a power line is sagging or looks to be dangerously low, please call us immediately.



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School Safety ABCs

School buses will be rolling soon, so it's time to start thinking about back-to-school safety!

Safety comes first:

Look left, right, then left again before crossing the street.

Cross in front of the bus only after the driver signals it's OK to do so.

Find a safe place away from traffic to wait for the bus.

Stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals to enter.

Drivers who encounter a school bus with flashing red lights must stop in both directions, unless separated from the bus by a median.

Texting while driving is illegal and particularly dangerous in school zones.

Karnes Electric Cooperative encourages you to always practice safety.



Stay Back and Stay Safe

WORKING WITH ELECTRICITY CAN BE A DANGEROUS JOB, ESPECIALLY for lineworkers. In fact, *USA Today* lists line repairers and installers among the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. That's why, at Karnes Electric Cooperative, safety is our No. 1 priority. This is not an empty slogan: Over time, we have created a culture of putting our crews' safety and that of the community above all else.

Yes, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to you, but more important, we want our employees to return home safely to their loved ones. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, vigilance—and your help!

Distractions Can Be Deadly

While we appreciate your kindness and interest in the work of our crews, we ask that you stay back and let them focus on their task at hand. Even routine work has the potential to be dangerous, and it takes their full attention and that of their colleagues, who are also responsible for the team's safety. Distractions can have deadly consequences. If a lineworker is on or near your property during a power outage, for vegetation management or for routine maintenance, please allow them ample room to work. These small accommodations help protect our crews—and you.

If you have a dog, try to keep it indoors while lineworkers are on or near your property. While most dogs are friendly, some are defensive of their territory and can't distinguish between a burglar and a utility worker. Our crews work best without a pet "supervising" the job.

We recognize that for your family's safety, you want to make sure only authorized workers are on or near your property.

You will recognize Karnes EC employees by their uniforms and the co-op's logo on our service trucks. You may also recognize our lineworkers because they live right here in our community.

Slow Down and Move Over

In addition to giving lineworkers space while they are near your property, we also ask that you move over or slow down when approaching a utility vehicle on the side of the road. One work zone crash occurs every 5.4 minutes, on average, across the U.S., and 70 of those each day result in injuries. There is one fatality each week from these accidents. The lineworkers' focus is on the work at hand, not on the road, so we need you to watch out for them.

Also, never text and drive—around work crews or at any other time. That message can wait, and the momentary distraction can change lives forever.

Keep Poles Clear and Safe

Nails, staples and other attachments to utility poles not only get in lineworkers' way when they are trying to climb poles, but these foreign objects can also damage the workers' safety gear, exposing them to possible shock or electrocution. Never post signs or attach anything to utility poles.

Guy wires may occasionally be inconveniently located, but please leave them alone. The wires provide support for poles, and removing or modifying them can weaken the system, causing poles, power lines and possibly lineworkers to come crashing to the ground.

Karnes EC's employees are looking out for you. Help them stay safe by returning the favor.