

## National Volunteer Week

## Co-op Stepping Forward To Help



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER LEROY T. SKLOSS

By presidential proclamation, the final week of April has been declared National Volunteer Week. The tradition started in the 1970s under President Richard Nixon and continues this month under President Barack Obama. The week, in turn, is part of National Volunteer Month, which highlights volunteers and volunteer opportunities across the country.

But at Karnes Electric Cooperative, every month is volunteer month. You see, electric cooperatives, like other cooperative businesses, are founded on a set of principles. Those include Principle No. 7, Concern for Community.

That principle states that cooperatives should strive to make the communities in which they do business better places to live.

Karnes Electric fulfills that ideal by supporting volunteer organizations that make our community better and encouraging the volunteer efforts of our employees.

Your co-op is made up of people who care. Our employees go out of their way to better the communities in which they live. They coach youth sports teams, serve on school committees and participate in church activities. They are co-op members like you and, like you, they want to make their hometowns stronger.

We would like to encourage you to join us in volunteering your time, money or both to help those in our communities who need it most. Whether it's organized by a national group such as the Red Cross or the United Way, or through local organizations such as houses of worship or food banks, there is no shortage of opportunities.

Volunteering, during National Volunteer Month and year-round, is one of the things that sets our cooperative form of business apart. We are part of this community, and we want to see it succeed.

## COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

7

## Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

**COOPERATIVES—Owned by Our Members, Committed to Our Communities**



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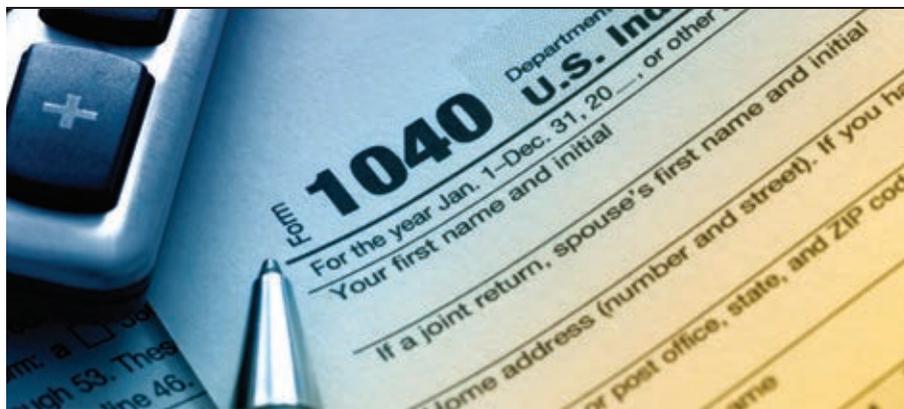
## Save Energy on Laundry Day

**The way you wash and dry your laundry could be costing you more than you know—and more than it needs to.**

Here are some ways to slash your laundry bills without sacrificing clean, fresh clothes:

1. Use cold water and a cold-water detergent. It's easier on your clothes and will clean them just as well. For oily stains that might need some heat to remove, try warm water instead of hot to at least save some energy.
2. You probably already separate dark-colored clothes from whites. Try washing and drying similar fabrics together, too. A load of lightweight clothes will dry a lot faster than a tub that mixes blue jeans with pillowcases.
3. Wait until you have a full load before running the washer; you don't save on water or energy if the machine is half-full.
4. Hang your clothes up to dry. You'll give them a longer life if you spare them the heat from the dryer. And you'll save energy and money by using your dryer less often.
5. When you do run the dryer, use the moisture sensor (if it has one) to let the dryer detect how long it will take to dry your clothes.

ISTOCKPHOTO



# Comeback for Energy Tax Credits

## Feds revive incentives for efficient home upgrades

BY MEGAN MCKOY-NOE

**Ready to boost your home's energy efficiency without breaking the bank? The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 revived energy-efficiency tax credits to the tune of \$500.**

The credit offsets the cost of upgrades such as super-efficient water heaters and heat pumps, central air conditioners, building insulation, windows and roofs.

This marks the third extension of the incentive initiated by the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005. The last round expired in 2011; the new legislation covers 2012 upgrades along with projects undertaken in 2013. If you've already received an energy tax credit, you may not qualify, as there's a lifetime cap of \$500.

Go to [energystar.gov/taxcredits](http://energystar.gov/taxcredits) for full details on qualifying upgrades and individual caps. Here are highlights of the tax savings available:

### Insulating Factors

Recoup up to 10 percent of the cost of upgrading a home's envelope. Labor costs are not covered. Eligible upgrades are:

- ▶ Insulation materials and exterior doors
- ▶ Systems designed to reduce a home's heat loss/gain
- ▶ Skylights and windows (\$200 maximum for upgrades between 2006-13)
- ▶ Qualifying metal or asphalt roofs

### Heating and Cooling

Replacing your home's heating or cooling system? You could qualify for a tax credit ranging from \$50 to \$500 for units put in place between January 1, 2012, and December 31, 2013. Eligible improvements are:

- ▶ Electric heat pump water heaters with an energy factor of at least 2.0 (\$300 cap)
- ▶ Advanced main air circulating fan (\$50 cap)
- ▶ Qualifying central air conditioner (\$300 cap)

### Tax Credit Basics

Energy tax credits are nonrefundable—they can increase your refund by reducing the taxes you owe and can be carried forward to reduce taxes in following years.

File for energy tax credits with IRS Form 5695. Be sure to keep a Manufacturer Certification Statement (a signed statement from the manufacturer certifying that the product or component qualifies for the tax credit) for your records. Eligible upgrades must be made to a taxpayer's primary residence by December 31, 2013.

Megan McKoy-Noe writes for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



## Karnes Electric Cooperative

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

### GENERAL MANAGER

Leroy T. Skloss

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arlon Retzloff, President, *Whitsett*  
 Martin R. Harris Jr., Vice President, *Tilden*  
 Larry R. Schendel, Secretary-Treasurer, *Runge*  
 Frank A. Geyer Jr., Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, *Charlotte*  
 Paul T. Brysch Jr., *Karnes City*  
 David C. Davidson, *Poteet*  
 Shirley Hofmann, *Runge*

### COOPERATIVE OFFICES

#### Main Office

1007 N. Highway 123, Karnes City

#### District Office

1824 W. Goodwin, Pleasanton

**Pay your bill, submit meter readings and view your account summary at [karnesec.org](http://karnesec.org).**



## 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](http://karnesec.org)

# Nominating Committee To Be Appointed

**The Karnes Electric Cooperative Board of Directors will meet on April 23, 2013, and will appoint a committee of members that will nominate candidates for the directors' election that will be held at the annual meeting on June 3. The Nominating Committee meeting will be held on April 29.**

The following is an excerpt from the bylaws pertaining to the nomination of such candidates.

**QUALIFICATIONS AND TENURE:** To become and remain a Director, a Person must comply with the following general qualifications:

(a) be an individual who is a member in good standing and who is domiciled in the area certified by the Public Utility Commission as being within boundaries served by the Cooperative under its certificate of convenience and necessity, and whose domicile is receiving electrical service from the Cooperative. A Member in "good standing" means a member who has timely paid all bills received from the Cooperative for the most recent twelve (12) consecutive billing periods without having been issued a termination notice or a disconnect notice;

(b) be above the legal voting age;

(c) have not been previously removed or disqualified as a Director;

(d) while a Director, and during the five years immediately before becoming a Director, not be convicted of, or plead guilty to, a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude;

(e) before becoming a Director, graduate from high school or earn an equivalent degree or certification;

(f) except as otherwise provided by the Board for good cause, attend at least three-fourths of all Board Meetings during each twelve-month period;

(g) while a Director and during the three years immediately before becoming a Director, is not engaged in business with, employed by or materially affiliated with, and does not have a material financial interest with another director, a competing enterprise, or a business selling electric energy, supplies or services to the Cooperative or its members;

(h) is not the incumbent or a candidate for an elective public office in connection with which a salary is paid;

(i) when a membership is jointly held by husband and wife, either one, but not both, may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative unless both shall meet the qualifications hereinabove set forth;

(j) is not the spouse, parent or child (including step- and adopted) of an incumbent director or Cooperative employee;

(k) an individual who was, at one time, or is currently, employed by the Cooperative is not eligible to serve as a director until at least sixty (60) months after leaving the employment of the Cooperative. Once becoming a director, an individual will not be eligible to be employed by the Cooperative until at least sixty (60) months after leaving the position of director;

(l) be bondable; and

(m) comply with any other reasonable qualifications determined by the Board.

**NOMINATIONS:** It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than thirty (30) days nor more than sixty (60) days, before the date of a meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of one (1) committee man from each district, for which a director is to be elected, and one (1) committee man at large, who shall be selected, so as to give equitable representation on the committee to the geographical areas served, or to be served by the Cooperative. No officer, or member of the Board of Directors, shall be appointed a member of such committee.

The committee shall prepare and post, at the principal office of the Cooperative, at least twenty (20) days before the meeting, a list of nominations for directors; but, any one hundred (100) or more members may make other nominations in writing, over their signatures, not less than forty five (45) days prior to the meeting; and the Secretary shall post the same, at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted.

The Secretary shall mail, with the notice of the meeting, or separately, but a least ten (10) days prior to the meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected; and, showing separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations; and, the nominations made by petition, if any.

Nothing contained herein shall, however, prevent additional nominations to be made from the floor at the meeting of the members.

The members may, at any meeting at which a director or directors shall be removed, as herein provided, elect a successor or successors thereto without compliance with the foregoing provisions with respect to nominations.

Notwithstanding anything in this section contained, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

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**This year's Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, June 3, 2013.**

# Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency

Did you know that a spring thunderstorm, flood, fire or the loss of power from high winds could jeopardize the safety of your food? Knowing how to determine if food is safe and how to keep food safe will help minimize the potential loss of food and reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

**Always keep meat, poultry, fish and eggs refrigerated at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit and frozen food at or below zero.**

▶ In the event of an outage, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature. If doors remain closed, a refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about four hours, and a full freezer will for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-full).



**A full freezer will stay cold longer during an outage—and saves energy the rest of the time.**

check for ice crystals. The food in your freezer that has partially or completely thawed may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is 40 degrees or below.

▶ If a power outage is two hours or less, you don't need to be concerned.

**Have items on hand that don't require refrigeration and can be eaten cold or heated on the outdoor grill.**

▶ Shelf-stable food, boxed or canned milk, water and canned goods should be part of a planned emergency food supply.

▶ Make sure you have ready-to-use baby formula for infants and food for pets.

▶ Remember to use these items and replace them from time to time. Be sure to keep a manual can opener for an emergency.

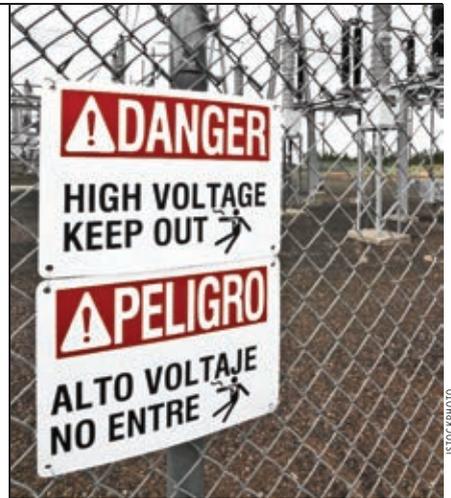
**Consider what you can do ahead of time to store your food safely in an emergency.**

▶ If you live in a location that could be affected by a flood, plan your food storage on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water.

▶ Coolers are a great help for keeping food cold if the power will be out for more than four hours—have a couple on hand along with frozen gel packs. Inexpensive styrofoam coolers can do an excellent job.

▶ If your freezer isn't full, keep items close together to keep food cold longer.

▶ Digital, dial or instant-read food thermometers and appliance thermometers will help you know if the food is at safe temperatures. Keep appliance thermometers in the refrigerator and freezer at all times.



**If you see any suspicious activity around a substation or other electric facilities, please call Karnes EC immediately.**

## Copper Theft

**Gain a buck, lose a life**

**Copper theft has reached an epidemic level that is not only affecting the United States, but is also international and creating havoc globally. The theft of copper costs the national economy around \$1 billion per year, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. The increase in copper theft has disrupted the flow of electricity, created electrical hazards, slowed down construction projects and knocked out irrigation networks across the country.**

Additionally, when thieves cut locks or chain-link fencing surrounding an electric substation, they leave a highly dangerous area exposed for children and animals.

Stealing material from an electric substation or utility pole can cause not only serious injuries and death but also extensive outages, fires and explosions—consequences that affect innocent people. The minimum damage that can occur is an outage, which may affect thousands of people.

Always alert Karnes Electric Cooperative if you see or suspect suspicious activity, or if any gate to a substation is open. Theft and tampering with electric power facilities can result in extremely dangerous situations, and we need your help to prevent them.

# Don't Water Down Safety This Spring

Whether it's swimming, boating or fishing, springtime is water recreation time for millions of Texans. While enjoying water activities, don't let a safety hazard dampen your fun. Follow these tips to stay safe this swimming season:

## At the swimming pool

- ▶ Do not put any electrical appliances within 5 feet of a swimming pool.
- ▶ Any electrical outlets within 20 feet of a pool should be equipped with a GFCI, or ground-fault circuit interrupter.
- ▶ Pools and decks should be built at least 5 feet away from all underground electrical lines, and at least 25 feet away from overhead electrical lines.
- ▶ Never swim during a thunderstorm or when there is lightning in the area.
- ▶ Use battery-operated, rather than plug-in, appliances near swimming pools.
- ▶ If a swimmer is electrocuted or shocked, don't dive in yourself or you could be electrocuted as well. Turn off the power and then use a fiberglass shepherd's hook to pull the victim out of the water.
- ▶ When you leave the pool, don't change the radio station or touch any electrical appliances until you are dry—never touch any electrical appliances when you are wet or standing in water. If children wish to play with sprinklers or hoses, emphasize that

they should be set up well away from any electrical outlets or appliances. In most instances, if potential safety hazards are taken into consideration and handled proactively, accidents and deaths can be avoided.

## On the lake

Electricity can be dangerous around larger bodies of water as well. If you plan to go boating or fishing this spring, be aware of your surroundings and potential electrical hazards.

- ▶ Always check the location of nearby power lines before boating or fishing. Contact between your boat and a power line could be devastating. Maintain a distance of at least 25 feet between your boat and nearby power lines to be safe.

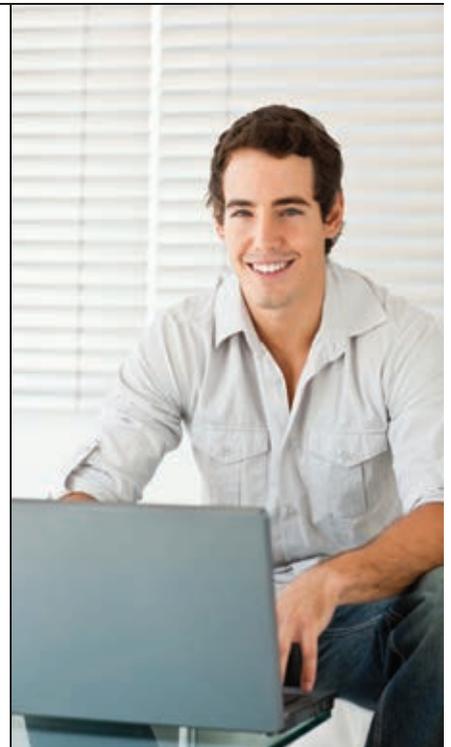
▶ If your boat does come in contact with a power line, never jump out of the boat into the water—the water could be energized. Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching anything metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line. Be sure dockside outlets have GFCI protection. Check cords that are plugged into them to make sure there is no broken casing or exposed wires.

**Be cautious on the water. The masts of a sailboat can easily reach overhead power lines.**

▶ Check for the location of power lines before fishing. Make sure you are casting the line away from power lines to avoid potential contact.



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# Increase Farm and Ranch Safety

Take care around electricity and other hazards of agricultural work

**Though rewarding, working on a farm or a ranch can be among the most dangerous jobs around. The fatality rate for farmworkers in crop and animal production was seven times higher than the fatality rate for all workers in private industry, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.**

Tasks on a farm or ranch can expose workers to dangers from machinery, chemicals, the elements, animals and even traffic accidents. And while electricity has made farm and ranch life much less labor-intensive, it also can create a hazard for the untrained or unwary worker.

“You can start by increasing your awareness of farming hazards and making a conscious effort to prepare for emergency situations including fires, vehicle accidents, electrical shocks from equipment and wires and chemical exposures,” an agency fact sheet states.

OSHA, which regulates workplace safety in the U.S., offers these steps you can use to reduce the incidence of illnesses and injuries on farms and ranches:



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- ▶ Read and follow instructions in equipment operators’ manuals and on product labels.
- ▶ Inspect equipment routinely for problems that may cause accidents.
- ▶ Discuss safety hazards and emergency procedures with your workers and family.
- ▶ Install approved rollover protective structures, protective enclosures or protective frames on tractors.
- ▶ Make sure that guards on farm equipment are replaced after maintenance.
- ▶ Review and follow instructions in material data sheets and on labels that come with chemical products.
- ▶ Take precautions to prevent entrapment and suffocation caused by unstable surfaces of grain storage bins, silos or hoppers.

Karnes Electric Cooperative would like to emphasize that electrical safety should be near the top of your list when going about your work. Use the following checklist adapted from a University of Minnesota publication to assess your electrical safety readiness.

## FARM AND RANCH ELECTRIC SAFETY CHECKLIST

- | YES                   | NO                    |   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do farm family members and all hired hands know where and how to disconnect power in the case of an electrical emergency?             |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Are disconnects, especially main breakers, regularly turned off and turned back on to ensure free action and good contact?            |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | In case of fire, can the electricity be shut off to a particular building on fire without shutting off electricity to the water pump? |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does all wiring appear to be in good condition and free from damage by rodents?   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do animals enter a building or drink at stock tanks without hesitation? (If they hesitate, it may be a sign of an electrical short.)  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Are overhead lines out of the way of augers and winged-type farm equipment?   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do all motors have correctly sized overcurrent protection?  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Are all electrical receptacles used to plug in tools properly grounded and protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters?            |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Are power tools left unplugged when not in use so that a child couldn’t accidentally turn them on?                                    |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Do children know whom to call in case of an electrical emergency?   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | If lightning protection is installed, are all wires leading to ground?  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Are all trees growing on the property free and clear of overhead electrical lines?  |

**Anything marked NO indicates a potential electrical safety hazard, and you should take proper action to fix these items. If you have any questions about electrical safety on the farm or for safety advice, you can call OSHA at 1-800-321-6742 or visit [osha.gov](http://osha.gov) and search for agricultural operations.**