

# Making Life Better



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO DEBRA COLE

**WHAT WOULD MAKE LIFE BETTER IN OUR SERVICE TERRITORY?** More jobs? Better health care? Improved parks? Access to faster internet? Renewable energy options? Those are improvements that could benefit everyone in the area.

HILCO Electric Cooperative exists to power communities and empower you, our members, to improve your quality of life. The cooperative business model offers the perfect tool for tackling tasks too big for one person to handle alone, but we need a common purpose to effectively wield the power of cooperation.



Think about the impact electricity had on rural areas about eight decades ago. People began living longer because they no longer had to work from dusk to dawn at backbreaking chores. Farm production jumped. Running water, lights and better food storage became possible—and with those leaps, our ancestors had new opportunities.

A few of you might remember our beginnings from your younger days, so you know full well the power of neighbors uniting behind a common purpose. Yet most of our members weren't around when this area rolled up its sleeves and worked together to get the lights on, when cooperation changed the landscape of the communities we serve.

Does that mean we don't need a cooperative anymore? Is our job done? Are there no more challenges left, no roadblocks to a brighter future for our children? What should come next for us?

That's up to you.

Your co-op is more than a power provider. We're proof that when folks unite with a single focus, they can turn dreams into reality and make lives better. So think about it: What's important to you? What would make life better?

Please tell us what you're working on to improve the quality of your own life. We're here to support your efforts, and we want to know how we can help bring people with common needs and interests together. Remember, electric co-ops can be a mechanism you use to make life better. Send your ideas to [hilco.coop](mailto:hilco.coop) or 115 E. Main St., Itasca, TX 76055, or call us at 1-800-338-6425.

We exist today because co-op members like yourself decades ago believed they could turn darkness into daylight. Thanks for sharing your ideas with us. We can't wait to work cooperatively with you!



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joseph (Joe) Tedesco, President, *District 4*  
 Bill Allen, Vice President, *District 5*  
 Janet (Jan) Smith, Secretary-Treasurer,  
*District 7*  
 Leroy Huff, *District 1*  
 Margaret Hill, *District 2*  
 Ron Roberts, *District 3*  
 George Thiess, *District 6*

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

### GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO

Debra A. Cole

### COOPERATIVE OFFICES

#### Itasca Headquarters

115 E. Main St. • P.O. Box 127  
 Itasca, TX 76055  
 (254) 687-2331  
 1-800-338-6425

#### Midlothian

300A Silken Crossing  
 Midlothian, TX 76065  
 (972) 723-2900

#### Whitney

4581 FM 933  
 Whitney, TX 76692  
 (254) 694-5237  
 1-888-850-6551



## CONTACT US

For information during office hours and outages after hours:

### CALL US

**(254) 687-2331** local or  
**1-800-338-6425** toll-free

### EMAIL

[hilco@hilco.coop](mailto:hilco@hilco.coop)

### FIND US ON THE WEB

[hilco.coop](http://hilco.coop)

# Important information regarding **HILCO's Southern Member Appreciation Picnic**

In celebration of HILCO's 80th anniversary, we  
will hold **ONE** Member Appreciation Picnic in 2017.

Look for more details in your future issues  
of *Texas Co-op Power*.

**We look forward to celebrating with you!**

## 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 March—you have won a \$50 credit on your HILCO electric bill!



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



## Power Tip

**The seasons are changing!**

Call a heating, ventilation and air-conditioning tech to inspect your HVAC system before switching over from winter heating to spring and summer cooling.

## March Bulletin

### March 11-12

**Waco**  
**Heart of Texas Comic Con**  
Extraco Events Center

### March 17-19

**Waxahachie**  
**Gun & Knife Show**  
Waxahachie Civic Center

### March 18-19

**Midlothian**  
**Spring Hodge Podge Market**  
Midlothian Conference Center  
\$6 per person or \$4 per person with 2 cans of unexpired food; 12 years old and under free with paid adult

### March 25

**Waxahachie**  
**Spring Lawn and Garden Expo**  
Waxahachie Civic Center  
(972) 825-5175

**Daylight Savings Time** begins at 2 a.m. Sunday, March 12. Remember to spring forward—set your clocks an hour ahead.

## BILLING SCHEDULE

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

### CYCLE 1

**Billing Date** ..... March 7  
**Due Date** ..... March 23

### CYCLE 2

**Billing Date** ..... March 14  
**Due Date** ..... March 30

### CYCLE 3

**Billing Date** ..... March 21  
**Due Date** ..... April 6

### CYCLE 13

**Billing Date** ..... March 22  
**Due Date** ..... April 6

### CYCLE 4

**Billing Date** ..... March 28  
**Due Date** ..... April 13

# Copper Crooks Threaten Lives

**WOULD YOU RISK BEING HIT BY LIGHTNING FOR \$100?** It's a bit ludicrous, but that's about what metal theft amounts to. It's hard to understand why anyone would put their life on the line for a few dollars—to take such a huge risk for such a small return—but it happens.

Thefts of copper (and sometimes aluminum and bronze) are still an unfortunate fact at abandoned commercial buildings, empty homes and—most dangerously—power substations near neighborhoods. We need your help to keep our equipment safe, prevent outages and save lives.

HILCO Electric Cooperative uses copper to ground equipment, protecting it from electrical surges and lightning by giving electricity a safe path to ground. We use

a lot of copper wire in our substations, where we step down high-voltage electricity arriving from distant power plants before it travels to your neighborhood. Then another transformer near your home—either mounted on a utility pole or in a big box on the ground—lowers the voltage again so you can use the power at home. Copper is an essential component every step of the way.

Metal thieves can collect a couple hundred dollars' worth of wire from a substation, but they leave behind a repair bill in the hundreds of thousands—or even millions, if the theft causes a fire. Fire in a substation can destroy



**Copper theft is on the rise, and co-op members can help. Call your co-op if you see anything unusual.**

regulators, switches, transformers and other expensive equipment. Thousands of co-op members are temporarily left in the dark after these incidents, even though co-ops move quickly to reroute power to affected areas.

Even without the damage done to co-op systems, the toll packs a big punch, since other equipment can be ruined without the protection that copper wires provide. There's also the potential for loss of life.

Our linemen are highly trained professionals who understand the dangers of working with electricity and take proper safety precautions. To protect the public, we surround our substations with secure fencing and post warning signs. But some thieves will not be deterred.

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual, such as an open substation gate, unprotected equipment or hanging wire, call HILCO EC immediately at 1-800-338-6425. If you see anyone other than our utility personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities, call the police.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH



TVIRBICKIS | ISTOCK.COM

### Raspberry Shortbread Thumbprints

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup raspberry jam

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, butter and almond extract. Beat at medium speed 2–3 minutes, scraping bowl often, until creamy. Reduce speed to low, add flour and beat 2–3 minutes more, scraping bowl often, until well-mixed.
3. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. With thumb, make an indentation in the center of each cookie (edges may crack slightly). Fill each indentation with about 1/4 teaspoon jam.
4. Bake 14–18 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Let stand 1 minute, then remove from cookie sheet.

A version of this recipe was a winner in the *Cookie Swap* recipe contest for November 2008. Submit your spicy recipes for this month's *Some Like It Hot* contest to *Texas Co-op Power* by March 10 for a chance to win \$100 and be published. Visit [texascoopower.com/contests](http://texascoopower.com/contests).

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

# Pam Lewis Retires from HILCO



Pam Lewis receives a service award from HILCO Board President Joe Tedesco.

**PAM LEWIS IS KNOWN** for her integrity, hard work ethic and ability to inspire her co-workers. These characteristics have been displayed over the past 15 years in the accounting department, from which Pam recently retired.

Pam began her career at HILCO in 2001 as an accounting coordinator. She was strong at encouraging initiative and cultivating teamwork. Although a bit accident-prone, she gave us great conversations in safety meetings and was always a good sport.

The next adventure that Pam is excited about is RVing to Alaska with her husband, Bobby, where they will take their time visiting the monuments, parks, wildlife—and most of all, relaxing.

We are grateful to Pam for her many years of service to HILCO. She has been a dedicated employee and a good friend to many of us. We will miss Pam's hard work, her willingness to help others and her great attitude. We wish Pam and Bobby many years of good health, fun travel and time well-spent with family. Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement, and we wish you the best in your next venture. 4601065001



# Stay Alive After Storms

**IN TEXAS, STORM SEASON STARTS EARLY** and stays late, so Texans need to know how to avoid the deadly hazards that severe storms can leave in their wake.

## Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

If the power goes out, you might need to use alternate means to power appliances for light, heat or cooking. Gas-powered devices can pose hazards if not used safely. Make



CHRISTOPHER FUTCHER | ISTOCK.COM

**Even in good weather, grills and camp stoves should only be used outdoors.**

sure portable generators are installed according to the co-op's safety specifications. Use generators, grills and camp stoves outside the house and garage, at least 20 feet away from windows, doors and vents.

## Electrocution

Severe weather can snap electric lines and break poles, leaving live electric wires down where you or family members could be in danger of touching them. Power lines can carry enough voltage to injure and even kill, so exercise extreme caution around them if you must venture outside.

Never assume that a line isn't "live" just because it doesn't throw sparks, pop

or hiss. Stay away from all downed wires and whatever they are touching, including water or wet items.

Closer to home, make sure the electrical cords and cables you use with portable generators are undamaged and in good repair. Keep all cords away from puddles and sources of water.

## House Fires

Storms also can bring flooding that affects the inside of your home. Avoid standing water that covers electric outlets or is in contact with electrical equipment. Don't operate electric appliances and equipment that are in water or have been underwater. Dry them out and have a qualified technician clear them for use first.

## Gas Explosions

You might be tempted to light candles for light if the power goes out. Place candles on stable, flat surfaces, out of traffic areas and away from the reach of children. Better yet, use flashlights and battery-powered lanterns instead.



HEART OF TEXAS EC

## What Is It?

*Then and now*

**MOST HILCO EC MEMBERS** recognize an electric meter when they see one, but technology used to maintain modern electricity distribution systems has evolved over the years. Compare these images of tools from the 1930s, '40s and '50s with those of today.

Lighting has come a long way since the delivery of electricity. These days even the dimmest LED bulb can light an entire room with a minimum of electricity.

**1.** This Westinghouse meter with dials is no longer used today. Co-ops now use a more advanced meter.

**2.** Thank goodness the old handheld fan has been replaced with the modern electric fan—and, even better, the air conditioner.

**3.** This handheld voltage tester replaced several older, heavier tools and takes up less room on the service truck.

**4.** It might look like a birdhouse, but this is a sectionalizing cutout used on an electric service lines. The new version looks different and is much more reliable.



# Tornados Rip Through HILCO Area

*Severe storms left wake of lost power, damaged homes and downed poles in parts of co-op service area.*

**THERE'S A SAYING ABOUT TEXAS WEATHER** that goes, "If you don't like the weather in Texas, wait an hour." This statement rang true for members in HILCO's Hill County service areas January 15 as a reported EF-1 tornado ripped through the area, causing power outages and damaging homes and power lines.

HILCO line crews banded together with supporting staff and worked long, grueling hours to ensure that members' power got restored in a safe and timely manner. The restoration effort was complemented with the help of contractors Horton, Arborworks, T&D and Trinity.

This is the second time in a little more than a year that the strength and endurance of HILCO staff and crews have been put to the test, and not once did they falter. Once again,

HILCO staff proved that with teamwork, they are ready for any task.

Co-op employees received overwhelming support from members, who cheered on crews via social media and posted messages of thanks for the cooperative and the hard work of its linemen. Employees in the field reported being approached by members with messages of appreciation.

We are truly grateful that there were no reported injuries sustained by this terrible storm. We would like to say thank you to our members for your patience and support as we worked to restore your power. We know what an incredible inconvenience it is not to have electricity, and we appreciate your understanding what it takes to restore service after such massive damage as these storms left behind.

# Put a Lid on It: Metal Roofing

**WHETHER YOU'RE REPLACING** your home's roof or choosing one for a new structure, the decision is complicated, with long-term considerations. Metal is one option that's cut above the rest.

Metal roofs are becoming a signature of expensive, high-end homebuilders. They cost more to install than shingle roofs, but the price difference is not as pronounced when reroofing. Metal roofs can be applied over several layers of old shingles, so tear-off expenses are eliminated. If you like a tile or slate look, the lighter-weight metal will not require roof reinforcement.

Metal roofing offers many advantages: long life, fire resistance, energy efficiency, and a long-lasting, attractive appearance. Installing a metal roof can lower air-conditioning costs and improve your home's comfort.

The main drawback to metal roofing is its higher initial cost. Considering that you likely will never have to replace it, the cost of a metal roof measured across its entire life cycle is reasonable, especially compared with other materials.

## Material Choices

The most common metal roofing materials are aluminum (often recycled from beverage cans), copper and steel. Aluminum and steel are strong enough to handle the weight of a person carefully walking on the roof. Copper and stainless steel are more durable, but their cost is often outside the budgets of many homeowners.

Aluminum is an excellent material because it can easily be formed to simulate tiles, slate or cedar shakes. Aluminum doesn't rust, so if there is an imperfection in the paint or it gets scratched, durability is not affected. Its irregular surface dampens or eliminates noise from raindrops.

Aluminum and copper roofing are particularly popular because of their efficiency and high content of recycled material. The materials naturally form a protective oxide coating to inhibit corrosion.

## Thickness and Weight

All types of metal roofing are relatively lightweight, aluminum being the lightest. As for thickness of the materials, it is not necessarily important to install the heaviest-gauge metal roof



**Metal roofing is more expensive, but the energy savings and fire-resistant qualities make it worth the investment.**

ing. Your roofing contractor can advise you on what thickness is best for your house.

## Treatments

Steel roofing base materials are coated with a zinc compound to retard rust. Like aluminum roofs, most are painted with tough resin-based paint. For the most authentic appearance, some include real stone granules in the final stage of a 10-coat process.

Powder-coated resin paint, applied after the panels are formed, is the most durable and attractive. Standing seam roofing is ideal on contemporary homes, and simulated tiles create a "Western-style" appearance.

## Advantages

The Florida Solar Energy Center built test homes with various types of roofs. In 90-degree weather, the attic temperature with a simulated cedar shake, aluminum roof was almost 30 degrees cooler than one with traditional asphalt shingles. A difference like this can mean a whopping 33 percent less cooling load on your air-conditioning system.

Another major advantage of metal roofs is that they are fire-proof. Fires are often spread from house to house by glowing embers carried on the wind to ignite other rooftops. If embers settle on a metal roof, however, they will not start a fire.

A house with a metal roof might be eligible for a discount on your homeowner insurance policy.



## HILCO Electric Scholarship for Excellence

Application Deadline April 17, 2017

# Do you aspire to go to college or vocational school?

If you're a high school senior with the strong desire to attend **college** or **trade school**, 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 dependents of HILCO members and meet the eligibility requirements listed on the application.

## How to apply

Visit [www.hilco.coop](http://www.hilco.coop) and download the application