

## WINTER WEATHER POSSIBLE FOR DEEP EAST TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SERVICE AREA

With a winter storm in the forecast, Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative is busy making preparations. We encourage you to also prepare now for the possibility of weather-related problems. If power outages occur, DETEC crews are ready to respond as quickly and as safely as possible.

### MAKE PREPARATIONS:

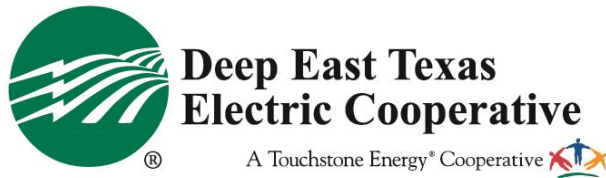
- Be sure you have an ample supply of blankets, clothes for layering, non-perishable foods, water, flashlight with batteries, and an alternate source of heat if possible.
- If you or someone in your household is dependent upon life support, have an alternate power source available or identify a location you can move to that has an alternate power source. In an emergency event, please call 911.
- Check backup generators for proper operations and remember to carefully follow generator safety precautions including NOT operating a generator indoors. Place generators 20 ft away from the house to avoid deadly carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Monitor your local weather alerts and emergency updates.
- Above all, we want to ask you to be safe - STAY AWAY FROM ALL DOWNED LINES. Consider them all to be live and dangerous. Call DETEC at 1-800-392-5986 to report downed lines and outages.

### HOW TO REPORT AN OUTAGE:

- **Call 1-800-392-5986.** For prompt service, please know the telephone number and meter number associated with the account. The meter number is the 6-digit number following DETEC on your meter or it can be located on your utility bill. We encourage you to rely on the automated system and do not select to speak with a representative unless necessary as you will experience long hold times due to heavy call volume. With your meter number, you should be able to report your outage quickly. The outage number is available 24 hours, every day.
- **Use our free Mobile App – (DETECmobile in the App Store).** The DETEC Mobile App is the quickest and most accurate way to report your outage. You can setup a new user account or use your existing online member login details. Users will need to know all pertinent information for the account experiencing an outage. You may also see our outage map here.
- **Visit [www.deepeast.com](http://www.deepeast.com).** You will need an online login to report your outage. New users may create an account to do so. You will need to know all pertinent information for the account.

### WHAT TO DO SHOULD YOU LOOSE POWER:

- Report your power outage using one of the methods above.
- As we restore power, large loads kicking on may cause surges or additional outages. Turn off your heating units, unplug appliances and electronics until the power is restored.
- Close freezers and refrigerators. The CDC states that the refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours; a half freezer for about 24 hours. Move refrigerated food to coolers of ice if necessary.
- Check on your neighbors. Older adults and younger children are especially vulnerable to extreme temperatures.
- If your neighbor's power is restored and you are still out, report your outage again.



### **FEND OFF THE WINTER CHILL – AND THE WINTER BILL**

Because heating and cooling can make up nearly half your electricity use, you may experience sticker shock when you open your electric bill following an extreme weather event. Instead of waiting until after a potentially high bill, be pro-active. There are steps you can take now to help manage your energy use efficiently and spend less.

- Keep drapes closed at night to block out the cold, and keep those that don't get direct sunlight closed during the day, too. Open shades on sunny windows during the day to take advantage of natural warmth.
- Make sure the fireplace damper is closed when it's not in use. Keeping it open can bring cold air into the room.
- Block any areas in your home that are particularly drafty, including around window frames and under doors.
- Reverse the ceiling fan. It may seem counterintuitive to use a ceiling fan when you're feeling cold, but it actually can help to warm you up. Let your ceiling fan turn at a low speed in a clockwise direction during colder months. This will help to push the warm air that rises toward the ceiling back down toward floor level.
- Dress for the weather, even when you're inside. Wearing long sleeves and pants, thick socks, slippers or shoes—even indoors—or wrapping up in a cozy blanket will help combat the temptation to bump up the thermostat. Dressing in layers can also help.
- Enjoy hot drinks and food such as soups and stews to keep yourself warm. Using a slow cooker, microwave or air fryer could help reduce food preparation costs compared to an oven-baked meal.
- Keep as active as possible to boost circulation. Move around at least once an hour and avoid sitting still for long periods. Even light exercise will help keep you warm. When you do sit down, put your feet up because it's coldest nearest the ground.
- Add insulating wraps to exposed pipes and water heaters located in unheated spaces.
- Make sure to change your air filter regularly to keep your system running efficiently.
- Caulk around your hearth, and caulk or weatherstrip around doors, windows and even electrical outlets on exterior walls.

Using the tips above can certainly help you manage your energy use, but your bill may still be higher than normal in winter months. The weather has a big impact on electric bills. Even those with the most efficient HVAC systems will see more use in extreme weather. When extreme cold hits, heaters work overtime. For example, even if you set your thermostat to the recommended 68 degrees in the winter, if it's 19 degrees outside, your system has to work hard to make up that 49-degree difference. Your heater works harder and cycles on and off more often in colder weather, making your energy use much higher. That means your electric bill will be noticeably higher. There's value in comfort, of course. But for us to be comfortable in our homes, our heaters will have to work harder. Don't wait until after you receive a high electricity bill this winter to start taking energy-saving measures. Be proactive about your energy use habits so you aren't caught off guard.