



NEC INSIGHT

Empowering Communities



Nueces Electric Cooperative Offers Tips for Hurricane Season

A message from your CEO,
Varzavand "Avan" Irani

Every year at this time, people in South Texas brace themselves for another potentially destructive hurricane season.

Hurricane season began June 1 and continues through Nov. 30. Since we can't stop hurricanes, the only thing we can do is work on being better prepared and know what to do in case one hits.

NEC is offering suggestions on what should be done to protect life and property if a hurricane threatens: We are asking our members to consider these safety tips when a hurricane warning is issued.

- **Make plans for action:** The best way to cope with a hurricane is to always be prepared for one. A hurricane warning is issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specified area in 24-hours or less. If a warning is given, stay tuned to radio or TV for official bulletins. Secure lawn furniture and other loose material outdoors. Fill the bathtub with several days supply of drinking water. Turn up refrigerator to maximum cold and don't open it unless necessary. Wedge sliding glass doors to prevent their lifting from their tracks. Check batteries in flashlights, stock up on canned foods and make sure you have plenty of medical supplies. Windows should be secured with either tape, plywood or shutters.

- **Stay or leave?** When a hurricane threatens your area, you will have to make the decision whether to evacuate or ride out the storm in the safety of your home. If local authorities recommend evacuation, you should drive carefully to

the nearest designated shelter using recommended evacuation routes. Make sure the house is locked and the water and electricity is shut off at main stations. Leave food and water for pets, since many shelters do not allow them. Take small valuables with you, but travel light.

- **Freezers/refrigerators:** First, open the freezer door as little as possible. With a freezers that's full, foods can stay frozen up to 72-hours. A half-full freezer can still keep food frozen up to 24-hours after the power goes out. Should the power stay off for several days, dry ice can preserve the food in the freezer.

- **Be cautious:** During high winds, electric lines can be torn down by limbs and trees. Any dangling line or lines on the ground can be deadly. Call NEC's office to report a downed line, outage or any hazardous situation. NEC's crews will be on the job 24-hours a day.

NEC is committed to supply its members with dependable and safe electric service in all kinds of weather. A hurricane is not a pleasant experience. Yet, staying safe and calm can make it an easier one.

Energizing South Texas for the past 80 years. That's the Cooperative difference.





An average air ambulance helicopter transport can exceed \$25,000.
Average insurance payout is 30- 50%, leaving the patient with the remaining balance.
Qualifying NEC members may get access to this program for just \$1 a month!

Included in the HALO-Flight Membership Plan:

- * Covered members are charged no out-of-pocket for HALO-Flight transports deemed medically necessary once terms of the patients insurance have been met.
- * Coverage anywhere in HALO-Flight's 26 county service area, as well as transfers to SanAntonio, Houston, Austin; and that of our reciprocal partner Dallas CareFlite. Coverage for all family members who live in the same house hold and are listed on the application (includes dependent, custodial and non-custodial children).
- * Coverage from three bases of operation: Corpus Christi, Alice and Beeville.

If flown by HALO-Flight, please contact our office to activate your Membership

As a Guardian Member, if you or your family require our service, your insurance (if any) would be billed, and HALO-Flight would accept that as **payment in full**.

If you are a Member of the Plan and do not have insurance, you **won't receive a bill**.

Medicaid recipients are not eligible to join HALO-Flight's Guardian Subscription Plan due to government regulations. We will, however, still transport these patients.

For questions regarding Guardian Subscription Plan Membership, please contact Membership Services at HALO-Flight: membership@haloflight.org or at 361.265.0509.

[Visit www.nueceselectric.org/content/halo-flight](http://www.nueceselectric.org/content/halo-flight) for full details.

For over three decades HALO-Flight has delivered on the emergent trauma needs of South Texans when minutes to a higher level of care mattered most and regardless of their ability to pay. With a fleet of helicopter air ambulances based in Corpus Christi, Alice and Beeville, and servicing over 28,000 square miles and a population of over one and a half million people, HALO-Flight responds to thousands of critical accident, heart attack, and fragile newborn patients, plus many more that might not have had a chance to survive otherwise. More information is available at www.haloflight.org



DIMA SIDELNIKOV | ISTOCK.COM

Freshen Up Your Fridge

If you've got leftovers from last month lurking in your refrigerator, it's time to pull on your latex kitchen gloves and clean it out. You may find out you have more room than you thought—enough to unplug the extra refrigerator or freezer that might be eating up electricity in the garage.

Try these tips to clean out and organize your fridge.

* Do a total fridge cleanup. Arm yourself with large trash bags, and throw away old leftovers. Make sure to check the expiration dates on rarely used condiments and dressings and toss any that are past their prime.

* If certain foods that you store in the fridge spoil before you eat them, vow to freeze them in the future.

* Adjust the height of each shelf so food is easier to see and reach. This could free up space. Designate spaces for fruits, vegetables, meats and drinks—so nothing is “out of sight, out of mind” and left to rot.

* Store leftovers in transparent containers and label them with the date the food was prepared so no one accidentally eats spoiled food.

* Cool hot foods before you put them in the refrigerator to save energy.

June Is National Safety Month

While Nueces Electric Cooperative often focuses on electric safety, there are many other dangers lurking out there. In recognition of National Safety Month, we're sharing the National Safety Council's list of the top causes of preventable injuries and death away from the workplace.

1. Poisoning. In 2011, poisonings overtook car crashes for the first time as the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for all ages combined. Poisoning deaths are caused by gases, chemicals and other substances, but prescription drug overdose is by far the leading cause.

2. Vehicle crashes. Crashes are the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death overall. Impaired driving, distracted driving, speeding and inexperience can cause a life to be cut short in the blink of an eye.

3. Falls. Falling is the third-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death over all age groups, but it's the No. 1 cause of death for those 65 and older.

4. Choking and suffocation. Choking on food or other objects is a primary cause. Suffocation and choking rank higher among the elderly and infants.

5. Drowning. It's the No. 1 cause of death for children ages 1–4, mostly due to children falling into pools or being left alone in bathtubs.

6. Fires and burns. Fires often start at night, when families are asleep and most vulnerable. A working smoke alarm will cut in half the chances of dying in a fire.

7. Natural and environmental incidents. Weather-related disasters claim hundreds of lives per year. You should learn all you can about emergency preparedness and always have an emergency kit on hand.



OKAN METIN | ISTOCK.COM



The Little Blue Logo That Changed Buying Habits

The little blue (and sometimes black) logo with the star inside that you see on all sorts of appliances and electronics has changed the way Americans shop.

The Energy Star program claims credit for reducing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and for saving Americans \$30 billion in energy costs. Analysts credit Energy Star with pushing manufacturers to innovate, helping them to set energy efficiency goals and upping competition in the market.

What Energy Star does is make it easy to know whether a product you're thinking about buying is energy efficient. Essentially, the program looks at the average energy use of each type of product and awards the Energy Star rating to top performers based on varying criteria. A refrigerator needs to be 9% more energy efficient than the minimum efficiency standard; a computer needs to use 25% less electricity than conventional models and include a power-saving mode for when it's not being used. Energy Star standards require that TVs must use 3 watts or less when switched off; lightbulbs must use two-thirds less energy than standard incandescent bulbs; and home furnaces must be 4%–15% more efficient than standard furnaces.

So if the appliance or electronic device you're purchasing includes the Energy Star logo, you know it's among the most energy-efficient products available. That simplicity is the secret to the success of the program that is run by the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The program's effectiveness comes from a complex process of making sure the Energy Star logo is accurate and trusted—and the numbers show it is trusted. Americans bought more than 300 million Energy Star-rated products in 2017, and a study found that three-fourths of U.S. households say the Energy Star label influences their purchases. According to energystar.gov, EPA uses the following specifications to determine if products meet the Energy Star standard:

- Product categories must contribute significant energy savings nationwide.
- Certified products must deliver the features and performance demanded by consumers, in addition to increased energy efficiency.
- If the certified product costs more than a conventional, less efficient counterpart, purchasers will recover their investment in increased energy efficiency through utility bill savings within a reasonable period of time.
- Energy efficiency can be achieved through broadly available, nonproprietary technologies offered by more than one manufacturer.



- Product energy consumption and performance can be measured and verified with testing.
- Labeling effectively differentiates products and must be visible to consumers.

Today, more than 500 certified labs in 25 countries around the world test more than 1,500 products a year, along with surprise inspections, to manage a list of 60,000 product models.

Energy Star requires quality standards in addition to just energy efficiency. In general, products must have popular features, such as internet connectivity for smart TVs. Lightbulbs must last up to 15 times longer and produce 70%–90% less heat than conventional bulbs.

In 2018, Energy Star tested 1,792 models, disqualifying 59 of them. Of the 858 kinds of lighting and fans tested, that year, 51 were disqualified. Of the 35 TVs tested, two were disqualified.

Energy Star has caught on because it has something for everybody—ways for consumers to save money; ways for businesses to promote their efficient products; online calculators for those wanting deep dives into finding the ideal energy use; and a simple little logo that tells us we're buying one of the most energy-efficient products available.



FAMILY VELDMAN | ISTOCK.COM

Safety Under the Sun

It may seem like common sense to keep kites away from overhead power lines, but a child enjoying a breezy summer day might not even notice when they're playing too close to electrical wires. What your children learn from you today can be a lifesaver later when they encounter a downed power line or think about climbing a tree.

- Teach your children how to play it safe around live wires. Some good lessons for them include:
- Stay away from electrical substations. If a ball or pet gets inside the fence, contact your electric cooperative for assistance—we'll come and get it out for you.
- Don't fly kites, toy airplanes, balloons or other flying devices anywhere near power lines. It's important to look up and move far away if power lines are present.
- Avoid climbing trees whose branches are anywhere near overhead power lines. A child could be shocked or even killed in a tree that is energized with electricity.
- Never throw anything onto or over a power line. If a kite or other toy gets caught in the wires, leave it there and call the electric cooperative.
- Keep all electrical appliances and toys away from water, including lawn sprinklers, swimming pools, hoses, rain, etc.
- Stay away from guy wires, green transformer boxes, electric meters and breaker boxes.
- Never touch an electrical device if you are wet or standing in water or in a pool.
- Never go swimming during a storm, especially when you hear thunder or see lightning. Electricity and water do not mix, and swimming during a storm puts you at a high risk.
- Never attempt to climb a utility pole or substation fence.
- Call 911 if you spot a downed line, and don't go anywhere near it. Assume all lines are energized and dangerous.

Surprise Newlyweds and Grads With Energy-Efficient Gifts

It's wedding and graduation season. Why not make a difference in the lives of those you're buying gifts for?

Grads and newlyweds who are furnishing their first homes need everything from small kitchen appliances, like toasters and mixers, to powerhouse machines like vacuum cleaners. If that's the gift you'd like to give, consider selecting an energy-efficient model.

Here are some ideas:

- Microwave ovens and slow cookers use less energy than the oven or stovetop to cook meals, and they often require less effort.
- Wrap up an electric blanket as a gift to help your friends stay warm in the winter and reduce heating bills. Choose one with an automatic shutoff for safety.
- A ceiling fan is a unique gift that anyone in a new home will appreciate year-round. Choose one in a style that matches the décor of your friends' home and offer to have it installed for them.
- And a high-quality, shock-absorbing power strip never goes out of style and is always welcome. Plus, it's a pretty sure bet that nobody else will give that gift but you.



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TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Preparing for Hurricane Season: June 1–November 30

EVACUATION PLANNING: When a hurricane threatens, listen for instructions from local officials. If they call for an evacuation in your area, get going without delay.

- Discuss evacuation plans with your family before hurricane season, June 1–November 30.
- * Make a checklist of what you need to do before you leave town and review it.
- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio, local TV and radio broadcasts during storm season.
- Prepare an emergency supply kit that includes a radio, flashlight, extra batteries, extra eyeglasses, bottled water, nonperishable food, dry clothes, bedding, insurance information, important documents, medications, copies of prescriptions and special products for babies, seniors, medically fragile family members and pets.
- Learn evacuation routes before storm season. When there's a hurricane in the Gulf, keep your gas tank as full as possible. Expect traffic delays in an evacuation.
- Register with the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry online at stear.dps.texas.gov or dial 211 to register if you have a disability or medical needs, or if you simply do not have transportation. Gulf Coast residents in evacuation zones who have a disability or medical needs who do not have friends or family to help or do not have transportation should register with STEAR in advance.

DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

Directrices para Huracanes

Preparando para la temporada de huracanes
desde el 1 de junio hasta el 30 de noviembre

EVACUACIÓN EN CASO DE HURACÁN: Cuando exista una amenaza de huracán, escuche las instrucciones de funcionarios locales. Cuando llamen para una evacuación en su área, evacue del área lo más pronto posible.

- Discuta los planes de evacuación con su familia antes de la temporada de huracán, que empieza el 1 de junio y termina el 30 de noviembre. Haga una lista de lo que usted debe hacer antes de salir de la ciudad y revísela.
- Escuche la radio y televisión durante la temporada de huracanes.
- Prepare un equipo de emergencia que incluya un radio, linterna, repuesto de baterías, anteojos extras, agua embotellada, alimentos no perecederos, ropa extra, ropa de cama, información de seguro, documentos importantes, medicinas, copias de recetas medicas y productos especiales para bebés, las personas mayores, miembros de la familia médicamente frágiles y mascotas.
- Aprenda sus rutas de evacuación antes de la temporada de huracanes. Cuando haya un huracán en el Golfo, mantenga el tanque de gasolina lleno. Esté consiente de que habrá demoras de tráfico.
- Puede registrarse con el State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry en la página web, stear.dps.texas.gov, o llamando al 211 para registrarse si usted tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas o si simplemente no tiene transporte. Los residentes que viven en la Costa del Golfo en zonas de evacuación con una discapacidad o necesidades médicas quienes no tienen amigos o familiares para ayudarles o no tienen transporte deben registrarse con STEAR por adelantado.



The time for hurricane planning should begin well before hurricane season arrives. Follow these tips:

Develop a plan for installing covers for windows.

Don't waste time taping windows. When a 100 mph wind blows an object at your window, tape won't stop it.

Remove weak and dead trees and tree limbs.

Know whether your home is in a zone that could be flooded.

Have a "grab and run" bag ready with important papers (like your homeowners insurance policy) and prescription medicines in the event you have to evacuate.

Have a plan for where you will go if you evacuate, the route you will take and how others can contact you.

Have a survival kit ready with nonperishable food, water, a first-aid kit, a battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

Nueces Electric Cooperative encourages you to always practice safety.

Director and Election FAQ's

Director Election Process

NEC prides itself on its director elections. The election process reflects one of the Seven Cooperative Principles - democratic member control: one member, one vote. NEC is member-owned and is governed by a eight (8) person, member-elected board of directors. These directors represent the eight member districts of the cooperative. A portion of the co-op directorships stand for election each year. All members can vote on all directors.

Nominating Process

Any qualifying NEC member in a district up for election may seek to become a candidate.

If more than two candidates petition for a directorship, a primary election will be held in the district to select two candidates who will appear on the election ballot. At the annual membership meeting to be held October 8, 2020, all members of NEC may vote to elect the new directors in the districts up for election. All members will receive a ballot by mail. If members cannot attend the meeting, they may cast their vote by mailing in the ballot.

It is up to you, the members, to elect the directors best qualified to run your cooperative. There is no term limit for an NEC director but he/she must complete the nomination process every three years and be re-elected by the members.

Director Responsibilities

Directors are tasked with the development of governance policies and monitoring the financial health of the cooperative. In addition, they are charged with keeping up-to-date on industry trends, legislative actions, and other pertinent issues affecting cooperatives as well as representing the membership at cooperative related functions.

Director Compensation

Directors receive a fee for each day during which they attend meetings or otherwise perform duties on behalf of the Cooperative.

Membership Access:

Article I, Section 8, "Membership List," of the Cooperative's By-Laws. Upon authorization, Petitioners may be granted access to a copy of a map of the district in which your residence lies and to view a list of the Cooperative members in your district for up to one (1) hour for the purpose of recording, in writing, the contact information of up to fifty (50) members from that list. A full copy of the By-Laws can be found at www.nueceselectric.org -> About-> Transparency and Your Cooperative

Nominations Open June 10th for NEC Director Positions

Beginning Friday, June 10, 2020, any eligible NEC member who wants to be a candidate for co-op director for districts 1, 2, and 4 can pick up a petition and instructions at the NEC office in Calallen at 14353 Cooperative Ave. Candidates must have their primary residence in the district in which they are running.

The deadline for the return of these petitions is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 24, 2020. If you are unsure of your district number, contact our member care department by calling 1.800.NEC.WATT or by e-mailing membercare@nueceselectric.org.

The process requires a petition to be submitted by any person wanting to be a candidate for cooperative director. The bylaws of NEC provide for staggered three-year terms for each director. A petition for nomination must contain 15 signatures of NEC members who have service within the district the nominee would represent. All petition signatures will be verified.

Petitions will be signed out from, and returned directly to, the Co-op's Executive Secretary who will contact you once the signatures are verified. If more than two qualifying petitions are received for a district, a primary election will be held in that district during the month of August to narrow the candidates to two. The director elections will be held at the Annual Meeting on October 8, 2020 in Robstown. For more information, visit Article IV of our bylaws.

Calendar Dates:

June 10

Director Election Packet pick up for District 1, District 2, and District 4. To see which district you belong to, simply visit <https://nueceselectric.org/content/board-directors>, click on the district map and type in your address.

July 24

Director Petitions to be returned to the co-op

August 3

Verification of Petition Signatures by Exec. Secretary

August 19-25

Last Day Primary Election/Meeting (if necessary)

October 8

Annual Meeting at Richard M. Borchard Fairgrounds



Payment Options:



Pay Online

www.nueceselectric.org

Access your account 24 hours a day from any computer to view usage, make payments or manage your account. Just click on "Pay Your Bill", on the left side of our Homepage and it will take you to the SmartHub account portal.



Pay With Your Smart Device

Download the SmartHub app to your iPhone or Android device. View usage, weather impacts, make payments and manage your account any time of the day.



Auto Draft:

Sign up to have your bank account or credit card drafted for your monthly bill. You can sign-up via your SmartHub online account.



Equal Payment Plan

Through this payment program, a member's usage is averaged for the year and the member makes equal payments each month. See more information and sign up online under the Member Services -> Payment Options menu tab, or call the office.



Pay by Phone:

800-NEC-WATT (800-632-9288)



Pay in Person:

Pay your bill at any one of our Customer Service centers located in Calallen, Ben Bolt, Ricardo or Orange Grove.



Pay by Mail:

P.O. Box 659821, San Antonio, TX 78265



Pay at the Payment Kiosk

Quick, easy, and accessible 24 hours a day, the Kiosk is located at the Calallen office. Payments post immediately to your account.



Payment Services

Pay using any Fidelity Express Pay Stations or for an additional \$1.50 service charge. Search online to find a payment station near you.



Nueces Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Find us on the web at:
www.nueceselectric.org

Call us at:
361-387-2581 or 1-800-632-9288

Your Elected Board of Directors:

Brian Menking: District 6, President
Bill Hartman, District 5, Vice-President
David Rosse, District 3, Secretary Treasurer
Johnny Alvarado, District 7
Gladys Lippincott, District 8 (Retail)
Donald Herrmann, District 4
Gregg Truesdale, District 2
Rumaldo Z. Juarez, District 1

Local Pages Editor:

Kirklan Hinojosa
communications@nueceselectric.org

Main Office / Mailing Address:
14353 Cooperative Ave
Robstown, TX 78380 (Calallen)
M-F 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Ben Bolt Service Center:
5646 S. Hwy 281 Alice, TX
M-F 8 - 12 / 12:30 - 4

Ricardo Service Center:
123 CR 1026, Ricardo, TX
M-W-F 8 - 12 / 12:30 - 4

Orange Grove Service Center:
Office no longer open

Use the NEC Outage Viewer to view outages 24-hours a day with any device.
The Outage Viewer is located on the homepage of our website.

NEC Power Providers

PLEASE NOTE: The (CRs) listed below have completed the process to qualify and are currently serving NEC area members. This provider list is subject to change. For the most up-to-date list of providers, please monitor our website nueceselectric.org or you can obtain a list from any NEC office.

AP GAS & ELECTRIC
APOLLO POWER & LIGHT
BLUESTAR ENERGY
CHAMPION ENERGY SERVICES
CONSTELLATION ENERGY
CORAL POWER SOLUTIONS
DYNEGY
ENERGY TRANSFER
ENERTRADE ELECTRIC
HINO ELECTRIC
MPOWER /MP2
NEC CO-OP ENERGY
TENASKA
ENCOA (TERM)
SMARTCOM ENERGY SERVICES
STARTEX POWER
SOURCE POWER & GAS

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
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