

The Power of Operation Round Up



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO DEBRA COLE

IT STARTED AS A SIMPLE IDEA 27 YEARS AGO at a co-op in South Carolina: Just round up the co-op member's electric bill to the next dollar, and then use the change to do good work in your community. Today, hundreds of electric co-ops throughout the country, including HILCO Electric Cooperative, use this idea to help members and organizations close to home.

All co-ops adhere to the Seven Cooperative Principles, including Concern for Community. The Operation Round Up program is the perfect embodiment of this core principle. The average co-op member donates \$6, with a maximum possible contribution of \$11.88 per year. This might not seem like a large amount, but when multiplied by the 7,700 members in HILCO's Operation Round Up program, it adds up to make a significant impact.

Each co-op decides how they want to operate the program, and most are governed by a board of volunteers that is separate from the board of directors for the electric co-op. This ensures that the decisions are made in the best interest of the community.

The program is always voluntary, and at any time, members can change their minds about participating. Once folks see the good work the program does in their community, they almost always keep contributing.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been collected and distributed for a wide range of activities, such as helping a family in need after a house

fire, assisting the local food pantry, providing funds so that the local fire department can get a needed piece of equipment, and dozens of other humanitarian efforts that bring electric co-ops even closer to the communities they serve. HILCO assists with numerous charities throughout our service area. Some of these include Common Ground Ministries, Meals on Wheels, Isaiah's Place and many more.

Although each co-op must respond to the needs of its members, one of the great attributes of co-ops across the country—and the world—is their willingness to share information about programs that are successful. Operation Round Up is a perfect example of that cooperative spirit. 7380000

HILCO Electric is pleased to offer Operation Round Up. We will continue to “borrow” ideas from other co-ops and welcome your participation. Please share with us additional activities that you think we should explore to serve you and your neighbors.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joseph Tedesco, President, District 4
Bill Allen, Vice President, District 5
Janet Smith, Secretary-Treasurer,
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Leroy Huff, District 1
Margaret Hill, District 2
George Thiess, District 6
Ron Roberts, District 3

Operating in Dallas, Ellis, Hill, Johnson and McLennan counties

GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO

Debra A. Cole

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1-800-338-6425 toll-free

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FIND US ON THE WEB

hilco.coop



Win a \$50 Bill Credit!

As you're reading your *Texas Co-op Power*, look for the "hidden" account number in the local HILCO pages in the center of the magazine. If it's YOUR electric account number, call us before the end of January —you have won a \$50 credit on your HILCO electric bill!



(254) 687-2331
or
1-800-338-6425



Power Tip

The average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use, according to the Consumer Electronics Association. Using power strips and unplugging chargers when not in use can help minimize electronics' wasted power.

January Bulletin

December 30, 2016–
January 1, 2017

Waxahachie
Waxahachie Gun & Knife Show
Waxahachie Civic Center

January 16

Waxahachie
Martin Luther King Day Parade
3 p.m., begins in downtown Waxahachie

January 21-22

Waco
Miracle Match Marathon
Sponsored by Waco Firefighters Association and benefiting National Marrow Donor program. Marathon, half-marathon, ultra-marathon, relay, 10K, 5K, 1-mile races and fire truck pull. For more information, visit miraclematchmarathon.net.

BILLING SCHEDULE

Payments are due by close of business at 5 p.m. on the due date.

CYCLE 1

Billing Date January 3
Due Date January 19

CYCLE 2

Billing Date January 10
Due Date January 26

CYCLE 3

Billing Date January 17
Due Date February 2

CYCLE 13

Billing Date January 18
Due Date February 2

CYCLE 4

Billing Date January 24
Due Date February 9



HILCO Electric Scholarship for Excellence

Application Deadline April 17, 2017

Do you aspire to go to college?

If you're a high school senior with the strong desire to attend college, we can help. Every year we award scholarships to young men and women to help make their dreams a reality.

Who can apply?

Any graduating high school seniors who are dependants of HILCO members and meet the eligibility requirements listed on the application.

How to apply

Visit www.hilco.coop and download the application

For more information on our scholarship program call 800-338-6425 or email Kendra Markwardt at kmarkwardt@hilco.coop

Follow us at 



Attention: High School Juniors and Seniors!



**Win an all-expense-paid trip
to explore Washington, D.C. !**

Deadline January 6

**Download your application by clicking on the
community tab at hilco.coop.**



A New Year's Resolution You Can Keep

GOING ON A DIET THIS JANUARY? Opening a savings account? Joining a gym?

Here's another resolution—and it might be easier to keep for longer than two weeks: Do one thing a month that will make your home more energy efficient.

Here are 12 ideas:

January: Get into the habit of turning your thermostat down by about 10 degrees before your family turns in for the night or leaves home in the morning. You can save as much as 1 percent on heating for every degree you lower the heat for eight consecutive hours.

February: Pull your refrigerator away from the wall and vacuum or dust its condenser and coils. Clean coils prevent your fridge's working parts from overheating.

March: Spring for an annual inspection of your air-conditioning system. It can keep your central AC running smoothly and efficiently all summer.

April: Hire a licensed electrician to inspect your home's wiring system—not every year, but at least once a decade.

May: Wash your windows—inside and out—and open the drapes. The sun can't warm and brighten your rooms if it can't find its way through grimy windowpanes.

June: Trim your hedges. Overgrown shrubs and trees can shade your windows too much and keep the sunlight from warming up your home come winter.

July: Grill your dinner outside and serve fresh, cold salads as side dishes. Giving your stovetop and oven a rest also gives your air-conditioning system a break on hot days.

August: Start running your clothes washer, dryer and dishwasher after dark. That will keep the heat and humidity out of the air—and help out your electric cooperative, too.

September: Get that heating and air-conditioning tech back to your house for a heating inspection. A tuneup can save you as much as 5 percent on your heating bill.

October: Close off your masonry fireplace and resolve not to use it anymore. Every time you use it, your home's heated air flies up the chimney.

November: Seal air leaks around windows, doors and other openings—such as the place where cables and wires come into the wall from the outside—with caulk and weatherstripping.

December: Replace your old holiday lights with LED fixtures, which last years longer and use far less energy.

Keep your rooms warm and bright by washing your windows inside and out.



Resolve to make this year the safest yet by hiring an electrician.

Make Electrical Inspection a Resolution

HAVE YOU EVER HIRED AN ELECTRICIAN

to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017.

If your home is older, you could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem—like a spark, smoke or something that won't turn on—before they call an electrician.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect every outlet plus wiring, circuits and appliances, then let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, an electrocution or a house fire.

Winter is prime time for electrical fires. Furnaces run nonstop; lights are on longer; the water heater works harder; and people tend to stay indoors, watching more TV, cooking at home more and giving electronics a workout.

As residents kick their homes' electrical systems into overdrive, anything that's been waiting to go wrong probably will—potentially creating dangerous situations.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year with a home inspection.



Small Change Makes a Big Difference

Your volunteer Operation Round Up Trust Board representatives and HILCO members are:

Debbie Brooks
Chairwoman

R.M. "Mike" Kuhlman
Vice Chairman

Gorden Pickett
Secretary-Treasurer

Mike Crech
Ana Fuentes
Joan Gamble

THE HILCO OPERATION ROUND UP TRUST BOARD met in October 2016 to review applications for the third quarter of the year. Six organizations were awarded a total of \$10,285 on October 27 at the HILCO office in Itasca.

HILCO directors and employees have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our members who have voluntarily agreed to have their bills rounded up to help others in our communities. The extra nickels, dimes and quarters are hardly missed individually, but together with other member contributions, they do so much good for organizations in our service area. Thank you, HILCO members, for your big hearts!

Deadlines to submit applications to receive funds are on the last day of each quarter. Applications must be received by this date to be considered for funding for the quarter.

It's easy to sign up for Operation Round Up! HILCO members can have their names added to or removed from the Operation Round Up program by calling 1-800-338-6425. Or just log on to hilco.coop, click on the Operation Round Up link, and we'll walk you through it!



Common Ground Ministries

\$800 for snacks, meals

HILCO Director Joe Tedesco, Diane Henley and Stacie Dixon



Isaiah's Place

\$913 for educational materials

HILCO Director Bill Allen, Diane Frederickson and HILCO Director Ron Roberts



Waxahachie Senior Center

\$1,872 for exercise equipment

HILCO Director Joe Tedesco and Jeanee Smiles



Lake Whitney Ministerial Alliance

\$3,500 for food bank, benevolence and school supplies

HILCO Director Bill Allen, Robert Rowe and HILCO Director Ron Roberts



Meals on Wheels

\$1,000 for meals for homebound elders

HILCO Director Leroy Huff, Cathy Martin and HILCO Director Jan Smith



Campfire Creek

\$2,200 for scholarship assistance

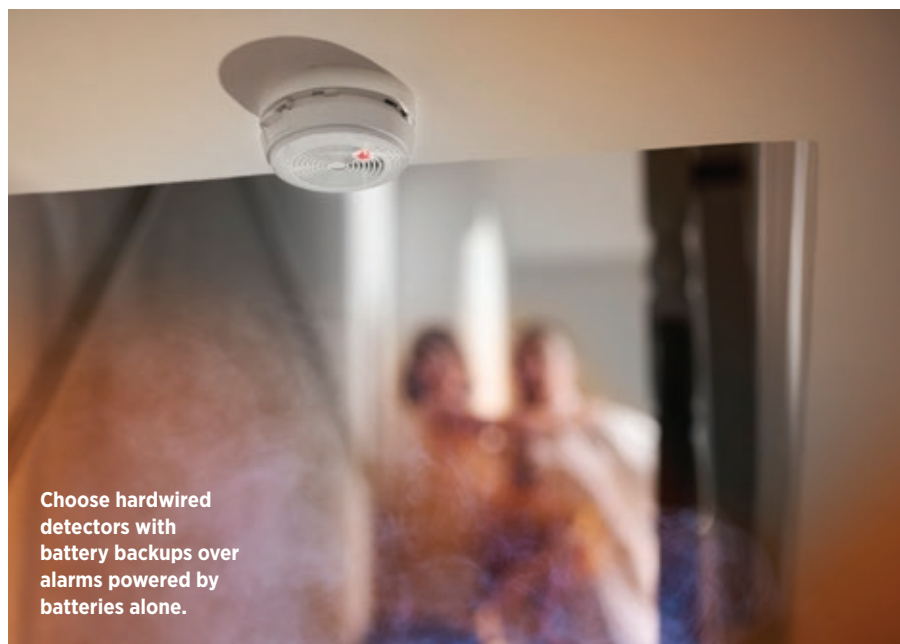
HILCO Director Leroy Huff, Jill Howard and HILCO Director Joe Tedesco

Smoke Alarm Safety

ON AVERAGE, EIGHT PEOPLE DIE IN HOUSE FIRES EVERY DAY IN THE U.S.—almost 3,000 people every year, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Although working smoke alarms cut the chance of dying in a fire nearly in half, roughly two-thirds of all house fire deaths still occur in homes without working smoke alarms.

Newer smoke alarm recommendations and technologies provide greater protection than ever before. HILCO Electric Cooperative has some tips for making sure your smoke alarms are working properly to keep your family safe.

- ▶ Smoke detectors should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of multistory homes.
- ▶ For the best protection, alarms should be interconnected so that they all sound if one sounds. Manufacturers now are producing battery-operated alarms that are interconnected by wireless technology.
- ▶ Combination smoke alarms that include ionization and photoelectric alarms offer the most comprehensive protection. An ionization alarm is more responsive to flames, while a photoelectric alarm is more responsive to a smoldering fire.
- ▶ Hardwired smoke detectors with battery backups are more reliable than those powered solely by batteries.
- ▶ Install smoke detectors at least 10 feet from cooking appliances to reduce nuisance alarms. Alarms installed within 10–20 feet of a cooking appliance must be photoelectric or have a hush feature to temporarily reduce the alarm sensitivity.
- ▶ If possible, alarms should be mounted in the center of the ceiling. If mounted on a wall, an alarm should be located 6–12 inches below the ceiling.
- ▶ Smoke alarms should be tested once a month, and batteries should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, at least once a year. If an alarm “chirps” or “beeps” to indicate low batteries, they should be replaced immediately.
- ▶ Occasionally dust or lightly vacuum the exterior of the alarm.
- ▶ Smoke alarms should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, at least every 10 years.



Choose hardwired detectors with battery backups over alarms powered by batteries alone.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



VM2002 | ISTOCK.COM

Grilled Cheese Grits

- 1 can (14.5 ounces) chicken broth
- 4 ounces processed cheese, cubed
- 2 ounces coarsely shredded Parmesan cheese
- 2 ounces shredded cheddar cheese
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, cubed
- ½ cup water
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh or pickled jalapeño peppers
- 3 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1 cup quick-cooking grits
- Olive oil

1. Bring the broth, cheeses, butter and water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Stir in the garlic, jalapeños, bacon and grits. Reduce heat and cook 6–8 minutes, stirring often.
2. Pour cooked mixture into a lightly greased pie pan and allow to cool for an hour or more. Unmold and cut into wedges. Brush one side with oil and place greased-side down in a pan over medium heat. Sauté until underside becomes golden and crusty.
3. Brush top with oil and flip. Grill on second side until golden crust forms.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at **TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM**

Why Seal and Insulate?

Save Energy and Money

Air that leaks through your home's envelope—the outer walls, windows, doors and other openings—wastes energy and increases your utility costs. A well-sealed envelope, coupled with the right amount of insulation, can make a real difference on your utility bills.

Saving money on electricity isn't the only reason for you to take a look at what's separating your indoors from Texas' outdoors. Consider these other benefits of sealing your envelope.

Increased Comfort

Sealing leaks and adding insulation can improve the overall comfort of your home and help alleviate many of these common problems:

Noise pollution seeping into your home. Better insulation means the rumble of dump trucks outside stays there, and you can hear your TV and each other better.

Less pollen and dust, and fewer insects (or other pests) entering your home. Keep Texas' critters and allergens out.

Better humidity control. Whether it's for health reasons, pest control or the longevity of your wood trim, a sealed envelope ensures that you're in charge of moisture levels.

Significant Savings

Most older homes in the United States don't have enough insulation and have significant air leaks. If you added up all the leaks, holes and gaps in a typical home's envelope, it would be the equivalent of having a window open every day of the year.

Easy-To-Spot Leakage

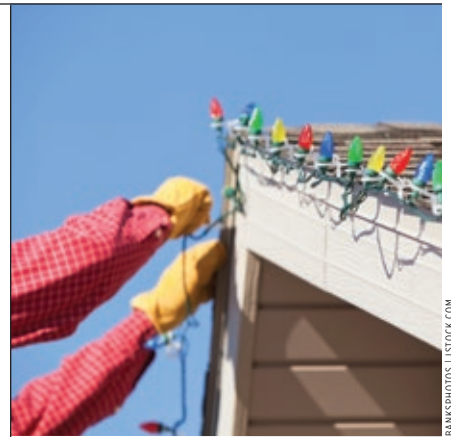
There are easily identifiable spots around your home where air is leaking in or out, diluting the conditioned air in your living space and adding unnecessary kilowatt-hours to your electricity bill.

Air commonly leaks into the house on all levels: through window casings, the stove vent fan, dryer vent, outdoor faucets and the crawl space. These leaks can be plugged by caulking and weatherstripping around windows, doors, vents and faucets.

Upstairs, air can leak out of your home through any attic hatches, roof soffits, plumbing vent stacks, recessed lights in ceilings, skylights and HVAC duct registers. Mitigate these leaks by increasing attic insulation.



Sealing your home means fewer indoor allergens.



BANKSPHOTOS | ISTOCK.COM

Remove Outdoor Holiday Lights Safely

WHEN YOU REMOVE YOUR outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

Suit up. Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home.

Look up. Note whether light strands are touching power lines hanging close to your roof. If they are, do not touch! If they're clear, use extra care when removing. Report low-hanging lines to your electric cooperative.

Unplug. If strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or each other when you start dismantling, you could get a shock.

Be gentle. Don't tug, pull, rip or yank lights loose. Take them down one section at a time and loop the strands around your elbow.

Inspect. Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires and other damage. Inspect decorations after each year's use and throw away any damaged strands.

Take your time. The weather was probably warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January, so you might try to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage shrubs, trees, gutters or eaves—or yourself.

Get help. Consider hiring a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove holiday lights next year. They have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto the roof and up trees, and handle electrical wires.