



MESSAGE  
FROM  
GENERAL  
MANAGER  
**BRAD  
BIERSTEDT**

## The Difference Between Conservation and Efficiency

Combine behaviors and technology to save

**THESE DAYS THE TERMS** energy conservation and energy efficiency are often used interchangeably, but they have distinct definitions. I like how the U.S. Energy Information Administration differentiates the two based on behavior and technology.

Energy conservation is a behavior—using less energy. To achieve it, consumers have to change their habits: Turn off lights, unplug appliances or opt to use a clothesline instead of a clothes dryer. Conserving energy often requires effort.

There's merit in adopting conservation habits to avoid waste, but we also have the option to use less energy without having to give up comfort or convenience.

That brings me to energy efficiency, which involves applying technology to use less energy while getting the same result or service.

using less energy. Energy Star-rated refrigerators, for example, keep food cool with about half as much energy as older models.

Energy efficiency often ultimately results in energy conservation—or using less energy.

Smart electricity usage is important to Karnes Electric Cooperative because it's beneficial to you, our consumer-members.

For one, using less electricity saves you money on your electric bill simply because you consume less. But it also benefits the co-op as a whole because our wholesale power costs fluctuate depending on the time of use.

You see, the cost of power increases during peak hours—typically 3–7 p.m. during the summer. So if we can diminish the use of power during those hot afternoons, then the cooperative's total wholesale power cost decreases. Those savings are passed along to you.

In addition, those in the electricity industry, including Karnes EC, are always trying to find ways to reduce consumption because there could be a shortfall of electricity generation in the future. Establishing energy conservation and energy-efficient habits now will help us use electricity more wisely down the road.

I encourage you to use the principles of energy conservation and energy efficiency together. Just because you install an energy-efficient LED in the light fixture on your front porch doesn't mean you should leave it on 24/7. And even if you have an Energy Star-rated clothes dryer, be a good steward and think twice

about running it with anything less than a full load.

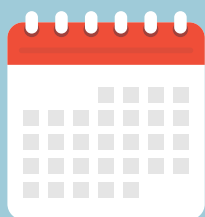
By combining energy-efficient technology with conservation-minded behavior, you can save electricity and money. ■



CAROLYN WOODCOCK | ISTOCK.COM

Technological advances allow us to automatically perform some actions we used to have to do manually. Because new electric products are able to do the same tasks with less energy, energy efficiency does not necessarily come with the trade-off of going without.

LEDs are considered energy efficient because they use less electricity to produce the same amount of light as an incandescent bulb. In the same way, Energy Star-rated products are intended to deliver the performance consumers expect while



## KARNES EC ANNUAL MEETING CANCELED

Due to ongoing concerns for the safety of our members and employees amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Karnes EC Board of Directors passed a resolution in July to officially cancel the 2020 KEC Annual Meeting. All business matters that were slated for this year's event will be postponed to the 2021 Annual Meeting.

## Karnes Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

### CONTACT US

P.O. Box 7  
Karnes City, TX 78118  
**Toll-Free** 1-888-807-3952  
**Web** [karnesec.org](http://karnesec.org)

**General Manager**  
Brad Bierstedt

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## Lightning Strike Q&A

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has answers for your questions on lightning safety

### Who is at greatest risk for lightning strikes?

Men are more likely to be struck by lightning, and most victims are 15–34 years old and frequently work or play outside. Those working in the construction or farming industries are most often struck. The average person's chances of being hit by lightning are about 1 in 500,000.

### How does lightning cause injuries?

Lightning can cause injuries in various ways, including through:

- ▶ Direct strikes, which often cause death.
- ▶ Contact, when a victim is touching an object that lightning strikes.
- ▶ Side flashes, which occur when lightning bounces or “splashes” off an object and onto a victim.
- ▶ Ground currents that pass from a strike point in the ground to a victim.
- ▶ Streamers, which can come up from objects near the ground.

### What happens to the body when lightning strikes?

Blunt trauma, neurological effects such as muscle or eye injuries, skin lesions, burns, and death can result from lightning strikes. About 10% of people struck by lightning die from it.

### What should I do if I see someone get struck?

Call 911 immediately. It is safe to touch a victim who has been struck by lightning.

### How can I protect myself from lightning?

**If outside during a thunderstorm**, seek shelter immediately, ideally in a fully enclosed building or hardtop vehicle with the windows rolled up. Do not lie down on the ground or go under a tree.

**If inside during a thunderstorm**, follow these safety tips:

- ▶ Do not use corded phones, computers or electronic equipment.
- ▶ Stay out of the shower and away from plumbing.
- ▶ Stay away from windows and doors. ■

## 24/7 Outage Reporting

**TOLL-FREE**  
1-888-807-3952

### ONLINE

At [karnesec.org](http://karnesec.org) using your SmartHub account, or use the SmartHub app on your mobile device.

Please be prepared to provide your account number and meter number.

### PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Online or via the SmartHub app
- 24-hour pay-by-phone
- Auto bill pay
- Mail
- In person
- Night drop
- Kiosk located at Pleasanton Member Service Center

### OFFICE LOCATIONS

Open Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

#### Karnes City Headquarters

1007 N. Highway 123, Karnes City

#### Pleasanton Member Service Center

1824 W. Goodwin St., Pleasanton

### MISSION STATEMENT

Providing quality service to empower communities and improve lives.



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## Use Ladders Safely Outdoors

**ANYONE WHO USES** a ladder should take extra precautions when working outdoors around electrical hazards—to prevent shock or electrocution.

**The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has recommendations for work sites that can be applied to anyone using a ladder—whether for personal use or on the job.**

- ▶ Before using a ladder, identify nearby overhead power lines. Note their distance from work areas and always assume power lines are energized.
- ▶ Consider the length of the ladder you're using, allowing room for raising and lowering the ladder.
- ▶ Contact Karnes Electric Cooperative if work needs to be done near overhead power lines.
- ▶ Don't use metal ladders near power lines.
- ▶ Ensure conductive objects are kept at least 10 feet away from lines.
- ▶ Make sure that ladders are stable, level and supported to prevent movement into a power line.
- ▶ Carry ladders horizontally, not vertically, and have someone help carry and set up large ladders.
- ▶ For every 4 feet between the ground and the upper point on which the ladder rests, set the feet of the ladder out 1 foot horizontally.
- ▶ Never touch a person or ladder that has made contact with an overhead power line. Call 911 and Karnes EC immediately.

**Falls are always a possibility when using ladders. Follow these guidelines from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to avoid a spill.**

- ▶ Inspect ladders for damage before use.
- ▶ Only use ladders on stable, level surfaces.
- ▶ Always face the ladder and maintain three points of contact when climbing it.
- ▶ Do not use a ladder while it's in a closed position.
- ▶ Do not use the top step of a ladder unless it was designed for that specific purpose.
- ▶ Do not move a ladder while a person or piece of equipment is on it.
- ▶ Observe the maximum load rating of the ladder and be aware of the user's weight combined with any equipment.
- ▶ Place nonfolding ladders so that they extend at least 3 feet beyond the point of support. ■

## Make Over Your Manufactured Home

**A MINI MAKEOVER** of a manufactured home to increase energy efficiency can yield big savings. Consider the following tips from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to enhance the operation of your home.

- ▶ Roll or spray a reflective, cool-roof coating onto the roof.
- ▶ Drain a gallon of water from the water heater yearly to remove sediment.
- ▶ Clean or replace the furnace filter and air conditioner filters.
- ▶ Insulate the water heater and its pipes and set the thermostat to 120 degrees.
- ▶ Apply polyethylene film or disposable plastic insulation to windows.
- ▶ Clean light fixtures to improve brightness.
- ▶ Only use LED lightbulbs.
- ▶ Remove or cover window air conditioners during cold months.
- ▶ Install a well-sealed insulated skirt around the base of the home.
- ▶ Seal duct ends and connections with mastic.
- ▶ Check and add insulation under the floor. ■



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ANDREY POPOV | ISTOCK.COM

## Co-ops Are Equal-Opportunity Employers and Providers

**AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES** are built by and belong to the diverse communities and consumer-members they serve. They are founded on seven principles that set them apart from other businesses. Concern for community and the open, democratic structure of co-ops are two of these core principles.

With these foundational concepts in mind, Karnes Electric Cooperative strives to serve our communities and works to enhance quality of life for our consumer-members.

As an employer, Karnes EC is committed to a positive, inclusive culture. We support policies that encourage employee development and success without fear of discrimination.

KEC is part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and CEO Jim Matheson recently issued a statement regarding the ongoing conversation about racism in America.

We must “recognize how we can contribute to a more transparent, fair and accountable society,” he said. “NRECA, its leadership and employees are expected to play a leadership role in rejecting racism, speaking against injustice, and demonstrating the value of diversity, equity and inclusion.”

At Karnes EC, we are an equal-opportunity employer. In compliance with federal and state equal employment opportunity laws, qualified applicants are considered for all positions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, nonjob-related disability or any other protected group status.

We are also an equal-opportunity electricity provider. Karnes EC does not discriminate against anyone seeking membership to be served by the cooperative. As a recipient of federal funds through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, KEC upholds the provision that no person in the United States, on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability, shall be excluded from participation, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of the organization's programs or activities.

But at Karnes EC, we don't just practice nondiscrimination because it's the law. We are inclusive because it's the right thing to do to foster strong communities. ■

## Electrical Safety in the Bathroom

**BATHROOMS POSE** a high risk of electric shock because of the potential for electricity to come into contact with water. Follow these tips to stay safe.

- ▶ Equip bathroom outlets with ground-fault circuit interrupters.
- ▶ Ensure that all electrical outlets are a safe distance from water.
- ▶ Consider covering outlets when they are not in use.
- ▶ Never use electrical devices while standing in water.
- ▶ Use appliances with built-in GFCIs.
- ▶ Consider recessed lights to keep fixtures away from water.
- ▶ Keep a fire extinguisher handy in case of a fire.
- ▶ Always turn off and unplug bathroom appliances when you're finished using them.
- ▶ Inspect cords on curling irons, hair dryers and other devices for damage, and discard them if unsafe.
- ▶ Have electrical work or repairs in the bathroom done by a professional. ■



VIKTORIA HNATUK | ISTOCK.COM

## 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](https://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

### Guía 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, evacue del área lo más pronto posible.

- ▶ **Discuta los planes de evacuación** con su familia **antes** de la temporada de huracanes, 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 seguros, 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 registrarse con el State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry** en la página web, [stear.dps.texas.gov](https://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 que viven en la Costa del Golfo en zonas de evacuación con una discapacidad o necesidades médicas quienes no tienen amigos o familiares para ayudarles o no tienen transporte deben registrarse con STEAR por adelantado.

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## September Holidays

### LABOR DAY

**Monday,  
September 7**  
Our offices will be closed in observance of the holiday.

### GRANDPARENTS' DAY

**Sunday,  
September 13**

### NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

**Tuesday,  
September 22**

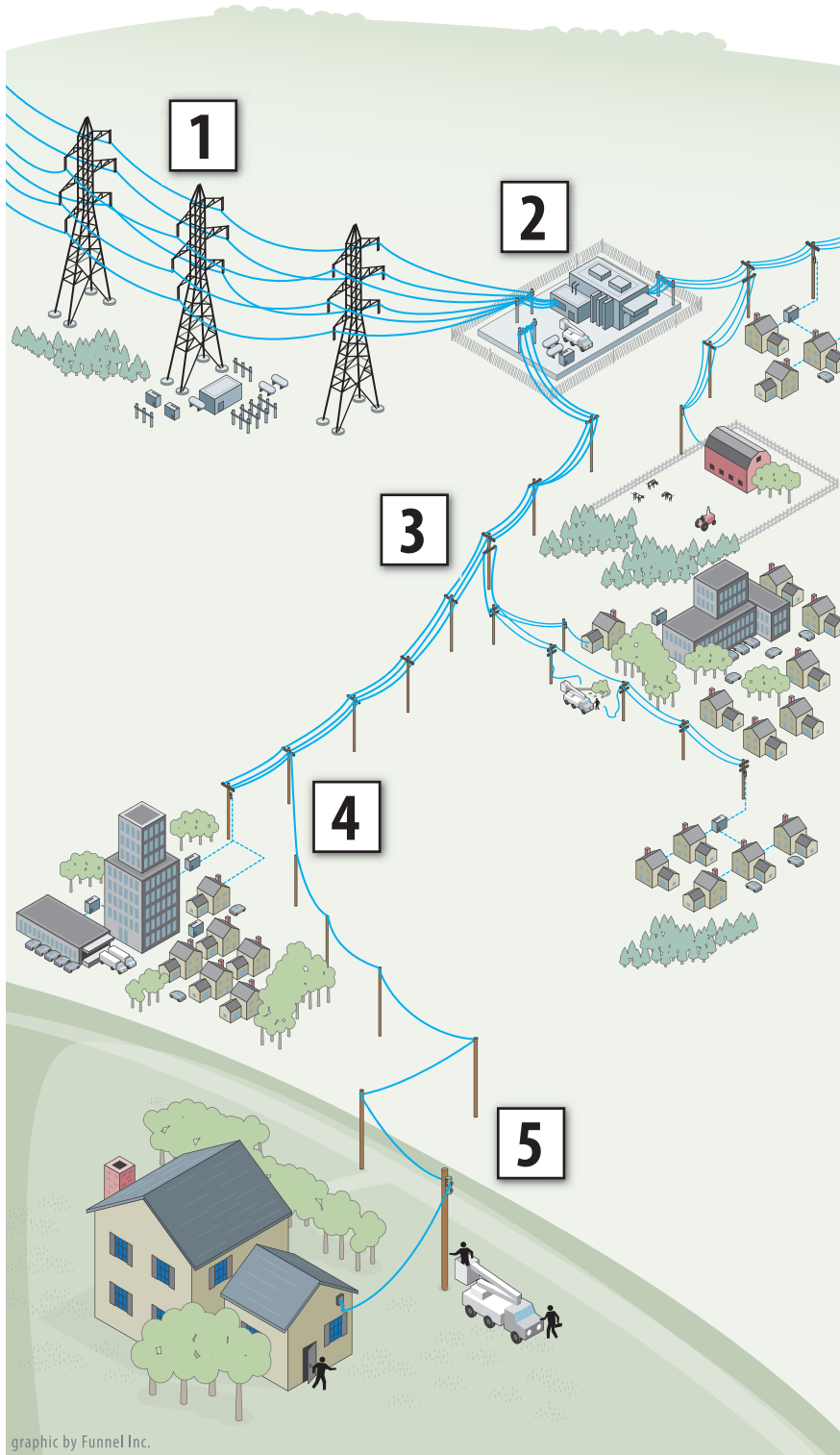
NRECA



# Powering Up

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible.

**Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.**



graphic by Funnel Inc.

## **1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines**

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

## **2 Distribution Substations**

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or complications down the line.

## **3 Main Distribution Lines**

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

## **4 Tap Lines**

If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers—either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service—outside businesses, schools and homes.

## **5 Individual Homes**

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.



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## Farm Safety Tips for Harvest Season

**THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR** IS one of the most dangerous in the United States, with 574 work-related fatalities occurring in 2018, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. And fall harvest can be one of the most hazardous times of the year.

That's why the third full week in September is recognized as National Farm Safety and Health Week—September 20–26 this year—initiated by the National Safety Council and proclaimed by the president every year since 1944.

The theme for the 2020 National Farm Safety and Health Week is Every Farmer Counts. This serves as a reminder that it is in everyone's best interest to prioritize the well-being of those who work hard to provide the nation's supply of food, fiber and fuel.

Texas has nearly a quarter of a million farms covering more than 125 million acres, according to the Texas Department of Agriculture. That means Texas has more farmland than any other state in the United States—and more risk to farmers.

The nature of farming and ranching makes it a hazardous industry, with frequent exposure to potentially hazardous work environments, machinery, equipment and animals, and labor-intensive work for long periods of time. Additionally, most Texas operations are exempt from Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations.

"The risk of accidental injury and death in the agriculture industry continues to be high," says a Texas agricultural fatality report by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

"Thus, it is imperative that employers, educators, and farm safety professionals continue to teach workers how to identify workplace hazards, how to avoid injury and how to respond in case of emergency."

Major causes of fatalities in the agricultural industry are transportation incidents, contact with objects and equipment,

falls, exposure to harmful substances, and assaults and violent acts (such as animal attacks), according to the Texas Department of Insurance's Division of Workers' Compensation.

Another hazard that farmers and workers must be aware of is potential contact with overhead power lines while working in the field.

### **The following safety tips can help yield a safe season.**

- ▶ Be aware of the location of overhead power lines and plan routes around them to avoid accidents.
- ▶ Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.
- ▶ Use a spotter and flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment while doing field work.
- ▶ Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- ▶ Look up before extending augers or raising beds of trucks around power lines.
- ▶ Remember that equipment and cargo in a vehicle—such as lumber, hay, tree limbs or irrigation pipe—can conduct electricity. Avoid their making contact with electrical equipment.
- ▶ Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- ▶ If a power line is too low or sagging, contact Karnes Electric Cooperative.
- ▶ If equipment does make contact with an energized or downed power line, do not exit the vehicle. Call 911 and Karnes EC immediately, and warn others to stay away. Remain in the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the vehicle by jumping out of the cab without touching it, and hop away with your feet together. ■

# Only Crackpots Take Potshots

It doesn't take a crack shot to hit an electric insulator or transformer, just a crackpot. Careless shooters taking potshots at electric equipment can cause major problems for your electric cooperative. Here's why:

**You are** inconveniencing your fellow member-customers whose electricity has been disrupted.

**It could even** be a matter of life and death to someone on a life-support system or who is hit by a stray shot.

**Damage** to electrical equipment is very expensive to repair. Lines may be cut or weakened from a shot, and they may sag or break, becoming a severe hazard for anyone who comes into contact with the line.

**Broken** insulators can cause power outages that are hard—and expensive—to find.

**Enjoy** your sport, but be a responsible hunter.

Karnes EC encourages you to always practice safety.

## Don't Post Signs on Utility Poles

**ALTHOUGH SEEMINGLY** innocent enough, putting signs or other items on utility poles creates serious safety hazards. Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs—as well as the signs themselves—pose dangers to Karnes Electric Cooperative's lineworkers who must climb poles when restoring power after storms or while performing routine maintenance to ensure system reliability.

Posters or other objects, such as birdhouses, balloons, flags and even basketball goals, can be dangerous obstacles. Also the nails and tacks left behind from signs can snag utility workers' boots or puncture safety clothing, putting lineworkers at risk of slipping or even electrocution.

In addition to being hazardous, tampering with utility poles can be costly. Posting signs or attaching other objects to utility poles is illegal and can carry a fine of up to \$500 per day.

Karnes EC appreciates your help in keeping utility poles clear and our linemen safe. ■

