

# Along these **LINES**

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021



## Big Business

Agriculture and horticulture critical contributors to Louisiana's economy.

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Derek Luckett, left, and children Dalton and Maycee, pick watermelons at the family-owned farm in Central and Pride.

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# DEMCO's Berthelot Elected to NRECA Board



**Danny Berthelot**

The Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives held its annual meeting in Baton Rouge in July. Speakers during the multiday event included Jim Matheson, National Rural Electric Cooperative

Association CEO; Craig Greene, Louisiana Public Service commissioner and chairperson; and David Wasserman, U.S. House editor and senior election analyst for The Cook Political Report.

Attendees also received industry updates and best practices advice from the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp. and CoBank, Pioneer Utility Resources print and digital communications, Louisiana Department of Transportation, Federated Rural Insurance Exchange, Touchstone Energy, and NRECA's Action Committee for Rural Electrification and Young Adult Member Engagement initiatives.

Reappointed by their respective cooperatives to serve three-year terms as ALEC directors were Teddy Welch, BECi; Mark Brown, Claiborne; Roger Dale DeHart,

SLECA; and Dennis Glass, WSTE. The board also elected 2021-2022 officers: President J.R. Hickman, BECi; Vice President Glass, WSTE; and Secretary/Treasurer Michael Heinen, JDEC.

Danny Berthelot (DEMCO/ALEC) was elected to serve as the Louisiana director to the NRECA board. He begins his first two-year term in March 2022.

Berthelot was elected to the DEMCO board in 1989. He serves as board president and on all DEMCO committees; the DEMCO Foundation Board of Directors; and the DEMCO Energy Services Board of Directors. He earned NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and Board Director Gold certifications.

Berthelot has served on the ALEC Board of Directors since 2005 and is on the Executive, Finance, Policy and Member Engagement committees. In the past, he served on the Safety and Loss Control Committee, was vice president of the ALEC board from 2006-2008 and was president from 2008-2010.

NRECA is the Arlington, Virginia-based trade association that represents more than 900 cooperatives and 42 million members across the country, as well

as public power districts and public utility districts. The board is composed of one representative from each of the 48 states served by electric cooperatives.

"I am honored that my colleagues elected me to represent their best interests on the NRECA board and to champion matters that bring value to our distribution cooperatives," Berthelot said. "I promise to work diligently on their behalf by ensuring that our national organization keeps the members we serve and our electric cooperatives as their top priority during these very tumultuous and evolving times in the electric utility industry. I look forward to the opportunity to work with cooperative leaders from across the country to advance the cooperative business model and position cooperatives to continue their successful efforts to provide reliable, affordable and safe electric service."

NRECA directors serve a critical role in the cooperative network. They are responsible for setting the strategic course for the association, which is considered one of the most influential organizations in the federal policy arena because of its not-for-profit status and its success supporting initiatives in the best interests of cooperative members, regardless of partisanship. ■

## Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Inc.

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#### CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

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#### DIRECTOR OF LOSS CONTROL

Aarron Graham

#### SAFETY COORDINATOR

Derek Seal

#### DIR. OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Addie Armato

#### CREDIT UNION

Robin Plunket, manager

Jody Overhultz, representative

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**Vice President** Dennis Glass

**Secretary/Treasurer** Michael Heinen



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J.R. Hickman

Teddy Welch

#### Claiborne Electric Cooperative Inc.

Mark Brown

Lane Davidson

#### DEMCO

Daniel Berthelot

Richard "Dickie" Sitman

#### Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative Inc.

Michael Heinen

Kirk Weldon

#### South Louisiana Electric Co-op Association

Brian Rivet

Roger Dale DeHart

#### Washington-St. Tammany Electric Co-op Inc.

Joe Jarrell

Dennis Glass

### Associate Member

#### Panola-Harrison Electric Cooperative Inc.



## Ag and Horticulture Are Big Business

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**Mission**

DEMCO is focused on enhancing the quality of life for members by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy services.

**Volume 36, Issue 5**

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# Manager's Report

Randy Pierce  
CEO & General Manager



As the CEO and general manager of DEMCO, it is my job to lead by example. One of our core values is to earn and preserve the trust of our membership through transparent business and operational practices.

In January 2021, I began writing an email to the membership to provide information about the co-op directly from me to you. In August, I shared information about the high cost per kilowatt-hour of electricity for the next couple of months. Even though DEMCO's distribution costs are virtually the same from month to month, the cost per kWh has increased solely due to power generation decisions made by our major wholesale power supplier, CLECO Power. Wholesale power—which is 60% to 65% of your electric bill—is a cost that fluctuates each month and is passed through to our members from CLECO Power.

Though we do not have control over CLECO's operational decisions, know that DEMCO is well into negotiations for a new wholesale power contract, which will take effect in early 2024. A new power supply contract and wholesale power portfolio will give DEMCO the flexibility and competitive pricing to provide service to members at the lowest cost possible.

I know high energy bills can impact your overall budget, and the effects can be overwhelming. Many members may not realize this, but in 1997 DEMCO established the DEMCO Foundation nonprofit charitable organization to help members in times of need. Funded through the Operation Roundup program, DEMCO members are eligible to apply for funding up to \$2,500 per calendar year. Although funds may not be used to pay your electric bill, funds may be allocated to support expenses such as rent or mortgage assistance, repairs and maintenance on your home, pharmacy and medical supplies, and school uniforms. To learn more or apply for assistance, visit [www.DEMCO.org/community/DEMCO-Foundation](http://www.DEMCO.org/community/DEMCO-Foundation) or call 225-262-2141.

In this issue, learn about peak energy demand times and energy-saving tips to help lower use and reduce your bill. Also, if you have been a DEMCO member for twelve months or more, you may enroll in levelized billing to help you avoid seasonal spikes in your bill. Stories on page 5.

If you live in a manufactured home, learn how to perform an energy-efficiency checkup to help you improve comfort and, most importantly, save you money on your electric bill. All homeowners can benefit from many of the tips provided. Story on page 17.

I'm proud to report DEMCO passed the inspection performed by Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program auditors in July 2021. Safety is a core value that guides how we work every day. Story on page 20.

I encourage you to take time to read page 21, to learn more about key factors that influence the price of electricity. Although DEMCO rates have not changed, other elements do impact your bill.



# Electricity Powers Quality of Life

Most of us use electricity—either directly or indirectly—at almost all times. Because it is so abundant and available with the simple flip of a switch, it is easy to take for granted.

According to the Energy Information Administration, the typical U.S. household uses more air conditioning, appliances and consumer electronics than ever before. The average home also contains 10 or more internet-connected devices.

Considering everything powered by electricity, it's no wonder we occasionally might wince at our monthly bills. But keep in mind, it is no longer just "the light bill."

Electricity powers our quality of life.

From the infrastructure of your home—appliances, water heater and HVAC system—to charging smartphones, computers, TV and the Wi-Fi router, your energy bill covers so much more than lighting. (Account No. 108583)

Today, there is more demand for electricity than ever before. At home, in schools and businesses, and commercial sectors such as transportation, the need for electricity is increasing.

When the cost of electricity goes up, you can make significant changes to save

money on your electric bill.

Not only can you reduce energy use overall, but you can reduce use during peak demand times. When electricity consumption is at its highest, there is greater demand for kilowatt-hours from our wholesale power provider. To cut down on peak demand and save money on your electric bill, try to identify when you use the most power each day and try to reduce using power during those times—typically early morning and early evening.

Use LED bulbs and energy-efficient appliances. Run large appliances—such as dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers—during mid-morning or overnight hours. Properly seal your attic ductwork, doors and windows. Service your HVAC system regularly. Check for governmental incentives and rebate programs for appliances to help you improve energy efficiency.

Whether it's the summer months when demand is high for air conditioning or winter when people crank up the heat, attention to these tips can help you reduce use and lower your bill.

We care about you, the members we serve, and understand electricity is more than a commodity—it's a necessity. ■

**Change Habits to BEAT THE PEAK**  
You can beat the peak (and save money!) by decreasing your power use when energy demand and prices are at their highest. Here are a few tips to help you get started:

**Laundry for Less:** Full loads mean fewer cycles, and washers and dryers run in the late evenings add less heat and humidity to the home. Energy can cost less outside of peak hours.

**Cool Off/Calm Down:** Turn off unnecessary lighting and electronics that generate heat, resist the urge to turn down the thermostat and remember, lower fan settings use less energy.

**Intramural Competition:** Online gaming with each active player using their own computer, display, gaming console and internet connection gets pricey. Play each other at home on one screen and save.

**Countertop Convenience:** Range or oven cooking can really warm up a kitchen. Microwaves, convection ovens, induction cooktops, Crock-Pot® and toaster ovens put more cooking heat where you need it.

For more energy-saving tips, visit [www.demco.org/member-services/save-energy](http://www.demco.org/member-services/save-energy).

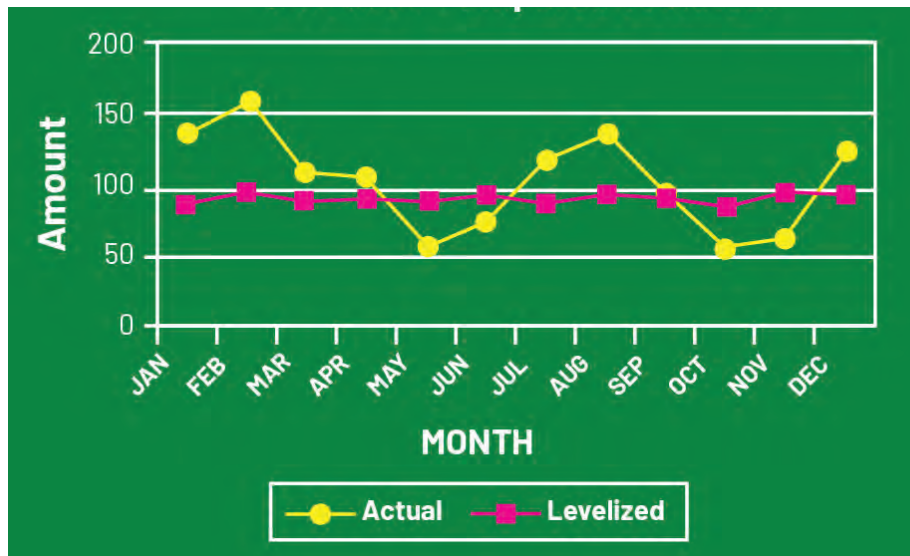
## Avoid Surprises With Levelized Billing

By Galen Dunbar, DEMCO Member Services Manager

Want to manage seasonal variations in your electric bill? Enroll in the Levelized Billing program, which uses a rolling 12-month average to level out your amount due.



This is a great way to avoid spikes in your monthly bill and help manage your budget. For more information or to enroll, log in to your MyDEMCO account. Click on the green tab "Billing & Payments" and select "Levelized Billing."



## Lucky Account Contest

Four lucky co-op members have a chance to win \$25! Your account number is listed on your mailing label, but to win you must also find it in the pages of the magazine. To claim your prize, call 225-262-2160. **Beginning in 2022, this contest will be replaced with the 'Auto Pay Program' \$50 contest. Sign up to pay by credit/debit card, bank draft or e-check to be eligible to win!**

# Annual Meeting Reflections

The Louisiana Member Services Association and ALEC recognized cooperative employees and their families for the volunteer work they do in their communities. This year's individual award recipients were Laci and Nicholas Lemieux, center, wife and son of JDEC Line Superintendent Heath Lemieux. The Lemieux family collected donations during Hurricanes Laura and Delta for line crews that were having a hard time finding toiletries and basic-needs items. They collected enough supplies to last crews throughout the entire recovery period and donated the items to the Red Cross. Making the presentation were ALEC's Jeff Arnold, left, DEMCO's Toni Johnson and ALEC's Addie Armato.



The Louisiana Member Services Association and ALEC recognized cooperatives for the volunteer work they do in their communities. This year's cooperative award recipient was DEMCO for its COVID-19 pandemic projects. Accepting the award on behalf of DEMCO were Anne Hawes, CEO Randy Pierce and Toni Johnson. Flanking them are ALEC's Jeff Arnold and Addie Armato. Employees got creative, finding ways to continue to recognize and support their community during the pandemic. DEMCO recognized the senior class of 2020 with billboards and signage, provided masks and warm meals to local medical teams and hospitals, bought gift cards from local grocery stores and restaurants, delivered thank-you cards and gift cards to nursing homes, made care packages for teachers and school administrators, and provided gift baskets for local fire departments.





President J.R. Hickman, second from right, presents a plaque to DEMCO Director Leslie Falks in recognition of his service on the ALEC Board of Directors. At left is Leslie's wife, Juanita. At right is ALEC's Jeff Arnold.



Don Andrews, left, CEO of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp., presents Addie Armato and Michael Heinen, NRUCFC director and Jeff Davis Electric general manager, with grants to fund ALEC's Louisiana Youth Tour and Leadership Conference.



Ken Gadjos presents Addie Armato with the CoBank Sharing Success grant check for the Cooperative Enterprise Teen Leadership Conference sponsored by ALEC and the Louisiana Council of Farmer Cooperatives. ALEC will match the \$5,000 grant.



ALTEC's Ed Amedee, ALTEC Capital's Jennifer Black, and Osmost's Spencer Loe present scholarships to three graduating seniors whose parents live or own businesses on ALEC member cooperative power lines.



Jeff Arnold, left, and Addie Armato join SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli, right, in presenting 2020-2021 Youth Leadership Council Delegate Thomas Massey with the Sandy Stockwell Youth Leadership Council Scholarship, valued at \$2,000.



SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli, center, accepts the Torch Award as the sponsoring cooperative for this year's Youth Leadership Council delegate.

# Electric Farm Equipment Trend to Watch

By Maria Kanevsky

Our nation's farmers have worked for generations in fields across the country. They have seen firsthand how farming equipment has improved to increase efficiency and to feed an ever-growing population.

A major change on the horizon for farming is switching from fossil fuel-powered equipment to electric.

This trend builds on the idea of beneficial electrification, where switching to an electric end-use technology satisfies at least one of the following conditions without adversely affecting the others: saving consumers money over time, benefiting the environment, improving product quality or consumer quality of life, and fostering a more robust and resilient grid. (Account No. 162225)

The most common form of electrification for farms has been electric irrigation pumping systems. Irrigation systems are crucial for farmers and can make or break the crop yield for the entire year.

Water heaters are the second most-used form of electric technology on farms. They are used for a variety of purposes, including dairy farm processing, sterilizing equipment and general cleaning.

Choosing an electric water heater for the right application depends on efficiency, size, recovery speed and peak temperature.

There are many benefits of replacing diesel motors with electric motors. Highly efficient electric motors can operate at 90% efficiency, while by comparison, diesel motors operate at 30% to 40% efficiency. Increased efficiency provides cost savings over time.

Farmers simply plug in the electric equipment without needing to refill a diesel tank. One of the greatest benefits of

electric motors is they do not emit fumes, which means farmers breathe in cleaner air around them.

Electric motors are cleaner, quieter and easier to maintain.

Some farmers are switching to electric tractors as John Deere, AgCo and other companies perfect electric models. Electric tractors are more efficient, quieter and better for the environment than conventional diesel tractors, but they lack the battery power many farmers need for a long day working in the fields.

By far, the largest barrier to converting to electric technologies is cost: both the price of the electric technology and the wiring to connect it to the entire farm.

Even with savings on fuel costs over time, farmers may be reluctant to replace their farming equipment because of high initial costs. However, federal and local government programs can help lessen the upfront costs for farmers.

Local electric cooperatives also can help farmers with energy audits, identifying energy-efficiency opportunities, or applying for funding from federal programs, such as the Rural Energy Savings Program or the Rural Business Development Grants.

Other electric farming technologies—such as grain dryers, thermal electric storage systems and heat pumps—are in the early stages of commercialization.

Implementation of these technologies will depend on the type of farm, electricity versus fossil fuel prices and incentives that decrease upfront costs for buying new equipment.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for expansion—especially for electric farm vehicles.

Given more time and investment, watch for use of electric farming equipment to become more widespread. ■

## Harvest Safety Tips For Farmworkers

- **Maintain a 10-foot clearance** around all utility equipment in all directions.
- **Use a spotter and deployed flags** to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.
- **If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately** by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is deenergized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab—without touching it at the same time—and hop away to safety.
- **Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle.** Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Source: Safe Electricity



## From the Cover

DEMCO member Lockett Farms is a family-owned farm and located in Central and Pride, Louisiana. Derek and Kacie Lockett sell homegrown seasonal vegetables through a community supported agriculture program. Members pay for a share of vegetables grown by the farmer, available to residents of Baton Rouge, Baker, Denham Springs, Central, Greenwell Springs, Prairieville, Pride, Slaughter and Zachary. To learn more visit [www.LockettFarms.com](http://www.LockettFarms.com).



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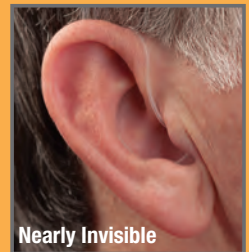
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# TIME FOR *Tailgating*



## Simple Hot Dog Chili

1 pound ground beef

½ cup ketchup

1 tablespoon chili powder

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon salt

Add ground beef to a skillet and mash with a fork. Add just enough water to cover ground beef. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil while continuing to break up ground beef to a finer texture. Simmer until chili is thickened to your liking. Serve over hot dogs.

### Watermelon and Cucumber Salad

- 6 cups watermelon, chopped
- 2 cucumbers, seeded and chopped
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¼ cup sliced red onion
- Juice of ½ lime
- 4 leaves of basil, chopped
- Salt, to taste
- Balsamic glaze

In a large bowl, toss together the watermelon, cucumbers, feta cheese and onion. Sprinkle with lime juice and basil. Season with salt. Stir well to coat. When ready to serve, drizzle with balsamic glaze.

### Coleslaw

- 1 head green cabbage, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ⅛ teaspoon onion powder
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

In a large bowl, mix together mayo, sugar, vinegar, mustard, garlic powder and onion powder. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Toss dressing mixture with chopped cabbage and onion. Cover and chill at least one hour.

### Wax Bean Salad

- 1 pound fresh wax beans, trimmed
- 1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
- 15-ounce can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup yellow onion, thinly sliced
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Place the wax beans and green beans in the pot. Cover with a lid. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes or until they reach the desired tenderness. Drain and rinse beans with cool water. Pat dry.

In a small bowl, combine vinegar, sugar, olive oil, salt and pepper. Whisk together.

In a large bowl, combine the wax beans, green beans, kidney beans and onion. Pour the dressing over the mixture and toss. Cover and chill.

Note: Canned green beans and wax beans may be substituted, but don't cook them.

### Baked Beans on the Grill

- 16-ounce can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 15.8-ounce can Northern white beans, drained and rinsed
- 28-ounce can barbecue baked beans
- ⅓ cup barbecue sauce
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Heat grill to 350 F.

Combine all ingredients in an 8-by 8-inch disposable pan. Cover with tin foil. Place on grill for 20 minutes or until heated through.

### Cowboy Caviar

- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ¼ cup lime juice
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 pound cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 15-ounce can black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 15-ounce can sweet corn, drained
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and diced
- 1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped

In a large bowl, whisk together the olive oil, sugar, lime juice, chili powder and salt.

Add tomatoes, black-eyed peas, beans, corn, red onion, bell peppers and jalapeno. Stir to combine.

Stir in cilantro. Cover and chill until serving time. Serve with tortilla chips.

### Grape Salad Dessert

- 2 pounds green seedless grapes
- 2 pounds red seedless grapes
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup candied pecans
- 8 ounces whipped topping

Rinse grapes and pat dry. In a large bowl, mix sour cream, brown sugar and vanilla. Add grapes to the mixture and stir thoroughly to coat. Add candied nuts and whipped topping. Sprinkle a little brown sugar and nuts on top. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Recipes by Gertrude Treadaway  
PHOTO BY KATIE WILCOX

# Big Business

Agriculture and horticulture critical contributors to Louisiana's economy

By Pamela A. Keene

Louisiana is an agricultural state. Farms, forests, livestock and marine resources combined put agriculture and horticulture as the third-highest economic driver in the state behind oil and natural gas.

With an estimated annual economic value between \$10 billion and \$12 billion, averaged over the past five years, commercial agriculture helps drive Louisiana's economy.

Two major hurricanes in 2020 and a late-season 2021 spring freeze caused infrastructure damage to barns, grain bins and poultry houses, reducing production. However, the state's generally mild climate makes it ideal for in-demand products: rice in the southwest; sugar cane in the southeast; cotton, corn and soybeans in the northeast; and poultry and beef in the northwest.

Forestry ranks No. 1 for economic



The southwest part of the state continues to be a big producer of rice. PHOTO COURTESY OF LSU AGCENTER

## Getting Localized Information

As one of Louisiana's three land grant universities, Louisiana State University oversees a network of extension agents, research scientists and 4-H agents who serve the state's 64 parishes under the umbrella of the LSU AgCenter.

Extension and research personnel in each of Louisiana's five regions are educated in region-specific topics in animal husbandry, forestry and wildlife, fisheries, agriculture and horticulture. They offer their services and knowledge at no charge.

For more gardening advice, plant lists and seasonal information, visit [lsuagcenter.com](http://lsuagcenter.com).

impact from plant products, with more than 13.9 million acres in forests, but storms have negatively affected this industry. Its value is more than \$3.6 billion.

"Agriculture and agribusiness are in the top five industries in the state," says Carol Pinnell-Alison, LSU AgCenter's county agent for Franklin Parish. "When we look at planted acres, soybeans in 2019 accounted for 1.1 million. Corn, the next-highest commodity, was reported to have 600,000 acres planted that year."

Carol says the number of acres planted does not directly equate to the overall final crop value. As prices and demand change, so does the number of acres planted. Additionally, acres harvested can change after crops have been planted.

The market price paid for a crop commodity also may vary during a growing season. The yield at harvest may be affected by good or bad weather conditions or pest problems. Producers are paid at harvest for the bushels or pounds-per-acre harvested.

"It's not unusual for the amount of yield



Cotton is one of the largest commercial crops in Louisiana. PHOTO COURTESY OF LSU AGCENTER

to be lower because of storm damage, unpredictable weather conditions or even a drop in the demand for certain commodities," Carol says. "Farmers may face increasing expenses regardless of the amount of their yield at harvest. Production costs for fertilizer, pest control chemicals, labor and equipment repair may fluctuate. Farming is a complex business."

The farms of today differ from the small, single-family farms of 100 or more years ago.

"Today, we have many fewer individual farmers, but the acreage of family farms has increased," Carol says. "Mechanization has allowed farmers with fewer employees to increase the number of acres farmed by decreasing the time needed to plant, control pests and harvest."

"Farmers today may not own all the land they farm. They rent land as a cash or



# Home Gardeners: It's Time to Bring On the Greens

By Pamela A. Keene

As the summer heat eases, it is time to plant fall crops in the home garden. From collards and mustards to snap beans and cabbage, fall vegetable gardening in Louisiana is all about the greens.

“Northern and central regions of Louisiana are in USDA Hardiness Zones 8a and 8b, while southern Louisiana is in Zone 9a,” says Kerry Heafner, LSU AgCenter horticulturist and Northeast Region Master Gardener coordinator. “That means pretty smooth sailing for most crops because the average first frost date for our area is mid-November and even later for southern Louisiana.”

Kerry suggests planting seeds of beets, carrots and English peas directly in the ground in September. Lettuces can also be direct sowed as well.

“With cabbages, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and other cole crops that grow better in cooler weather, purchase seedlings to plant around the same time,” he says. “If you start soon enough, you may be able to harvest a second crop of cucumbers or squash.”

He suggests regularly checking your food garden for signs of pests. Armyworms can be especially troubling on tender new growth. They are the larvae stage of moths that eat all kinds of vegetable plant leaves and quickly devastate plants.

“The best way to get rid of them is early detection, then manually removing them from the plants,” Kerry says. “If you want to use an insecticide, start with early applications of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), available at garden centers that sell natural or organic pesticides.”

Consider planting annuals in your landscape for cool-season color.

“Snapdragons, late-season petunias and marigolds can be planted in the early fall,” Kerry says. “They can get a good start and continue to grow throughout the winter.”

*Continues on page 14*

### Facts About Agriculture in Louisiana

- ▶ Crops such as sugar cane, sweet potatoes, rice, soybeans, corn and cotton account for 60% of the state's agricultural revenues.
- ▶ Livestock, cattle, calves and poultry comprise 40% of ag-related revenues. Poultry is the largest animal ag industry in the state at \$2 billion.
- ▶ Commercial fishing contributes more than \$330 million, including shrimp, catfish, crawfish and oysters.
- ▶ Louisiana provides 25% of all the seafood eaten in the United States.
- ▶ More than 850 million pounds of seafood is produced in the state.

*Sources: Office of the Governor, Louisiana Economic Development, WorldAtlas.com*

a shared lease, adding to their production costs. The landowner may be a local person or an individual who owns the land as an investment.”

Carol says local farmers' agribusiness suppliers are not the only businesses that benefit from farming.

“In addition to the obvious expenditures, farmers spend money for mortgages, groceries, utilities, gasoline and other expenses,” she says. “Especially in smaller, less populated areas, agriculture may be the only industry to support the community.” ■

## Bring On the Greens

*Continued from page 13*

Ornamental kales and cabbages with colorful foliage can be planted in September and October, and provide a nice balance for flowering annuals.

He suggests checking the Louisiana Super Plants, including the Sorbet series of violas—smaller cousins of pansies. Developed and tested at the LSU Research Station in Hammond, the Sorbet series is one of dozens of annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees created especially for Louisiana growing conditions.

“The research station’s website groups Super Plants by bedding plants for warm and cool growing seasons,” Kerry says. “It also lists plants that have been developed for the past dozen years, including the Penny Mac hydrangea, Leslie Ann camellia and American beautyberry.”

Autumn is also the time to order spring-flowering bulbs—such as grape hyacinth, crocus, anemone and scilla—which can be planted as soon as they are shipped. Turn the soil to loosen and add organic matter to the planting area to prepare the beds for when the bulbs arrive.

Consider adding larger elements to your landscape from late October through the end of December. Turn to area nurseries and box retailers for



**Lettuce planting dates range from mid-August through mid-October in south Louisiana and from mid-August through late September in north Louisiana.** PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXABAY

native plants, shrubs and trees that will add interest to your yard, and provide food and shelter for wildlife.

“Fall is the ideal time to add larger trees and shrubs, particularly natives, to your landscape,” Kerry says. “As the weather cools a bit and many plants start to go dormant, they’ll have a chance to develop

their root system without the stress of our hot springs and summers.

“Be sure to water them well through the fall and winter, and by the time spring comes again, they’ll have a head start on becoming established to better handle the higher temperatures and humidity that we can expect in the spring and summer.” ■

## First Things First: Do a Soil Test

Are your plants getting the proper diet to be the best they can be? Maybe it is time for a soil test from your local extension office. You will end up with a wealth of knowledge about what fertilizers to use, how to amend your soil, and whether your plants are getting the nutrients they need to be healthy and prolific.

Fall is an excellent time to do a soil test because many of your other garden chores are slowing down. Pick up soil-test kits at your local LSU AgCenter. Some local nurseries and garden centers also have them.

Kits are \$10 each, plus \$5 for prepaid postage. Pick up a kit for each general area you want to test. Here is how it works:

- ▶ Select areas you would like to test—say for vegetable plantings, fruit trees, annuals or shrubs. Take a sample from the area by scraping off mulch, grass or weeds, then digging your shovel straight down about 4 inches into the ground. Put the soil into a bucket.
- ▶ Repeat this vertical sample process at least four to six times—and up



PHOTO COURTESY OF LSU AGCENTER

to 10 times—in the same general area.

▶ Mix the samples in the bucket well, then remove approximately one cup of soil, placing it in a clean plastic bag or directly into the pre-labeled box. Label each bag with the type of plants you plan to grow. This is important.

▶ Repeat in other planting areas, such as lawns, flower beds or vegetable gardens, keeping the samples separate. Different

plants require different nutrients and soil acidity to flourish, so it is important to know how to prepare your soil before you plant.

- ▶ By testing your soil before you plant and amending it according to the recommendations, you are setting the stage for success. If the soil is suitable, you have a much better chance of getting your garden to grow.
- ▶ About three weeks after submitting your sample, you will receive a detailed report that tells you the current condition of your soil, its pH and precisely what you need to amend it for your plants.

A soil test is an inexpensive way to start your home gardening journey with a leg up. For more information, contact your local LSU AgCenter at [www.lsuagcenter.com/soiltest](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/soiltest).



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# The Biggest Event In Silver Dollar History!

The American Silver Eagle has been the most popular silver coin *on the planet* since its introduction in 1986. Its beautiful, iconic design inspires collectors, and investors love it because it's struck in one full ounce of 99.9% fine silver, and guaranteed for weight and fineness by the U.S. Government. Now in 2021, for the first time ever, the coin's design is changing.

## The Most Important Coins in the Modern Era

When President Ronald Reagan signed the Liberty Coin Act into law, he didn't know American Eagles would have the impact they've had, year after year. The coins were so popular that between 1986 and 2020, over 535 million were struck. That's more than HALF A BILLION coins, easily making Silver Eagles the most bought coins in the world. Hugely popular now, Silver Eagles may soon become even more popular!

## Collectors Crave Firsts

Collectors covet coins with Key Dates. Key Dates mark significance in a coin's history...firsts, lasts, lowest mintage,

new finishes and new designs. Now, for the first time in over three-and-a-half decades, the Silver Eagle is getting a new design, leading to a historic "first" unlike anything we've seen. The iconic Heraldic Eagle reverse is being replaced by a beautiful new "Eagle Landing" design. This is arguably a bigger deal than even the actual introduction of the coin because there's so much more interest now than in 1986, with investors and collectors!

## If You Knew Then What You Know Now...

If you'd had a crystal ball in 1986, you undoubtedly would have grabbed every Silver Eagle you could get. Those coins in uncirculated condition continue to be sought-after. Now you're getting another chance to land a big Silver Eagle first, a Key Date. Additionally, since these newly designed Silver Eagles are only being released during the second half of 2021, it's quite possible this will be one of the lowest mintages we've seen. That's significant because it could make 2021 a DOUBLE Key Date, with both a new design and a low mintage. Demand for these coins is already sky-high, but if that

happens, watch out! No one can predict the future value of silver, but many Americans are rushing to stock up, for themselves, and their loved ones.

## Don't Wait, Order Now! Buy More and Save!

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To save money on your energy bill, add skirting around your manufactured home. PHOTO COURTESY OF WINFIELD SUPPLY

## Give Your Manufactured Home an Energy-Efficiency Checkup

### Tip-Offs to Problems

Your manufactured home may be a good candidate for some energy-efficiency improvements if:

- ▶ It was built before 1994 and especially 1976, when there were no construction standards.
- ▶ You feel drafts on windy days.
- ▶ The air near the floor is noticeably cooler than the air closer to the ceiling.
- ▶ You have trouble keeping your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

Improving your home's energy efficiency is important, regardless of the type of home you own. For manufactured homeowners, tackle these efficiency measures to improve comfort and save money.

- Replace the electric furnace with a high-efficiency heat pump. Of all energy-efficiency upgrades, this will give you the greatest return on your investment.
- Caulk around windows and replace weatherstripping to help keep Mother Nature out and conditioned air in.
- Replace door weatherstripping and install a door sweep. Poor-fitting weatherstripping allows for significant air leakage. A door sweep or draft snake at the bottom of exterior doors helps stop drafts.
- Add skirting around the base of the home.
- Inspect the underbelly. Repair or replace damaged or missing insulation, which protects your ductwork and helps seal your home.
- Check your ductwork. It carries heated and cooled air from the unit to the vents. Cracks in seams cause this air to leak out, costing you money. If your ducts are exposed, use duct mastic to seal ductwork and keep conditioned air where it belongs.
- Remove window air conditioners in the winter. Air leakage occurs through and around the unit. An alternative is to install a specially designed cover on the interior and exterior of the window unit.
- Add a cool roof coating to reflect up to 85% of sunlight, lower the indoor temperature and reduce air-conditioning costs. White or light-colored coatings can be applied by roller or brush. (Account No. 229049)
- Install LED bulbs, which use much less energy and last eight to 10 times longer than traditional bulbs. But remember: Even though LED bulbs use less energy, turn them off when not needed to save money. ■

### Bank Draft Drawing Winners

DEMCO members who pay their bill by bank draft are eligible to win a \$50 gift card. Winning account numbers are published in each issue of Along these LINES. It's easy to be eligible to win. Sign up for bank draft at DEMCO.org or call 1-844-MyDEMCO.

Congratulations to these winners: Account numbers 372803, 340031, 191180 and 180964.

**Beginning in 2022, this contest will be replaced with the 'Auto Pay Program' \$50 contest. Sign up to pay by credit/debit card, bank draft or e-check to be eligible to win!**

# Seniors born before 1956 get big boost

SLEEK NEW MEDICAL ALERT DEVICE IS FLYING OUT THE DOOR

COMES WITH NO CONTRACTS, NO DEPOSITS AND NO MONTHLY BILLS



Seniors get new medical alert device that instantly connects to free unlimited nationwide help with just the push of a button

Seniors born before 1956 get new medical alert device

Instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever

Comes with new cellular embedded technology that works at home or anywhere you go so you are never alone

All seniors born before 1956 are getting an instant \$150 rebate making this deal just too good to pass up

Nothing to hook up. You don't need a land line or cell phone. It's ready to use right out of the box

Sleek new modern design makes you look important not old

Special Report:  
Demand for new Medical Alert Device soars

The phone lines are ringing off the hook.

That's because for seniors born before 1956, it's a deal too good to pass up.

Starting at precisely 8:30 am this morning the Pre-Store Release begins for the sleek new medical alert device that comes with the exclusive FastHelp™ One-Touch E 911 Button that instantly connects you to unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

"It's not like old style monitored help buttons that make you talk to a call center, only work when you're at home and come with hefty bills every month. FastHelp comes with state-of-the-art cellular embedded technology. That means it works at home or anywhere, anytime

cell service is available whether you're out watering the garden, driving in a car, at church or even hundreds of miles away on a tour or at a casino. You are never alone. With just a single push of the One-Touch E Button you instantly get connected to free unlimited help nationwide with no monthly bills ever," said Jack Lawrence, Executive Director of Product Development for U.S. based Universal Physicians.

"We've never seen anything like it. Consumers absolutely love the sleek new modern design and most of all, the instant rebate that practically pays for it and no monthly bills ever," Lawrence said.

FastHelp is the sleek new medical alert device with the best of combinations: a quality, high-tech engineered device that's also an extremely great value because there are no monthly bills ever. ■

## Doctor urges seniors to get new medical alert device

Seniors snap up new medical alert device that comes with no monthly bills

People don't always do what their doctor says, but when seasoned veteran emergency room physician, Dr. Philip B. Howren says every senior should have a medical alert device, you better listen up.

"Seniors are just one fall away from being put in a nursing home," Dr. Howren said. "With a medical alert device, seniors are never alone. So it keeps them living independently in their own home. That's why seniors and their family members are snapping up a sleek new



"FastHelp™" and it instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

"This slick new little device is designed to look like the pagers doctors wear every day. Seniors love them, because it actually makes them look important, not old," Dr. Howren said.

FastHelp is expected to hit store shelves later this year. But special newspaper promotional giveaways are slated for seniors in select areas that call 1-800-275-0444 Ext. HELP3225. ■

medical alert device that comes with no monthly bills ever," he said.

Many seniors refuse to wear old style help buttons because they make them look old. But even worse, those medical alert systems come with monthly bills.

To solve these problems Universal Physicians, a U.S. company, went to work to develop a new, modern, state-of-the-art medical alert device. It's called

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

## No contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever

FastHelp is the only Medical Alert device that won't break the bank. That's because it comes with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever - which makes FastHelp a great choice for seniors, students and professionals because it connects to one of the largest nationwide networks everywhere cell service is available for free.

And here's the best part. All those who already have an old style monitored medical alert button can immediately eliminate those monthly bills, which is why Universal Physicians is widely advertising this announcement nationwide.

So if you've ever felt a medical alert device was too complicated or expensive, you'll want to get FastHelp, the

sleek new medical alert device with no monthly bills.

The medical alert device slugfest was dominated by two main combatants who both offer old style monitored help buttons that come with a hefty bill every month. But now Universal Physicians, the U.S. based heavyweight, just delivered a knock-out blow sending the top rated contenders to the mat with the unveiling of FastHelp. It's the sleek new cellular embedded medical alert device that cuts out the middleman by instantly connecting you directly to highly trained 911 operators all across the U.S. There's absolutely nothing to hook-up or install. You don't need a land line and you don't need a cell phone. Everything is done for you. ■

## The only device that makes you look important, not old

The problem with medical alert devices is, nobody wants to wear them because it makes them look old. Well, that's not the case with FastHelp. That's because it's the first state of the art medical alert device designed to make you look important, not old. Old style monitored help buttons you wear around your neck, or require expensive base station equipment or a landline are the equivalent of a horse and buggy, it's just outdated.

Millions of seniors fall every year and spend hours lying on the floor helpless and all alone with no help.

But seniors who fall and get immediate help are much more likely to avoid getting sent to a nursing home and get to STAY living

in their own home independently.

Yet millions of seniors are still risking their safety by not having a medical alert device. That's because seniors just can't afford to pay the monthly bills that come with old style medical alert devices.

That's why seniors born before 1956 are rushing to cash in the whopping \$150 instant rebate before the 7 day deadline ends.

So there's no need to wait for FastHelp to hit store shelves later this year because seniors born before 1956 can get it now just by using the \$150 instant rebate coupon printed in today's newspaper before the 7-day deadline ends. If lines are busy keep trying, all calls will be answered. ■

## Five Star Customer Reviews

See what actual customers are saying about FastHelp

### VERY IMPRESSED

"When I pressed the alert button, I got straight through to help and they answered me immediately. I live out in the country and my cell phone doesn't always get reception... that was not a problem with my FastHelp device."

- Walter, TN

### LIFESAVER

"When I got my FastHelp I never thought I'd have to use it, but when I fell and broke my hip it saved my life."

- Harold, OH

### Very appreciative of having FastHelp

"I did have an emergency. Help RESPONDED quickly and came in a few minutes."

- Irving, PA

### WE LOVE THE PRODUCT

"We bought it outright with no bills ever."

- Rosemary, NY

### Safe anywhere

"This little FastHelp device is my guardian angel. I'm so glad my daughter-in-law got it for me."

- Pete, FL

### Everyone should have it

"I've been telling everyone to get one. Thanks to the folks at FastHelp for taking good care of people when they need it."

- Mark, IA

### Love my unit and feel much safer

"I am a 68 year old recent widow. Standing on a chair to put my tree topper on this Christmas I thought 'What if I fell?' Saw your ad and ordered my FastHelp unit."

- Megan, CA

Unsolicited consumer feedback from satisfied customers as reported to Universal Physicians. Universal Physicians rated these customer reviews 5 stars

## HOW TO GET IT

### ► BORN BEFORE 1956:

Use the rebate coupon to the right and call this Toll-Free Hotline:  
1-800-275-0444  
EXT. HELP3225

### ► BORN AFTER 1956:

You cannot use the rebate coupon to the right and must pay \$299 Call:  
1-800-281-0344  
EXT. HELP3225

### BOTTOM LINE:

You don't need to shop around. We've done all the leg work, this deal is too good to pass up. FastHelp with the instant rebate is a real steal at just \$149 and shipping and there are no monthly bills ever.

**PROS:** It's the sleek new medical alert device that comes with the exclusive FastHelp One-Touch E 911 Button that instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts or deposits. It connects you to the vast available network of cellular towers for free and saves seniors a ton of money because there are no monthly bills ever making this deal irresistible. Plus it's the only medical alert device that makes seniors look important, not old.

**CONS:** Consumers can't get FastHelp in stores until later this year. That's why it's so important for seniors born before 1956 to call the National Rebate Center Hotline within the next 7 days. For those who miss that deadline, the sleek little medical alert device will set you back over \$300 bucks.

## REBATE COUPON

# VALID FOR USE



## 7 DAYS ONLY

Amount of Rebate (AOR) **1P**

# \$150.00 OFF



# 2Y

RE: HELP3225  
DLVY: ML2077R-1

1 OF 1

# Safety Is a Core Value at DEMCO

Every three years, DEMCO participates in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program—an initiative that promotes the highest safety standards among America's 900-plus electric cooperatives. Maintaining this level of safety achievement is part of the safety culture at DEMCO. (Account No. 340919)

The goal of RESAP is to preserve life and prevent injuries; establish electric utility safety and loss control standards, and recognize employees who work hard every day to maintain a safe working environment and complement our mission.

One RESAP program requirement is a surprise visit. In May, DEMCO welcomed RESAP inspectors, who proceeded to tour, inspect and review internal and field processes, practices, equipment and records during their visit.

DEMCO received a flag to acknowledge participation and achievement in the program.

"RESAP is a constant reminder every day to look out for each other and look out for the public," says Rickey Cummings, manager of safety loss



Rickey Cummings, left, and Jacob Overhultz with DEMCO's 2021 RESAP flag.

control. "We want to be sure every member of the co-op family returns safely home to their loved ones at the end of each day."

"This comprehensive evaluation program benchmarks areas of improvement while continually raising the bar

of safety standards each year," says Jacob Overhultz, safety coordinator.

"Safety is at the forefront of everything we do at DEMCO," Cummings says. "We are committed to the utmost standards of safety for our employees, our members and the communities we serve." ■

## DEMCO Announces New Youth Co-op Ambassador Program

By Chanon Martin, DEMCO Community Relations Specialist

DEMCO is accepting applications for its new Youth Cooperative Ambassador Program—an all-expense-paid leadership and educational program for ninth and tenth grade DEMCO member-students.

This program aims to foster positive ideas and values about cooperatives,

cooperative governance and the Seven Cooperative Principles. Workshops, seminars, peer group activities and a community service project help enhance leadership, problem-solving skills and interpersonal relationships.

Ambassadors will network with students from all seven parishes served by DEMCO: Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and West

Feliciana.

To qualify for consideration as an ambassador, a student's parent or guardian must be a DEMCO member.

Visit [www.DEMCO.org/Community](http://www.DEMCO.org/Community) for more information and to apply by October 15, 2021. ■



# Key Factors Influence Electricity Prices

**The cost to supply electricity varies minute to minute.** The wholesale price of electricity on the electric power grid reflects the real-time cost of supplying electricity. Demand for electricity contributes to the cost of supplying electricity. Electricity demand is usually highest in the afternoon and early evening (peak hours), so costs to provide electricity are generally higher at these times.

**Electricity prices are usually highest in the summer.** Changes in price generally reflect variations in electricity demand, availability of generation sources, fuel costs and power plant availability. Wholesale power costs are higher when generation sources are added to meet the increased demand.

**The cost of generating electricity is the largest component of electricity.** In 2020, the major components of the U.S. average price of electricity were generation (56%), distribution (31%) and transmission (13%). For DEMCO, wholesale power generation costs account for 60% to 65% of our cost.

**Many factors influence electricity prices.** Electricity prices generally reflect the cost of building, financing, maintaining, and operating power plants and the electricity

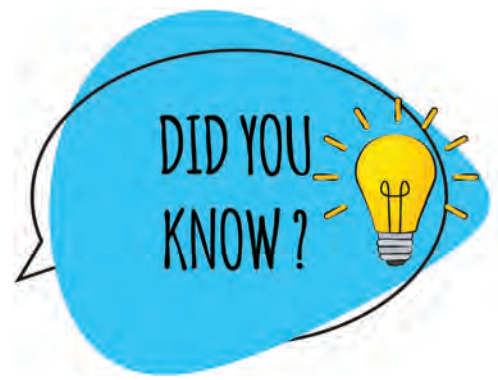
grid—the complex system of power transmission and distribution lines.

Several key factors influence the price of electricity:

- **Fuels:** Fuel prices, especially for natural gas and petroleum fuels, may increase during periods of high electricity demand and when there are fuel supply constraints or disruptions because of extreme weather events and accidental damage to transportation and delivery infrastructure. Higher fuel prices, in turn, may result in higher costs to generate electricity.

- **Power plant costs:** Each power plant has financing, construction, maintenance and operating costs. When consumer power demand is high, wholesale power costs increase—often high demand can lead to less supply. To meet the demand, power generation may depend on less efficient resources or plants, which can increase cost.

- **Transmission and distribution system:** The electricity transmission and distribution systems that connect power plants with consumers have construction, operation and maintenance costs, including repairing damage to the systems from accidents or



extreme weather events and improving cybersecurity.

- **Weather conditions:** Extreme temperatures can increase demand for heating and cooling, and the resulting increases in electricity demand can push up fuel and electricity prices.

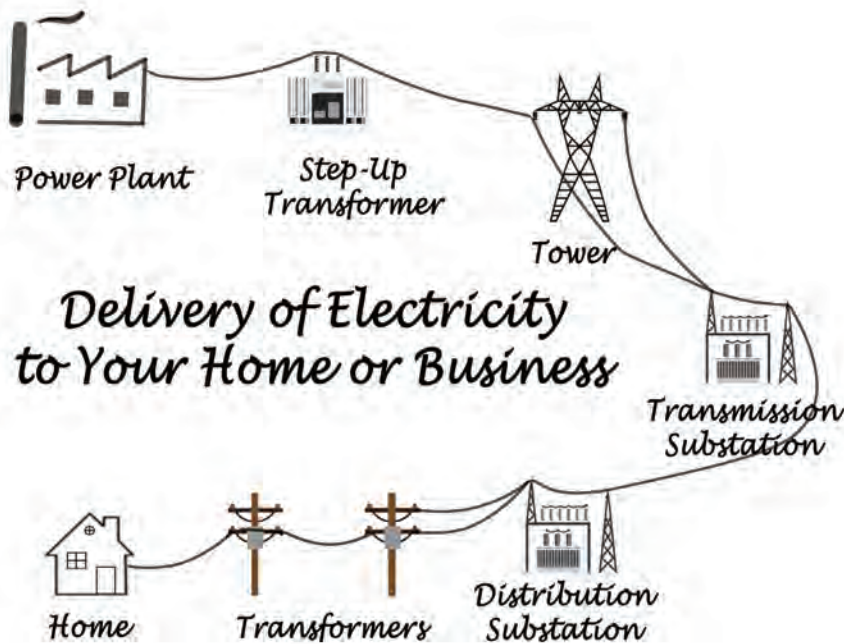
- **Regulations:** In some states, public service/utility commissions fully regulate prices, while other states have a combination of unregulated prices (for generators) and regulated prices (for transmission and distribution).

**Electricity is delivered to consumers through a complex network.** Electricity is generated at power plants and moves through a complex system—called the grid—of electricity substations, transformers and power lines that connect electricity producers and consumers. Most local grids are interconnected for reliability and commercial purposes, forming larger, more dependable networks that enhance the coordination and planning of electricity supply.

In the United States, the entire electricity grid consists of hundreds of thousands of miles of high-voltage power lines and millions of miles of low-voltage power lines with distribution transformers that connect thousands of power plants to hundreds of millions of electricity customers across the country.

The retail structure of the electricity industry varies. The company selling you power may be a not-for-profit municipal electric utility; an electric cooperative owned by its members; a private, for-profit electric utility owned by stockholders (often called an investor-owned utility); or in some states, you may purchase electricity through a power marketer.

DEMCO is a not-for-profit electric cooperative that purchases power from a wholesale power supplier, then distributes that power to our member-owners. ■





LEFT: Jeff Davis Electric accepts the new Superior Safety Award. RIGHT: Beauregard Electric accepts the Traveling Statewide Safety Award.

# Co-ops Celebrate Safety Achievements

Every year, the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Awards and Safety banquet culminates with recognition of the state's electric co-ops' safety achievements.

ALEC provides many services to member cooperatives, but one of the most touted is safety and training programs.

Cooperative employees work in a dangerous environment every day, sometimes in extreme weather conditions. ALEC's goal is to train them to do their jobs safely.

"These procedures we teach affect each cooperative's bottom line and, ultimately, each member's rates," said ALEC Director of Loss Control Aaron Graham. "Most importantly, it guarantees our employees go home to their families at the end of each day."

ALEC member cooperatives can participate in the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program, which requires a rigorous safety inspection every three years by a certified team of loss control professionals that inspects everything from plant and equipment to employee procedures.

"We consider these inspections a great opportunity," said DEMCO General Manager Randy Pierce. "The inspection team provides us with a review of what we are doing really well, as well as the areas we need to improve, and that's important when the real achievement is keeping everyone safe every day."

This year, DEMCO completed the RESAP inspection and received a flag to display at its headquarters.

ALEC member cooperatives that have

worked without a loss-time accident are given plaques to recognize their achievement. This year's recipients were:

- **Claiborne Electric:** 239,657 hours without lost time since June 2019.
- **Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative:** 441,952 hours without lost time since January 2017.
- **Washington-St. Tammany Electric Cooperative:** 705,726 hours without lost time since May 2018.
- **Beauregard Electric Cooperative:** 1,321,000 hours without lost time since August 2016.
- **South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association:** 4,062,033 hours without lost time since December 1996.

"It takes a lot of safety training and a little bit of good luck to have this record," admitted SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli.

In a fast-paced world where time is money, electric cooperatives must constantly emphasize slowing down, taking your time and not taking shortcuts.

"Shortcuts can be a life-or-death decision," warned Charles Hill, general manager/CEO at WSTE. "Cutting corners is never worth someone's life or well-being."

Mark Brown, general manager at Claiborne Electric added, "Our primary goal is to make sure our employees go home to their families each and every day."

While Louisiana electric co-ops faced an unprecedented year of multiple hurricanes, they never faltered in their commitment to safety. The two hardest-hit—JDEC and

BECi—maintained perfect safety records during an incredibly challenging year.

Since this occurred for the first time in recent history, an additional award was added. The Superior Safety Award was given to JDEC for working an entire year with no accidents. General Manager Mike Heinen was surprised by the award, and expressed his pride in his staff's achievements.

"This is what it is all about," Heinen said. "We leave our families and homes in some of the worst conditions, but we maintain a focus to work safely every day so we can return home to those loved ones."

The Traveling Statewide Safety Award is always the last presentation. A special formula is used to determine the winner, incorporating employees' incidents, incident severity, man-hours worked and vehicle accidents.

BECi received the prestigious statewide safety award for the third year in a row with a perfect safety record.

"This award is a testament to our employees and directors," said General Manager Kevin Turner. "It takes a commitment from the top down, starting with the cooperative's board of directors to the employees looking out for one another daily. I'm incredibly proud of our staff, especially after the challenging year we had with a worldwide pandemic and severe hurricane season."

ALEC commends all Louisiana electric cooperatives on their achievements and continued commitment to safety. ■

# Bad to the Bone

Full tang stainless steel blade with natural bone handle —now **ONLY \$79!**

The very best hunting knives possess a perfect balance of form and function. They're carefully constructed from fine materials, but also have that little something extra to connect the owner with nature.

If you're on the hunt for a knife that combines impeccable craftsmanship with a sense of wonder, the **\$79 Huntsman Blade** is the trophy you're looking for.

The blade is full tang, meaning it doesn't stop at the handle but extends to the length of the grip for the ultimate in strength. The blade is made from 420 surgical steel, famed for its sharpness and its resistance to corrosion.

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**But we don't stop there.** While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99 8x21 power compact binoculars *and* a genuine leather sheath **FREE** when you purchase the **Huntsman Blade**.

**Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed.** Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the impeccable craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

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