

GENERAL
MANAGERBRAD
BIERSTEDT

A Labor of Love

EACH SEPTEMBER we celebrate Labor Day, a national tribute to the contributions American workers make to the strength and prosperity of our country.

The word labor is defined as an expenditure of physical or mental effort, especially when difficult or compulsory. That definition is not lost on the employees of Karnes Electric Cooperative. When the lights go off—whether due to thunderstorms, wildfires, hurricanes or ice storms—our lineworkers leave their families to work tirelessly in harsh and dangerous conditions to restore your power. Other employees handle your phone calls and dispatch crews to get electricity flowing to your home as quickly and safely as possible.

But that doesn't mean the job is a laborious punishment. It's a labor of love.

When the weather goes awry and the calls come in, employees who were safe at home often call in to see if there's anything they can do to help. We've had customer service representatives simply show up to help answer members' calls during a crisis. This is because they care about what they do. They care about the membership. And nothing is more important than making sure that every member is safe and sound—with the power humming—even during inclement weather.

And it's not just when the lights are off that our employees are working hard. Their dedication is evident every day.

Our lineworkers go through extensive training to ensure their safety and that of their fellow crew members. Our office staff is also trained to stay safe around electricity, and this, in turn, helps ensure your safety. Karnes EC is always here to educate you about the dangers of electricity, and, through *Texas Co-op Power* and other avenues, we pass along tips to help keep you safe and save you money by making energy-conscious decisions.

We don't do this because it's our job. We do it because we care about you, our members, who are our friends, family and neighbors.

Today I want to ask you, our member-owners, to thank a co-op employee if you see one. Thank them for their commitment, their talent, their hard work and their service to the membership of this cooperative. After all, even though our offices will be closed for Labor Day on September 6, if your power goes out, we'll be on our way to fix it, holiday or no holiday. ■

**ALWAYS
CALL
BEFORE YOU
DIG**



FALL IS THE PERFECT TIME to plant trees, shrubs and other plants. But before reaching for that shovel, you need to call 811. This is the national number that connects you to your local call-before-you-dig center, where you can ask for the approximate location of buried utility lines to be marked.

Many homeowners incorrectly believe they don't need to call 811 before breaking ground on projects such as tree and shrub planting. A call must be placed to 811 before every digging project, not just for tree and shrub planting, but also for projects such as building a deck, putting in a pole for a basketball goal or installing a mailbox.

There are more than 200,000 unintentional hits to underground utility lines annually across the country, and almost 40% of those happen because someone chose to make a judgment call instead of a phone call to 811.

Unintentionally striking an underground utility line while digging can cause harm to you or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, and result in bills to cover repair costs and even fines in some areas.

So play it safe and call 811 before you dig. ■

Leave Lawn Ready for Spring

BEFORE YOUR LAWN goes dormant for the season, give it a little pampering so that it will look its best next year. Some care and maintenance now can mean a thick and verdant lawn next spring.

Remove leaves. A layer of leaves blocks light and traps in too much moisture. Your grass will thank you for keeping up with leaf blowing or raking so that it won't get soggy or decay over the winter.

Keep mowing. Grass grows throughout the winter in warm climates and up until the first hard freeze in colder places. Setting your mower deck to a high level will help grass maintain moisture and resist matting. Don't mow it too short because that affects the root system, making it less likely to withstand winter conditions.

Continue watering. Just the rain and dew might not be enough to sustain your lawn, so keep the sprinklers or irrigation system going until there's a risk of a freeze.

Aerate the soil. Using a core aerator every couple of years prevents soil compaction and breaks up debris that blocks sunshine and nutrients.

Fertilize. An extra shot of nutrients found in lawn fertilizer can help your grass get through the winter. Consider a slow-release fertilizer that is high in nitrogen. Fertilizing in the fall helps your turf fight disease, boosts drought tolerance, replenishes nutrients and enriches the soil, and promotes healthy root growth. To maximize the benefits, apply after aerating.

Spread seed. Healthy and prolific grass offers good protection against weeds, so sprinkle some more seed over existing turf. Fall is the ideal time to reseed because the days are not as hot and the nights are cool. Remember to apply seed where it can contact the soil and to keep seeds moist until they germinate. ■



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Karnes Electric Cooperative

CONTACT US

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24/7 Outage Reporting

TOLL-FREE
1-888-807-3952

ONLINE

At 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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Electrical Safety Basics for Children

PARENTS SHOULD TEACH children a valuable, potentially lifesaving lesson: Respect electricity.

Here are electrical safety basics every child should know:

Mixing water and electricity can kill you. Teach children not to use electric toys or other devices near water or in the rain.

Plugging multiple devices into a single outlet or power strip can create sparks and even cause a fire if that outlet can't handle the load. Teach kids to plug into surge-protected power strips or to use one device at a time and unplug the rest.

When they unplug those devices, they should grab them by the plug, not the cord. Yanking a cord can damage the appliance, the outlet and the plug itself.

Electrical cords can be strangling hazards and might cause electrical burns if they are misused. Make sure youngsters keep cords away from their mouths and necks. It's best to hide cords so they aren't a temptation.

Electrical outlets are receptacles for electrical plugs only. Children should know from an early age that it's a no-no to put foreign objects or fingers into plugs. Sticking other items into an electrical socket can lead to electric shock or death. Use childproof outlet covers.

Flying kites and climbing trees are never safe activities near power lines. If a tree has a power line running through it—or if it's even within reach of the line—it's not a safe place to play. If a kite gets caught in a power line, the child should not tug on it to get it loose. The string could conduct electricity and seriously hurt the child.

Electrical substations are fenced off to keep children and animals out. If a toy or small pet gets inside the fence, the child should tell a parent or teacher, who can call a trained worker to come and retrieve it. ■

Beach House Pasta

2 teaspoons dried shrimp

1 pound angel hair pasta or linguine

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic, sliced

Pinch crumbled chile pequin

1 pound rock shrimp or other small shrimp, peeled and deveined, cut into small pieces

Kosher salt

1 tablespoon chopped tarragon

1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Finely grated zest of 1 lemon

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, plus more to finish

3 tablespoons cold butter, diced

2 scallions, sliced

1. Grind dried shrimp with mortar and pestle; set aside.
2. Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water until al dente. Drain it, reserving 1½ cups liquid.
3. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and chile and cook, stirring, about 1–2 minutes. Add rock shrimp, season with salt and cook, tossing, 1–2 minutes. Add the tarragon, parsley, lemon zest and juice, pasta, ¾ cup pasta cooking liquid, and butter, and toss to coat. Cook, tossing and adding more of the cooking liquid as needed, until sauce is glossy and coats pasta, and shrimp are cooked, about 3 minutes. Season with salt if needed.
4. Divide pasta among bowls and top with scallions and reserved dried shrimp.

TCO Find this and more delicious recipes online at TexasCoopPower.com.



LAURI PATTERSON | ISTOCK.COM



Simple Tricks for Sealing Success

A HOME WITH air leaks can't resist the elements so long as gaps and cracks are keeping the building from operating at maximum energy efficiency. You can seal gaps and cracks inexpensively by using caulk. Here are some tips to help you get the best results when caulking around the home.

Selection

You can find caulk for a wide range of applications. Acrylic latex caulk is good for general uses, indoors and out. It's also easy to clean up if you make a mistake. Silicone caulk is more challenging to use but is best for sealing tile, glass and metal. Check the manufacturer's recommendations on the label to make sure you're buying the right sealant for the job.

Preparation

Caulk is packaged in sealed tubes. Embossed markings along the nozzle correspond to different bead sizes, which you can match to the joint you plan to fill. To open, snip the tip of the nozzle, cutting at about a 45-degree angle, and pierce the interior seal with a nail or other sharp object. To ensure that the caulk adheres properly, clean the area first, removing any old caulk left over from previous applications and wiping away dust.

Application

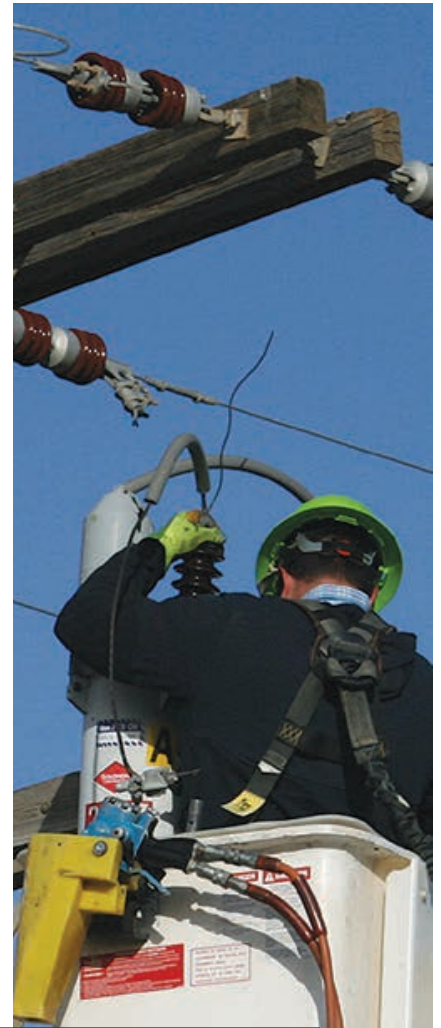
While there's no exact science to caulking, you'll get a feel for the consistency of the material and the tension in the caulk gun. Hold the nozzle at a 45-degree angle to the joint and position the tip so the caulk adheres to both surfaces. Pull—don't push—the gun along the seam, applying the caulk 2–3 feet at a time. For a clean look, apply the caulk in a single, unbroken bead whenever possible. Caulk is more difficult to remove after it has dried, so keep rags handy to clean up mistakes as soon as they happen.

Finishing

After you've drawn a bead along the joint, finesse the caulk into the seam. This process, known as "tooling," helps the caulk adhere to the surface while removing any rough patches. Press the caulk into the joint by running a moistened finger, paintbrush handle or other object along the surface. Because your work will likely improve as you go along, it's best to start with the least noticeable cracks and work up to the more prominent ones. ■



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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Labor Day
Monday,
September 6
Our offices will be closed that day in observance of the holiday.

Patriot Day
Saturday,
September 11

National Hunting and Fishing Day
Saturday,
September 25

SWISHER EC

Don't Fall Victim to Utility Scams

EVERY DAY, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, websites and in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports.

Electric co-op members have been targeted through a phone scam purporting that power will be shut off unless immediate payment is received. Remember, Karnes Electric Cooperative will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two other trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, in which a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the extra funds back into your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment to us, Karnes EC will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to the next billing cycle.

Another trending scam is called smishing (short for Short Message Service, or SMS, phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. Karnes EC will only send you important updates via text if you've signed up for our text alert service.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

Take your time. Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information without thinking. Take a moment to evaluate the situation before acting.

Be suspicious. Scammers typically request immediate payment through prepaid debit cards or third-party smartphone apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.

Confirm before you act. If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent Karnes EC or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 1-888-807-3952 to verify the situation. ■

TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Hurricane season is June 1–November 30

If you are under a hurricane warning, find safe shelter right away.

When a hurricane is 36 hours from arriving:

- ▶ Turn on your TV or radio in order to get the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.
- ▶ Restock your emergency preparedness kit. Include food and water sufficient for at least three days, medications, a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first-aid supplies. Learn how to build an emergency kit at [ready.gov/build-a-kit](https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit).

When a hurricane is 18–36 hours from arriving:

- ▶ Bookmark your city or county website for quick access to storm updates and emergency instructions.
- ▶ Bring indoors any loose, lightweight objects that could become projectiles in high winds (e.g., patio furniture and garbage cans); anchor objects that are unsafe to bring in (e.g., propane tanks); and trim or remove trees close enough to fall on a building.

When a hurricane is 6–18 hours from arriving:

- ▶ Turn on your TV or radio or check your city or county website every 30 minutes for the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.
- ▶ Charge your cellphone so you will have a full battery in case you lose power.

When a hurricane is six hours from arriving:

- ▶ If you're not in an area that is recommended for evacuation, plan to stay at home or where you are, and let friends and family know where you are.
- ▶ Close storm shutters and stay away from windows. Flying glass from broken windows could injure you.
- ▶ Turn your refrigerator or freezer to the coldest setting and open only when necessary. If you lose power, food will last longer. Keep a thermometer in the refrigerator to be able to check the food temperature when the power is restored.

To stay safe during a hurricane:

- ▶ If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Do not drive around barricades.
- ▶ If sheltering during high winds, go to a Federal Emergency Management Agency safe room; International Code Council 500 storm shelter; or a small, interior, windowless room or hallway on the lowest floor that is not subject to flooding.
- ▶ If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building. Do not climb into a closed attic; you may become trapped by rising floodwaters.

To stay safe after a hurricane:

- ▶ Listen to authorities for information and special instructions.
- ▶ Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. If it is safe to do so, turn off electricity at the main breaker or fuse box to prevent electric shock.
- ▶ Avoid wading in floodwaters, which can contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.

DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

Preparación para huracanes

La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de junio al 30 de noviembre

Quando un huracán está a 36 horas de llegar:

- ▶ Prenda su televisor o radio para obtener las últimas actualizaciones meteorológicas e instrucciones de emergencia.
- ▶ Reponga su kit de emergencias. Incluya alimentos y agua suficientes para al menos tres días, medicamentos, una linterna, pilas, dinero en efectivo y suministros de primeros auxilios. Aprenda como construir un kit de emergencia en [ready.gov/build-a-kit](https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit).

Quando un huracán está a 18–36 horas de llegar:

- ▶ Marque como favorito el sitio web de su ciudad o condado para el acceso rápido de las actualizaciones de tormentas e instrucciones de emergencia.
- ▶ Traiga adentro objetos sueltos y ligeros que puedan convertirse en proyectiles con vientos fuertes (por ejemplo, muebles de patio y botes de basura); sujete objetos que no serían seguros para llevar adentro (por ejemplo, tanques de propano); y recorte o retire los árboles que están lo suficientemente cerca como para caer en un edificio.

Quando un huracán está a 6–18 horas de llegar:

- ▶ Encienda su televisor o radio, o visite el sitio web de su ciudad o condado cada 30 minutos para obtener las últimas actualizaciones meteorológicas e instrucciones de emergencia.
- ▶ Cargue su teléfono celular para que tenga una batería llena en caso de que pierda energía.

Quando un huracán está a seis horas de llegar:

- ▶ Si no se encuentra en un área recomendada para la evacuación, planifique quedarse en su casa o donde se encuentra y avise a sus amigos y familiares donde se encuentra.
- ▶ Cierre las contraventanas y aléjese de las ventanas. Los vidrios que vuelan de las ventanas rotas podrían dañarle.
- ▶ Ajuste la temperatura de su refrigerador o congelador a la posición más fría y ábralos solo cuando sea necesario. Si pierde la energía, la comida durará por más tiempo. Mantenga un termómetro en el refrigerador para poder verificar la temperatura de los alimentos cuando se restablezca la energía.

Para mantenerse a salvo durante un huracán:

- ▶ Si se le indica que evacue, hágalo inmediatamente. No maneje alrededor de las barricadas.
- ▶ Si se refugia durante vientos fuertes, vaya a una habitación segura de la Federal Emergency Management Agency, refugio contra tormentas del International Code Council 500 o una habitación o pasillo pequeña e interior sin ventanas en el piso más bajo que no esté sujeto a inundaciones.
- ▶ Si queda atrapado en un edificio por inundación, vaya al nivel más alto del edificio. No suba a un ático cerrado porque usted puede quedar atrapado por las crecientes inundaciones.

Para mantenerse a salvo después de un huracán:

- ▶ Escuche a las autoridades para obtener información e instrucciones especiales.
- ▶ No toque el equipo eléctrico si está mojado o si está parado en el agua. Si es seguro hacerlo, apague la electricidad en el interruptor principal o en la caja de fusibles para evitar una descarga eléctrica.
- ▶ Evite vadear en el agua de la inundación, que puede contener desechos peligrosos. Las líneas eléctricas subterráneas o caídas también pueden cargar el agua eléctricamente.