

National Co-op Month



MARK ROLLANS
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Since 1930, October has been designated National Co-op Month, providing an opportunity to explain the co-op difference to members.

Our story is unique in that electric cooperatives were built by ordinary people working together, not big businesses looking for profit.

National Co-op Month is a time to celebrate the cooperative difference,

including our members' ownership and voice in its cooperative. While the idea of cooperation dates back to as far as recorded human history, the first model for modern co-ops was founded in England in 1844.

I've devoted my entire working life to the cooperative business model. However, simply calling what we do 'work' doesn't paint an accurate picture of the passion and enthusiasm I, all Medina EC employees and your board of directors, demonstrate on a daily basis.

The cooperative way of doing business is an American success story we can all be proud of. Cooperatives continue to be essential components of the nation's economy, providing hundreds of thousands of jobs while contributing to the communities we serve.

Despite this diversity, co-ops have some things in common. They are owned and democratically controlled by the people who use their services or buy their goods. They're motivated by service to their members, not by profit. These characteristics give co-ops an uncommon loyalty and commitment to the communities in which they are located.

When you're doing the right things for the right reasons, you're doing more than a job. Whether through providing reliable electric service, helping people waste less energy through our energy audits or even demonstrating community spirit, we're doing things at this cooperative that help more than 16,000 members every single day.

That's what cooperatives are all about, helping and serving members. The rest of the nation might celebrate the cooperative business model every October, but Medina EC celebrates it every day!

Until next time,
Mark Rollans
CEO

CONTACT US

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www.facebook.com/MedinaEC

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Celebrate the Cooperative Difference

Until electric cooperatives came along, rural America was left in the dark.

As electricity was beginning to be adopted throughout the U.S., for-profit electric utility companies didn't want to serve rural areas, claiming they couldn't profit.

If utilities provided electricity to rural areas, customers paid the cost of extending power lines, amounting to roughly a year's annual income, and were often charged double for power.

Electric co-ops in the U.S. were born in 1935 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the federal Rural Electrification Administration as part of his New Deal.

Electric cooperatives soon appeared across the nation, formed by members for members. Individuals paid \$5 to

be a member while co-ops secured government loans to start operations.

Because of the great need for electricity in south Texas, farmers, ranchers and other concerned groups began meeting together.

On November 22, 1938, the first official meeting of Medina EC was held at the Medina County Agent's office in Hondo, Texas.

Medina EC maintains the original \$5 membership fee to this day that was first established at the birth of the electric cooperative movement.

Benefits of Membership

Being part of an electric cooperative means that you have access to a number of benefits others don't.

From national discount programs (see page 22) to energy efficiency education to community involvement, your co-op strives to work for our most important goal: serving the membership.

A few other benefits include:

Capital Credits

A cooperative does not earn profits in the same sense that other businesses do.

Instead, any margins, or revenue remaining after all expenses have been paid, are returned to the members in proportion to their usage of the co-op's services through capital credit allocations and retirements.

Capital credits represent each member's share of the cooperative's margins and ownership of the co-op.

According to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



Every year, Medina EC sponsors students whose parent or guardian is a member for the Government-In-Action Youth Tour. These students receive a free educational, one week experience in Washington, D.C. Watch for details about the 2012 program in next month's Texas Co-op Power magazine.

(NRECA), over the years electric cooperatives in the U.S. have returned nearly \$6 billion to their owners.

Community Involvement

Co-ops are vital parts of the communities they serve. Medina EC is very active in the community.

Your cooperative has conducted informational and safety trainings that help many members. Your co-op even offers several programs to benefit the members' children.

Programs like Medina EC's annual scholarship and the Government-In-Action Youth Tour offer opportunities open strictly to the membership.

More details about these programs, including 2012 application deadlines, will be available next month.

There for You

Medina EC is working for you, making sure your lights are on and that your power is affordable, available and reliable.

So don't be afraid to take advantage of what your cooperative has to offer. The co-op strives to exceed your expectations in everything we do!

Learn About Co-ops

Electric Cooperatives Build a Better World

Member-owned electric co-ops transformed the landscape of rural America, delivering safe, reliable, and affordable electricity for 75 years. www.nreca.org



America's Electric Cooperatives

DID YOU KNOW?

- Electric co-op lines cover 75 percent of the U.S. landmass.
- Serve 42 million people in 47 states.
- Electric co-ops have retired \$9.5 billion to members (capital credits) since 1990.

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY:

Every June, more than 1,500 high school juniors take part in an educational trip to Washington, D.C. during the Rural Electric Youth Tour.

Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World

A message from America's Electric Cooperatives



SAVING WITH CO-OP CONNECTIONS®

Benefits of Cooperative Membership

Medina EC's commitment to you goes beyond providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity.

We're always looking for ways to provide value to our members and our community, especially during tough economic times.

Medina EC's Co-op Connections Card is a money-saving tool we're proud to offer our membership. The card connects you with discounts on everything from hotel stays to prescription drugs.

Businesses that offer a Co-op Connections discount are located throughout our 17-county service territory.

Local businesses participating in the Co-op Connections program also benefit from increased traffic from cooperative members.

Businesses can sign up at no cost. For more details, about signing your business up or to fill out an application, please visit www.MedinaEC.org/coopConnections.aspx.

Looking for a deal on an oil change? What about a discount for your next family meal? Visit Medina EC's web site for a full list of local merchants. Be sure to present the card at the

How Can Co-op Connections Help You?

Individuals get discounts at:

- Local retailers, including restaurants,
- Online
- Various locations across the United States in other Touchstone Energy Cooperative service areas

Businesses benefit from:

- Signing up at no charge for this program allows local businesses to reach a wider audience and receive FREE advertising from the co-op
- Using the new www.BizConnections.coop offers a resource to help local businesses save money with a one-stop-shop for Business to Business discounts on a variety of goods and services necessary for a successful organization

register to receive your discount!

The card also gives you access to online savings at more than 95 national retailers like Hertz Rental Cars, Barnes&Noble.com, Best Western hotels and ProFlowers.com.

One of the most valuable features of the Co-op Connections Card is the pharmacy discount. While it isn't insurance, you can save 10 to 60 percent on prescription medications.

The logo and information on the back of your card is recognized at more than 60,000 national, regional and local pharmacies.

The pharmacy discount has been widely used by members of Touchstone Energy co-ops across the country. Since the program's inception, members have saved nearly \$20 million combined on prescriptions.

Want to find out more? Log on to www.LocateProviders.com to search for pharmacies in the area honoring the card. Use code 22203 as the group number under the "Groups" login section. Next, enter your zip code.

Medina EC strives to serve our members and help them save money. The Co-op Connections Card is just one of the ways we are able to do this!



Co-op Connections Discount Card
Variety of Discounts for individuals and businesses

Around the U.S.A.

www.Connections.coop
www.BizConnections.coop



E-bills are Easy, Fast for Members

Medina EC now offers consumers the option of receiving and paying their monthly bills online instead of through the mail.

This change to paperless, or e-billing, can take some getting used to, but those who have made the switch are finding many advantages to online bill payment, including:

- * The co-op's secure, password protected billing site could reduce your risk of identity theft. A U.S. Secret Service study of identity theft and fraud cases between 2000 and 2006 revealed that crooks' two favorite "non-technology" tactics involved rerouting mail and stealing mail out of mailboxes.
- * You get your bill faster because it's usually available the same day the cooperative posts it. Paper bills arrive a few days later in the mail.
- * If you opt to view and pay your bill online, you'll reduce the amount of paper you need to keep, file and handle. The cooperative's website keeps several months worth of your past bills available on demand, so you don't have to keep paper copies anymore.
- * The less paper that comes to your home means waste is reduced. It's a convenient way to reduce your family's impact on the environment.
- * You can get more information about your account from your cooperative's website than from the monthly paper statement. You can compare current and past statements, even check out your daily energy usage.
- * You don't have to stress about the mail. You can make your payment online or by phone, up to the day it's due, instead of worrying about getting your payment to the mailbox for it to arrive in enough time.
- * You'll save money on stamps and checks and time on writing checks and shredding bills. E-billing also helps control costs at your cooperative, helping to keep your electric rates affordable.

Interested in signing up? Just log in to your password protected account at www.MedinaEC.org. Don't have an online account? Sign up is free and just takes a few minutes.

You Have the *Power* to Save

Co-op Connections[®] offers substantial savings to Medina EC members while it also helps support local businesses and communities. The card entitles members to discounts from local and national retailers and service providers. And it's absolutely free.

For local businesses wishing to participate in the Co-op Connections[®] program, please contact Brian Bell at 1-866-MEC-ELEC (632-3532), ext. 1056.



South Texas Maize
\$1 off general admission per person

Hondo, TX (830) 741-3968
<http://www.southtexasmaize.com/>

Ranch Equip & Hardware, Inc.
5% discount on all cash purchases- except sale, feed & fencing items; 10% discount on paint

Cotulla, TX (830) 879-2223

Uvalde Furniture; Uvalde TV & Appliance
10% off regular priced items

Uvalde, TX (830) 278-8009

Hebbronville Machine Shop
5% discount after \$500.00 or more on labor on each invoice

Hebbronville, TX (361) 527-4461

Seco Secret, Inc
10% off lodging rates

D'Hanis, TX (830) 363-7611

MEC Celebrates National

WHAT IS ENERGY AWARENESS MONTH?

Energy Awareness Month is recognized every October, when Americans are encouraged to become more informed about sources of energy and the importance of energy conservation.

The 2011 Energy Awareness Month theme is *Turn Words into Action; Turn Action into Results*. Wise energy attitudes, behaviors and organizational decisions ensure results when working to conserve energy and save money.

As part of Energy Awareness Month, Medina EC provides ideas and programs to promote energy-saving practices for our residential and commercial members.

Take a moment in your daily routine to conserve energy, empower others to take action, and join together to save energy and money. Participate in site-specific energy action programs like your co-op's free Home Energy Audits.

More energy efficiency and conservation strategies are available online at www.MedinaEC.org, www.TogetherWeSave.org, any Medina EC district office or by calling Medina EC at 1-866-MEC-ELEC.

Rebates Available

Medina EC is introducing the next phase of the cooperative's Energy Efficiency Rebate program on September 24 at the 73rd Annual Membership Meeting.

Members of Medina EC are now eligible for appliance rebates to help make their home energy efficient. Rebates are limited to existing, occupied residences and small businesses.



The following ENERGY STAR appliances are eligible for a \$35 rebate from the cooperative in this phase:



- window unit air conditioners
- clothes washers
- dishwashers
- freezers
- Refrigerators are eligible for a \$50 rebate!

Medina EC's Energy Efficiency Rebate program helps members lower their usage and save money, also enabling the cooperative to give back to the membership.

Members are only eligible for one rebate in each category. Original purchase receipts must be attached to the rebate application.



Please allow up to eight weeks once the rebate

application is received for verification for the credit to appear on your bill. Members can still apply for the \$10

rebate for an insulating water heater blanket and a \$25 rebate for an electronic programmable thermostat as well.

This expanded selection of rebates are the latest in Medina EC's commitment to helping the cooperative membership save money by becoming more energy efficient. More details, including the application form, are available at www.MedinaEC.org or any Medina EC district office.



Energy Awareness Month!

Energy Consumption:



FICTION: Using a bigger air conditioner will cool my house better.

FACT: A smaller air conditioner that runs for a slightly longer period is actually more efficient than a larger unit that

cools the house with short bursts. Have an air-conditioning professional determine the best size unit for your home.

FICTION: Using an old refrigerator or freezer as a spare is economical.

FACT: Old refrigerators and freezers are usually less efficient than newer models and keeping the appliance can seriously ding your wallet. Consider using a cooler instead when you occasionally need additional cool storage.

FICTION: Duct work should be sealed with duct tape.

FACT: Duct tape is really not the best tool for the job because poor surface preparation and dusty environments often cause it to fall off. The tape also is not as durable as the preferred sealants: mastic or metal tape.

FICTION: Ceiling fans only save energy during warm weather.

FACT: When on the right setting, circulating air with ceiling fans saves money in all seasons. In summer, change the rotation of the blades to direct air down, making the room feel up to four 4 degrees cooler. In winter, direct air upward.

FICTION: Setting the thermostat to a cooler temperature than ultimately needed will make the house cool faster.

FACT: An air conditioner runs at the same rate until it reaches the thermostat setting. If you set it to a low temperature, you might forget to put it back to normal and use more energy than necessary.

FICTION: Washing clothes in hot water is necessary to clean them.

FACT: While warm water might be necessary to remove oil, dirt or infectious germs, doing laundry with cold water is sufficient for most washes. Heating water consumes the majority of the energy used to do laundry.



Together We Save

Did you know, replacing a single incandescent bulb with a compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) saves energy, money AND helps the environment?

Again this year, Medina EC is celebrating National Energy Awareness Month by giving away CFLs and helping save you money!

COUPON FOR THREE FREE CFL LIGHT BULBS



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Bring this coupon to any Medina EC district office to receive your free CFLs!

(While supplies last.)

*Don't forget to bring your used residential CFLs anytime to any one of our districts offices and we'll see that they're safely recycled!