

You've got QUESTIONS? We've got ANSWERS.

Whether it's your Bluebonnet bill,
a power outage or another concern
— we're ready to help.

"When you call Bluebonnet, the first thing you hear is a friendly voice saying, 'Hi, thanks for calling Bluebonnet!' Our member service representatives are ready to assist you — whether it's during business hours, in the middle of a storm or even on social media. We're here to provide the answers you need, whenever you need them."

— JENNIFER MARTIN,
Bluebonnet's manager of member operations

By Kirsten Tyler

WE KNOW BLUEBONNET Electric Cooperative's members have questions because employees answered an average of 14,000 phone calls per month last year. The cooperative's knowledgeable member service representatives answer questions about everything from bills to starting new service to power outages. In addition to speaking with a representative, many members turned to our website for answers. Bluebonnet's outage center, billing & payments and payment assistance web pages, which explain ways a bill can be paid and how to report an outage, were visited by 57,831 members in 2024.

We asked the representatives and other cooperative employees what questions Bluebonnet's members ask most frequently. Turn the page for those questions and the answers.

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At Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, employees work to bring you electricity, keep it flowing and answer your questions. Clockwise, from top left:

- 1 David Arldt places a stake on property in Giddings where power poles and lines will soon be installed. He is a Bluebonnet technician who helps design plans for property that does not yet have electric service.
- 2 Tucker Saegert, an apprentice lineworker, climbs a power pole in the Bastrop area to solve an issue with a transformer.
- 3 Apprentice lineworker Terry Swonke and journeyman Zackary Handrick work to restore electricity to members near Chappell Hill after a windstorm.
- 4 Issa Avila Zamora, a member service representative at Bluebonnet, answers members' questions from the cooperative's call center in Bastrop.
- 5 Bianca Rodriguez-Maciel, a representative at the Lockhart member service center, answers questions about a member's bill.

Photos by Sarah Beal

Q&A

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How do I get a security light on my property?

If an existing pole with a meter and/or transformer is present, contact member services at 800-842-7708 to ask for a security light. If the light has to be installed on a new pole, Bluebonnet will provide a cost estimate for that work and equipment. After a member service representative enters your request, a Bluebonnet technician will contact you to schedule an appointment either in person or by phone.

You will discuss your needs and, if applicable, the technician will provide a cost estimate. Bluebonnet or one of its contractors will install both the light and the pole if needed. If you have an existing security light that you would like to upgrade to an LED light, there is a one-time fee of \$125,

Payment assistance agencies

Community resources are available to assist Bluebonnet members by providing financial assistance.

If you need help with your bill, contact a member service representative from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 800-842-7708. Visit bluebonnet.coop/assistance for more information, including contact information for area agencies.

There are more than 25 agencies in 14 counties — including several that serve multiple counties — that may be able to provide payment assistance to Bluebonnet members who live in the communities or regions they serve.

in addition to the monthly charges.

After installation, your monthly bill will be updated to reflect a security light fee, ranging from about \$10 to just under \$20.

If you have an existing light that is damaged or not functioning properly, please contact member services at 800-842-7708 or visit bluebonnet.coop/security-lights to request a repair.

Does Bluebonnet have Spanish-speaking member service representatives?

¿Bluebonnet tiene representantes de servicio para miembros que hablan español?

Yes. Bluebonnet has a dedicated team of 15 Spanish-speaking member service representatives. In 2024, those representatives answered 25,345 calls from Spanish-speaking members. The co-op also has five bilingual representatives who talk with members face to face at Bluebonnet's member service centers. If you need assistance with billing, service changes or general inquiries, our representatives are here to help on the phone or in person from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Sí. Bluebonnet cuenta con un equipo de 15 representantes dedicados a servicio al miembro que hablan español. En 2024, esos representantes respondieron 25,345 llamadas de miembros que hablan español. La cooperativa también cuenta con cinco representantes bilingües que hablan con los miembros cara a cara en los centros de servicio para miembros de Bluebonnet en Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart o Manor. Si necesita ayuda con su factura, cambios de servicio o consultas generales, nuestros representantes están aquí para ayudarlo por teléfono o en persona, Lunes a Viernes de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m.

I can't pay my bill by the due date. Can I have more time to pay?

Bluebonnet offers flexible payment options to members when they encounter financial difficulties. If you are unable to pay your bill or need to talk about payment options, go to bluebonnet.coop/assistance, log in to your MyBluebonnet account and click 'Payment Extensions' under the Bill & Pay tab or contact member services at 800-842-7708 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Bluebonnet's representatives will work with you to find a solution, whether it's determining if you are eligible for an extension or enrolling you in the cooperative's SteadyPay program, which aims to smooth out the ups and downs of your monthly electric bill. For more information on SteadyPay, see tips at left and visit bluebonnet.coop/steadypay.



Smooth out ups and downs of electric bills with SteadyPay

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative members can have predictable monthly payments with the cooperative's SteadyPay billing option. If you've been a Bluebonnet member for at least six consecutive months, you can sign up for SteadyPay. Here is how it works:

- Your electric bill is averaged out on a monthly basis, based on your previous 12 months' billing statements. You pay that averaged amount for six months.
- Twice a year — in April and October — Bluebonnet recalculates your payment based on your most recent 12 months of electricity use. The new payment amount will then be updated starting on your May and November billing statements.
- Enrolled in Auto Pay? Your account will automatically be charged the SteadyPay amount on the bill's due date.

- If you pay your SteadyPay amount before your bill is ready, that payment will not apply to your upcoming statement — it will be factored into the next recalculation.

- You can stay on the SteadyPay option as long as you like. Members will be removed from the program if their electric service is disconnected due to nonpayment or if they do not pay the full SteadyPay amount. If removed, you can re-enroll in SteadyPay after 12 consecutive months without a disconnection for nonpayment.

Ready to enroll? Visit a Bluebonnet member service center or call a member service representative at 800-842-7708 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Get more information at bluebonnet.coop/steadypay.

In addition, several organizations in Bluebonnet's region can help some members pay their electricity bills. A complete list of those agencies, including contact information, is at bluebonnet.coop/assistance.

My bill was higher this summer than it was last summer, but nothing has changed at our house. Why did it increase?

Bluebonnet has not raised its rates since 2017. Typically bills fluctuate from year to year because seasonal and temperature changes can change how much electricity you use. During scorching Texas summers and unpredictably cold winters, your HVAC system works overtime to keep your home comfortable, even if you haven't adjusted your thermostat.

To monitor your electricity use and costs, down to the hour, create an online MyBluebonnet account, then log in at bluebonnet.coop or on the cooperative's mobile app. Several tools are available to provide information about your electricity use as well as the average daily temperature each day. You can also compare this year's electricity use with last year's using the bill comparison chart.

Energy efficiency can reduce electric bills: Find tips at bluebonnet.coop/energy-saving-tips, or on our Facebook, Instagram and X pages year-round.

What should I do if I experience a power outage — storm-related or not?

Bluebonnet is committed to providing safe, reliable service around the clock, every day of the year. If you experience a power outage any time — including overnight, on weekends or during holidays — you can report it any of these ways:

1. Text 'OUT' to 44141
2. Call 800-949-4414
3. Use the MyBluebonnet mobile app
4. Visit bluebonnet.coop/report-outage

Once your outage is reported, a crew or crews will be dispatched to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. All members are automatically enrolled in outage text notifications. If you've opted out, you can re-enroll by texting "BBOUTAGE" to 44141. Members can also view the outage map anytime at outage.bluebonnetelectric.coop, and get more information about outages, outage reporting and storm preparedness at bluebonnet.coop/outages.

What electric equipment at my home am I responsible for repairing and what is Bluebonnet responsible for repairing?

Bluebonnet and its members share responsibility for maintenance and repairs as shown in the illustration at right. As a

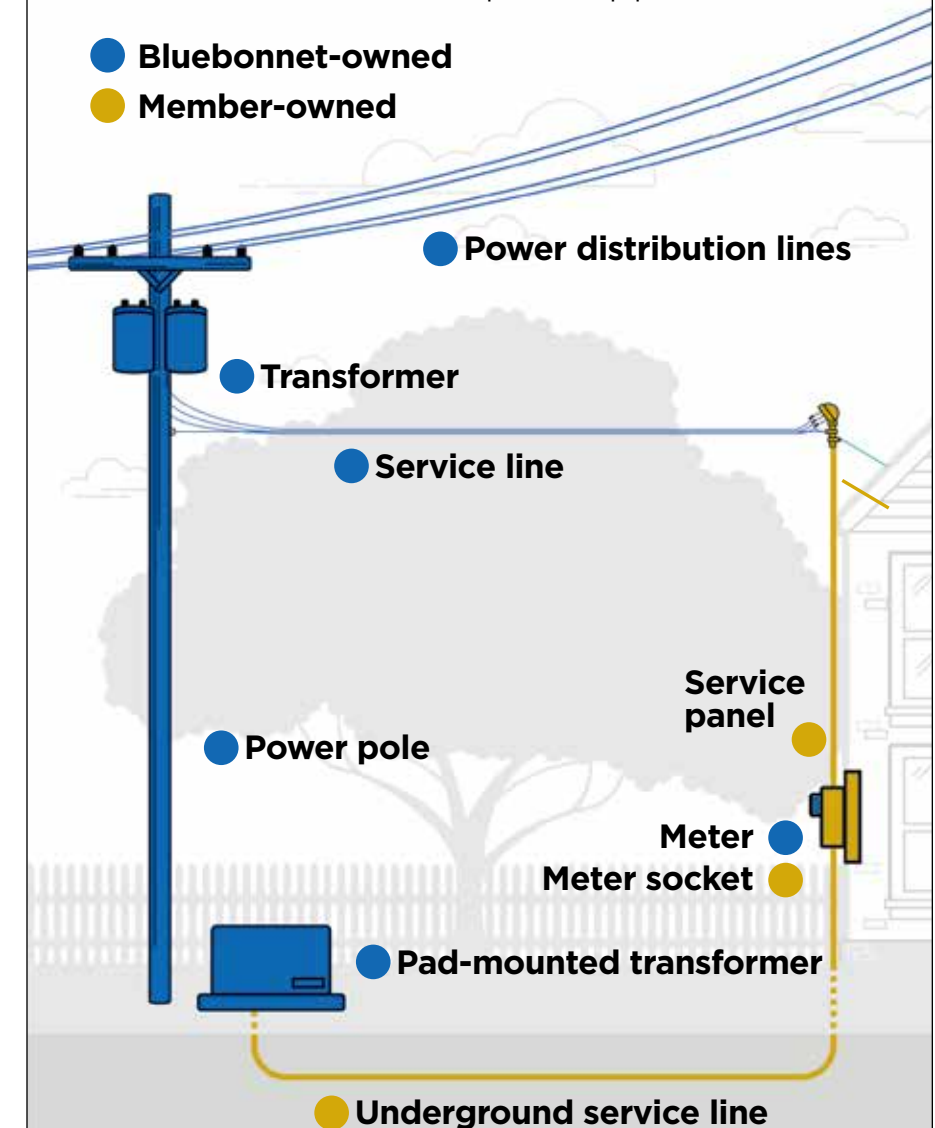
See Q&A on Page 20

Who owns what?

Bluebonnet-owned equipment and member-owned equipment

Equipment in **blue** is owned by the cooperative and in **gold** by the member. If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician to repair their equipment.

- Bluebonnet-owned
- Member-owned



Note: Both overhead and underground service are depicted. Service to a home or business is typically one or the other.

From National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Q&A

Continued from Page 19

member, you are responsible for any issues related to breaker boxes — both main and household breakers. Bluebonnet handles all maintenance and repairs of the meter.

What do I need to do to get electrical service on my property in the Bluebonnet service territory? There are no power poles or lines there now.

If you are moving or transferring service to property in Bluebonnet's service territory that does not already have electricity, call a member service representative at 800-842-7708 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, or submit a request anytime at bluebonnet.coop/startstop-service.

After the representative enters your request into our system, a Bluebonnet technician will contact you to schedule an in-person or phone appointment. During that appointment, you'll discuss your needs and we will provide a cost

estimate for labor and materials. There could be additional costs related to tree removal or trimming, or if there is a need for specialized materials. Once you accept the price quote and provide all required information to Bluebonnet, it may take up to 12 business days for Bluebonnet or a contractor crew to begin construction of your project. Weather conditions and other unforeseen factors can impact that timeline.

If a new power line needs to be constructed to extend and provide electric service to me, do I need to get an easement from my neighbor?

If Bluebonnet must extend power lines from your neighbor's property to yours, an easement — granting legal access to someone else's property for you to get electricity — will likely be needed. We recommend you share your plans about your electricity needs with your neighbors and ask them to sign an easement to access their property in order to extend electricity to your property. For quick access to an easement form, visit bluebonnet.coop/document-center.

Do I have to own the property where I am requesting electrical service?

Yes. Bluebonnet will only meet with the property owner to discuss new service or changes to existing service. If the owner of the property is

not available, the property owner can reach out to Bluebonnet and approve another individual to meet with a technician from the cooperative.

I need to pay my bill fast before the due date. What is the quickest way to do that?

The Pay Now feature at bluebonnet.coop is the fastest way to pay your bill. Go to bluebonnet.coop and click 'Quick pay' from the top of any page or 'Pay Now' from the email notification that your bill is available. Last year, 393,920 bill payments were made online and through the mobile app.

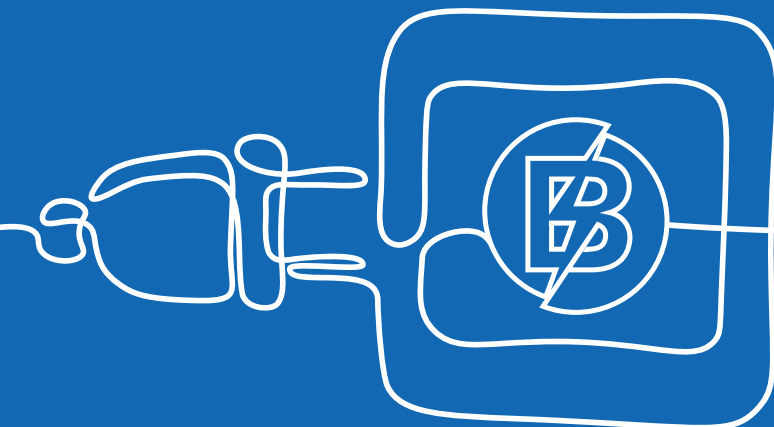
There are several other ways a member can pay a bill:

- Use a self-service option: Call 800-842-7708 and select Option 2 when prompted. You can also log in to your MyBluebonnet online account or pay on the mobile app.
- Visit a Bluebonnet member service center in Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart or Manor.
- Speak to a member service representative by calling 800-842-7708 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For questions regarding your bill, contact a member service representative or visit a member service center. ■

29,000 followers
& 25,000 monthly visitors

are
plugged in
to
Bluebonnet!



Are you?



Follow us on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn
and our website, bluebonnet.coop.

Get important, timely information about:

- The cooperative
- Online account tools and tips
- Severe weather alerts and updates
 - Energy-saving ideas
 - Career opportunities
 - Contests and giveaways

A QUICK way to pay

Managing your bills has
never been easier.

Bluebonnet's **Quick pay** feature
lets you pay your bill without logging in!

All you need is your account number
and last name or business name.

Just click '**Quick pay**'
from the top of any page on
bluebonnet.coop.



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FRESH TIPS TO BE MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT THIS SPRING



GET MORE TIPS

Visit bluebonnet.coop/energy-saving-tips for helpful ideas to save electricity all year.

Spring officially begins March 20, bringing new opportunities to save electricity and money. Here are some ways to get started on spring energy savings.

CLEAR THE AIR

Open windows to let fresh air circulate.

COOK OUTSIDE

Soak in the sunshine by grilling or smoking meals. Or toss a salad and make sandwiches to enjoy outdoors.

SEARCH AND SEAL

Cracks and gaps let conditioned air escape. Caulk and weather strip to seal leaks, especially around windows and doors.

LET THE LIGHT IN

Open blinds and curtains and turn off lights to save electricity.

BE FAN FRIENDLY

Set ceiling fans to turn counterclockwise for cooling. Remember, fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off when you leave.

ADJUST THE THERMOSTAT

Set your thermostat for the milder months ahead. Consider turning it off entirely during mild weather or scheduling cooling before you arrive home if you have a smart thermostat.

TUNE UP YOUR SYSTEM

Have an HVAC technician inspect your system before the peak cooling season.

UNPLUG AND SAVE

Disconnect devices you don't use regularly. Plugged-in devices draw power even when not in use. A smart power strip makes it easy to turn off multiple items at once.

MOVE OUTDOORS

Trade lights, TVs, computers and devices for outside activities.

ANNUAL MEETING 2025

A GUIDE TO YOUR PROXY FORM



VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

- VOTING BY PROXY**
- Mark your selections by placing a ✓ or an X inside the appropriate box(es).
 - Fold and mail this form in the enclosed postage-paid envelope addressed to: Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, c/o Survey & Ballot Systems, P.O. Box 46430, Eden Prairie MN 55344-9751.
 - All mailed proxies must be postmarked by May 6, 2025, in order to be valid.
 - Proxies may also be registered with Bluebonnet's principal office by returning to any Bluebonnet Member Service Center by 5 p.m., May 6, 2025.
- VOTING IN PERSON AT THE ANNUAL MEETING**
- The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 2:30 p.m. at The Silos on 77, 1031 CR 223, Giddings, Texas.
 - Registration will open at 1:30 p.m. and close at 2:30 p.m.
 - Once you register at the Annual Meeting your proxy may be revoked at that time.
 - If you need assistance with your proxy form, please call Bluebonnet Member Services at 800-842-7708 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday or email annualmeeting@bluebonnet.coop

PROXY

This proxy shall remain in effect on any subsequent date, time and place to which said Annual Meeting may be recessed or postponed, giving full authority to the appointed proxy to vote for me, as if I were present in person, on all matters that come before such meeting, including election of directors and passing upon reports as well as the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

STEP 1: Please choose who you want to vote your proxy
→ If you do not make a selection below, your proxy will be assigned to the Proxy Committee. ←

- I assign my proxy to the Proxy Committee:
The Proxy Committee of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, Inc. comprised of Byron Balke, Bryan Bracewell, Roderick Emanuel, Russell Jurk, Robert Mikeska and Shana Whiteley, with full power of substitution, as my proxy and agent for the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative to be held at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at The Silos on 77, 1031 CR 223, Giddings, Texas.
- OR**
- I assign my proxy to the Bluebonnet member named below:
_____ with full power of substitution, as my proxy and agent for the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative to be held at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at The Silos on 77, 1031 CR 223, Giddings, Texas.

STEP 2: Check either "A" or "B"
→ If you check both A and B, your vote may not be counted. ←

- A. I instruct the Proxy Committee or the individual named above to vote my proxy at its discretion.
- OR**
- B. I instruct the Proxy Committee or the individual named above to vote for the candidates checked below.

DISTRICT 1 CALDWELL, HAYS, GUADALUPE, GONZALES COUNTIES	DISTRICT 3 BASTROP COUNTY	DISTRICT 5 BURLESON COUNTY
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

STEP 3: Sign
→ If you do not sign, your vote cannot be counted. ←

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ TELEPHONE # _____

ACCOUNT NAME _____ 10-DIGIT ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

ADDITIONAL ACCOUNT NAME (IF APPLICABLE) _____

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at The Silos on 77 event center in Giddings

One of the benefits of being a Bluebonnet member is having a say in cooperative business, including voting on agenda items and for the cooperative's Board of Directors during the Annual Meeting. Ensure your voice is heard by submitting a proxy form by May 6, 2025, or attending the Annual Meeting in person on May 13, 2025. Proxy forms will arrive in a blue envelope to your mailbox starting in March.

The Proxy Committee is made up of the directors who are not up for election this year.

If you assign your vote to another member, be sure to print clearly and legibly the name of that individual who will serve as your proxy at the Annual Meeting.

Your account number will be printed on the proxy form you receive in the mail. If you pick up a proxy form at a member service center, you must write your account number in this space. Your account number can be found in the upper left portion of your bill, below the name on your account.

If you cannot attend the Annual Meeting, you assign your vote either to another member who will attend the meeting or to the Proxy Committee to vote in your place.

Be sure and sign your proxy or your vote can't be counted.

Please print clearly and legibly the name on your account as it appears on your Bluebonnet bill. You can find that name on the top left portion of your paper or online bill.

Don't miss the deadline to turn in your proxy form. It must be postmarked by May 6, or dropped off at any Bluebonnet member service center by 5 p.m. that day.