

APRIL–MAY 2021

SAVE THE DATE

April 13
NEC Grounding Requirements
 Webinar

April 13–16
Metering School
 Livingston, Sam Houston EC

April 13–16
**Introduction to System
 Operator/Dispatcher School**
 Kerrville, Kerrville Public
 Utility Board

April 20–23
Transformer School
 McGregor, Heart of Texas EC

April 20–23
Basic Pole Climbing School
 Pleasanton, Karnes EC

April 27–30
**Groundman/Apprentice
 Essential Skills School**
 McGregor, Heart of Texas EC

May 4–5
Basic Electricity School
 Robstown, Nueces EC

May 11–14
Metering School
 Tahoka, Lyntegar EC

Find photos from [Loss Control schools](#) on the TEC website.

ALWAYS THINK SAFETY

Gloves | Grounds | Cover Up

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Use the [TEC Safety and Loss Control discussion list](#) on the TEC member website to share and gather information.



**Texas Electric
 Cooperatives**
 A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION
 FROM TEC LOSS CONTROL

Co-ops Confront Epic Winter Storm



CENTRAL TEXAS EC

The polar vortex that plunged Texas into freezing temperatures and covered the state with ice and snow for the better part of a week in February turned electric cooperatives into crisis control centers. Outdoor crews battled the elements to repair damage to infrastructure. Indoors, employees hastened to communicate with members as power outages paralyzed much of the state.

“We had a massive communication effort to help members stay safe prior to the arrival of the winter weather, from calling all critical care customers to encouraging members to make emergency plans,” said Kathi Calvert, general manager at Houston County EC. “Throughout the rolling blackouts and ice storm damage, we provided more specific updates to help members make decisions on how to stay safe. In a crisis it takes everyone working together.”

Nearly 4.5 million homes and businesses lost power during the worst of the storm, which resulted in disaster declarations for all 254 Texas counties.

“Rolling blackouts left our outage management system in disarray,” said Bryan Chandler, operations manager at Heart of Texas EC. “Our crews in the field were constantly stuck and having to be pulled around due to the icy conditions. Our members came to our aid with food, fuel and tractors to help pull trucks.”

Among the co-ops that provided mutual aid during the disaster were Bowie-Cass, Cherokee County, Farmers, HILCO, Jasper-Newton, Navarro County, Rusk County, San Bernard, South Plains and Wood County ECs and United Cooperative Services.

At Rita Blanca EC, several large loads permitted the co-op to turn off their power, enabling electricity to reach other members.



JUSTIN BROWN | COSERV



HEART OF TEXAS EC

TOP: A Central Texas EC crew prepares to change out a regulator bank that was burned up when overloaded during the extreme cold. CENTER: CoServ crews work on a broken pole in Little Elm. ABOVE: No injuries resulted from a bucket truck rollover involving a contractor working for Heart of Texas EC.

Lighthouse EC's Ogden Bids Adieu

Larry Ogden, the longtime safety coordinator at Lighthouse EC and the indulgent caller of the scholarship auction at the TEC Loss Control Conference, has retired after 43 years at the co-op.

Ogden started at Lighthouse EC in 1978 and held an array of positions, settling in as safety coordinator in 1983. On his watch the co-op achieved a 14-year stretch of no lost-time incidents, reached 1 million hours worked without a lost-time incident and claimed the GE Safety Award at the Loss Control Conference five times.

"I hope that I have contributed in some small way to make this co-op a better place for its employees past and present and its members," Ogden said.

Bill Harbin, former Lighthouse EC



CHRIS SALAZAR / TEC

Larry Ogden calls the scholarship auction at the 2019 TEC Loss Control Conference.

general manager and a colleague during most of Ogden's career, described Ogden's passion for safety as "uncompromising."

"He was probably the main force to help us keep safety as something you did because it was the right thing to do," Harbin said.

Ogden, a licensed auctioneer, dropped his usual rapid-fire chant during the Loss Control scholarship auction

as he coaxed more than \$500,000 out of pockets for the purchase of donated items over the past 20-plus years.

"His selfless contribution to the Loss Control program has benefited hundreds of students across the state, and TEC is forever grateful," said Martin Bevins, vice president of communications and member services.



CHAD SIMON / SAM HOUSTON EC

Sam Houston EC's Robert Lantrip works during the February storm.

Lineman Appreciation Day Is April 12

During the frantic days and nights of the February polar vortex, as co-op employees strived to restore power in unforgiving conditions, members turned to co-ops' Facebook pages to share their love for lineworkers. Here are a few of the posts:

'Sending prayers to all the guys working long hours in this weather to restore our power while some are going home to no power themselves.'

—Deep East Texas EC

'Thank you a thousand times for all your great work and to all the linemen and ladies that were out there in this unbelievable cold and snowy weather to keep our lines working.'

—Fannin County EC

'You all do exceptional hard work, and it is very much appreciated. Please be safe out there as you have families that are waiting on you to return safe and sound.'

—MidSouth EC

TEC UPDATE

2021 TEC LOSS CONTROL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Each recipient receives \$1,200. Scholarships are available to high school seniors who are children of electric cooperative, electric municipal or contractor employees who participate in TEC's Loss Control services, such as organizational safety meetings, schools or the Loss Control Conference.

Group 1: Karson Bynum, Bowie-Cass EC; Bailey Crofford, Wood County EC; Paige Grissom, Bowie-Cass EC; Maegan Hammonds, Bowie-Cass EC; Gavin Kelley, Sam Houston EC; Alyssa Lankford, Wood County EC; Katie Newman, Jasper-Newton EC

Group 2: Maci Anderson, HILCO EC; Skylar Cheek, HILCO EC; Davonte Grisham, HILCO EC

Group 3: Hannah Bell, United Cooperative Services; Emma Copeland, Grayson-Collin EC; McKenna Everheart, Grayson-Collin EC; Audrey Kubis, PenTex Energy; Canyon May, Lamar Electric; Landry McCasland, PenTex Energy; Kaden Reynolds, Grayson-Collin EC

Group 4: Payton Dickson, Big Country EC; Kaylee Weaver, Big Country EC

Group 5: Estrella Badillo, Rita Blanca EC; Edika Carrillo, Deaf Smith EC; Faith Diaz, Deaf Smith EC; Katelyn Kelley, Bailey County EC; Marisol Morin, Lyntegar EC; Karla Nanez, Deaf Smith EC; Karlie Swinford, Lyntegar EC; Tate Williams, North Plains EC

Group 6: Madelynn Brown, Guadalupe Valley EC; Kenzie Kluth, Guadalupe Valley EC; Alex Pieper, Fayette EC; Kobe Schwausch, Guadalupe Valley EC; Wyatt Wick, Fayette EC

Group 7: Jeffery Casares, Magic Valley EC; Holly Hargrove, Magic Valley EC; Victoria Hocott, Magic Valley EC; Kayla Jalufka, Karnes EC; Trenton Janysek, Karnes EC; Lindsey Jonas, Karnes EC; Kristin Mueller, Karnes EC

G&T: Emma Pratkan, South Texas EC

Municipals: Christian Molina, Kerrville Public Utility Board; Reese Ward, city of Seymour

Contractor: Adrienne Lerma, Urban Electrical Services

STAFF

Martin Bevins, VP, Comm. & Member Services
(512) 486-6249, mbevins@texas-ec.org

Danny Williams, Loss Control Manager
(512) 413-0509, dwilliams@texas-ec.org

Curtis Whitt, CLCP, LC Regional Supervisor
(512) 694-0232, cwhitt@texas-ec.org

Tami Knipstein, LC Program Coordinator
(512) 486-6271, tknipstein@texas-ec.org

Tom Widlowski, Editor
(512) 486-6246, twidlowski@texas-ec.org

Wesley Caldwell, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 942-9351, wcaldwell@texas-ec.org

Mike Finnell, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 942-9673, mfinnell@texas-ec.org

Phillip Henricks, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist
(806) 438-0067, phenricks@texas-ec.org

Donnie Myrick, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 677-3488, dmyrick@texas-ec.org

David Nance, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 804-6748, dnance@texas-ec.org

Ronnie Wiggins, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 709-1177, rwiggins@texas-ec.org