



# HILL COUNTY ELECTRIC NEWS & VIEWS

March 2023

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## 2023 Nominations for Board of Trustee

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This year, HCE no longer has a nominating committee. The committee was eliminated in last year's bylaw change. With this change, the only way to run for the Board of Trustees is by petition. Open districts this year are District 2 and District 3.

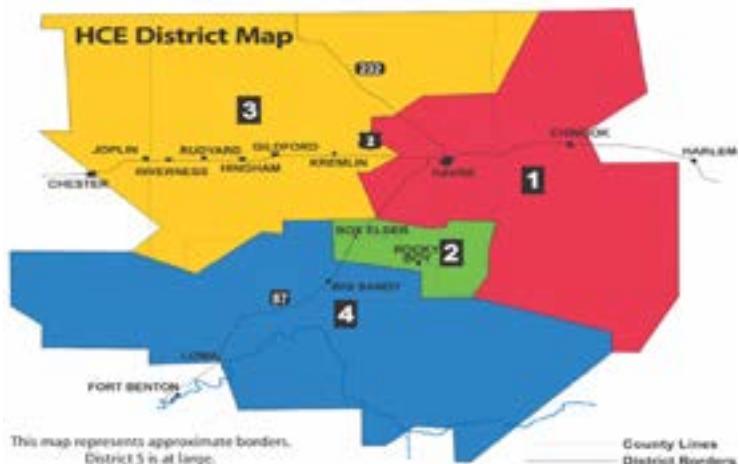
Nominee requirements to run:

- **Petition with district number and name of nominee**
- **Collect 15 current members' printed name, address, and signature on petition**
- **Nominee must live within the district in which they are running**
- **To sign the petition, a member does not have to live in same district as nominee**
- **Submit signed petition to the cooperative no later than March 29, 2023**

**After petition is submitted, it will be reviewed for accuracy and if it passes the low threshold of 15 valid signatures.** The name of the nominee will appear on the mail-in ballot, as well as at the annual meeting for those who do not mail their ballot for the election of the Board of Trustees.

If you still have questions as to which district the nominee lives in, you can call us at 406-394-7804 and someone will help you with the district information.

If you have any questions about our bylaws, please visit [https://www.hcelectric.com/images/documents/2022\\_HCE\\_Bylaws.pdf](https://www.hcelectric.com/images/documents/2022_HCE_Bylaws.pdf).



# *Creating Community Along the Hi-Line*



Craig Gates  
General Manager/CEO

Some may think that Hill County Electric (HCE) is defined by geography. After all, our service territory is easily drawn on a map. But I've come to realize that our electric cooperative is much more than a set of boundary lines. It's a community.

In a community, neighbors watch out for neighbors, families take care of families,

and we all work together toward the common good. That's not so different from an electric cooperative. We're community-focused, and our goal is to efficiently deliver affordable, reliable, and safe energy to the people who count on us. That means if we must choose between making a buck or watching out for your best interest, we'll choose you and the greater community every time.

And really, that's no surprise. We are not a for-profit company. Our electric cooperative was built by the communities we serve, and we continue to be led by consumers like you. Even when we work together with other cooperatives around the state, we always have an eye on our community at home, working hard for the local communities we represent.

To me, the power of a community comes from the people who live here. People who love where they are, and love being together. I know that all of us at Hill County Electric are glad to be a part of your community, doing our part to help it thrive by securing and delivering 24/7 energy to your home and business.

This time of year, we are getting ready for our annual meeting and the election of our Trustees. This year we have two districts up

for election and they are Districts 2 and 3. Just as any good community has good leadership, this is your chance to nominate someone who would be a good leader for the cooperative. Someone who has the same values as the cooperative, who fights every day for efficient, affordable, reliable and safe energy for your home.

We didn't set out to create a community when our electric cooperative began. But I'd like to think, as we've grown and served you and our neighbors over the years, we've helped to create one along the way. For that opportunity, and so many others, I and the team at Hill County Electric are truly grateful.



Congratulations to Reinhard Bold and Ezra Goldhahn for being selected to represent HCE on the 2023 Youth Tour to Washington, DC!



# Making Our Homes More Efficient: Clean Energy Tax Credits for Consumers

Equipment type	Tax Credit Available for 2022 Tax Year	Updated Tax Credit Available for 2023-2032 Tax Years
<b><i>Home Clean Electricity Products</i></b>		
Solar (electricity)		
Fuel Cells		30% of cost
Wind Turbine		
Battery Storage	N/A	30% of cost
<b><i>Heating, Cooling, and Water Heating</i></b>		
Heat pumps		
Heat pump water heaters	\$300	30% of cost, up to \$2,000 per year
Biomass Stoves		
Geothermal heat pumps		30% of cost
Solar (water heating)		
Efficient air conditioners*	\$300	30% of cost, up to \$600
Efficient heating equipment*		
Efficient water heating equipment*	\$150	30% of cost, up to \$600
<b><i>Other Energy Efficiency Upgrades</i></b>		
Electric panel or circuit upgrades for new electric equipment*	N/A	30% of cost, up to \$600
Insulation materials*	10% of cost	30% of cost
Windows, including skylights*	10% of cost	30% of cost, up to \$600
Exterior doors*	10% of cost	30% of cost, up to \$500 for doors (up to \$250 each)
Home Energy Audits*	N/A	30% of cost, up to \$150

\*Subject to cap of \$1,200/year

# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Who is eligible for tax credits?**

A: Homeowners, including renters for certain expenditures, who purchase energy and other efficient appliances and products.

**Q: What do consumers do to get the credit(s)?**

A: Fill out IRS [Form 5695](#), following IRS instructions, and include it when filing your tax return. Include any relevant product receipts.

**Q: Are there limits to what consumers can claim?**

A: Consumers can claim the same or varying credits year after year with new products purchased, but some credits have an annual limit. See the table above.

**Q: How do consumers find qualified professionals to conduct home energy audits?**

A: Visit <https://www.energy.gov/energysave/professional-home-energy-assessments>.

**Q: What products are eligible for tax credits?**

- *Home clean electricity products*
  - **Solar panels for electricity** from a provider in your area.
  - **Home back-up power battery storage** with capacity of 3 kWh or greater.
- *Heating, cooling, and water heating*
  - **Electric or natural gas heat pumps; electric or natural gas heat pump water heaters; central air conditioners; natural gas or propane or oil water heaters; natural gas or propane or oil furnaces or hot water boilers** that meet or exceed the specific efficiency tiers established by the Consortium for Energy Efficiency. Eligible products here: <https://cee1.org/node/729>.
  - **Solar water heating products** that are certified for performance by the Solar Rating Certification Corporation or comparable entity endorsed by the state government in which product is installed. See: <https://solar-rating.org>.
- *Other energy efficiency upgrades*
  - **Oil furnaces or hot water boilers** if they meet or exceed 2021 Energy Star efficiency criteria and are rated by the manufacturer for use with fuel blends at least 20% of the volume of which consists of an eligible fuel. See: <https://www.energystar.gov/products>.
  - **Panelboards, sub-panelboards, branch circuits, or feeders** that are installed according to National Electrical Code and have load capacity of 200 amps or more.
  - **Insulation materials and systems** that meet International Energy Conservation Code standards. See: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/building-energy-codes-program>.
  - **Exterior windows** that meet Energy Star's Most Efficient requirements. See: [https://www.energystar.gov/products/most\\_efficient](https://www.energystar.gov/products/most_efficient).

**Q: What if I have questions about products, standards, codes or other eligibility referenced above?**

A: Ask a trusted contractor, plumber, or electrician.

**Q: Where do I get even more detailed information?**

A: More information on the energy efficient home improvement credit and residential clean energy property credit is available for tax professionals, building contractors, and others at IRS releases frequently asked questions about energy efficient home improvements and residential clean energy property credits | Internal Revenue Service. See: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-releases-frequently-asked-questions-about-energy-efficient-home-improvements-and-residential-clean-energy-property-credits>.