



HILL COUNTY ELECTRIC NEWS & VIEWS

September 2025



1.877.394.7804
hcelectric.com 

CEO Message

Supporting Renewable Energy While Ensuring Fairness for All



Craig Gates
General Manager/CEO

At Hill County Electric, we're proud to serve members who care deeply about where their electricity comes from—and how it's delivered. Whether you power your home entirely through the cooperative or generate part of your energy with renewables, you're part of a system built on shared ownership, shared responsibility, and shared investment.

As more members add renewable energy to the grid, we've seen a growing need to talk about something called cost shifting. It's a topic being addressed by electric cooperatives across the country, and one we want to be transparent about with you.

Here's the basic idea: even when members generate some of their own power, they still depend on the co-op's grid for reliable electricity—especially at night, during storms, or on calm, or cloudy days. That means poles, wires, transformers, substations, and line crews must all remain in place, ready to deliver power when it's needed most.

The challenge comes from how electricity is billed. A portion of the co-op's operating costs are recovered through the energy you use or kWh. But when net metering members offset their usage with self-generated electricity, they avoid part of these shared costs—even though they're still using the grid. Those costs don't disappear; instead, they shift to other members who may not have generation systems of their own.

That's not sustainable or fair in the long run.

To keep our cooperative strong and equitable for all, we're making an adjustment to how these costs are shared. You can find details about that update on the following page.

We remain committed to supporting all of our members and we are just as committed to making sure every member pays their fair share in keeping the lights on, today and for the future.

Effective September 1, 2025

Hill County Electric (HCE) is making an adjustment to the monthly base charge for **NET METERING ACCOUNTS**.

What's Changing:

- The monthly base charge will increase from \$40 to \$100.
- Annual netting of kilowatt-hours will continue as before.

Why the Change?

- More members are producing some of their own power through solar, wind, or battery systems.
- Even with self-generation, members still depend on HCE's grid for reliable power.
- The cost of maintaining poles, wires, substations, and crews doesn't decrease — and must be shared fairly among all members.
- Without this adjustment, costs would shift unfairly to members who are not on net metering.

Our Commitment to You:

- HCE fully supports members who invest in renewable energy.
- This change ensures a fair and sustainable system for everyone.
- We remain dedicated to providing reliable, safe, and affordable electricity to all our members.
- Our cooperative is dedicated to environmental stewardship, and we're proud that most of our electricity is generated from clean, renewable energy.

Have Questions?

Call us at 877.394.7804

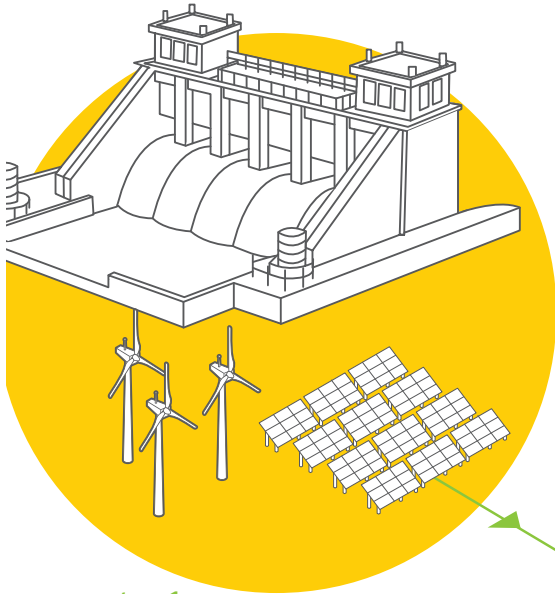
Co-op Day at the Pool

Each summer, we're excited to host Co-op Day at the Pool in several of the rural communities we serve. We cover pool admissions for the day, hand out popsicles, and set up a space where our team can connect with local families and neighbors. It's our way of showing appreciation for the wonderful community pools that offer a place for summer fun. These events, which we proudly share with our sister co-op, Triangle Communications, are always a highlight of our summer!

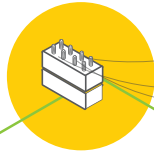


CRITICAL CONNECTIONS: HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU

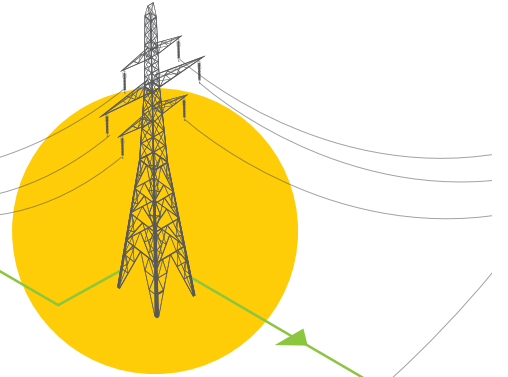
The electric grid is considered one of the most complex machines in the world, delivering the electricity we need for everyday life.



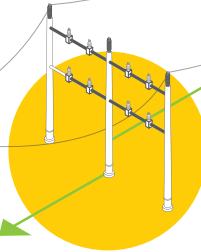
step 1
GENERATION
Power plants generate electricity using a variety of energy sources, like solar, natural gas, nuclear and wind energy.



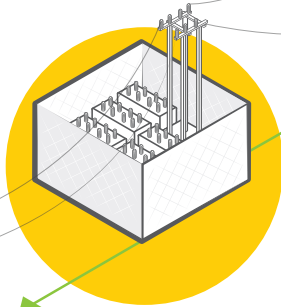
step 2
**STEP-UP
TRANSFORMER**
A step-up transformer increases the voltage to push the electricity over long distances.



step 3
TRANSMISSION LINES
High-voltage electricity travels over long distances through these lines.

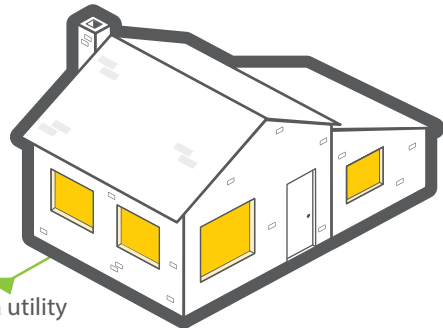


step 4
**TRANSMISSION
SUBSTATION**
Voltage is lowered at a transmission substation so electricity can travel across the local distribution system.



step 5
DISTRIBUTION SUBSTATION
These substations lower the voltage again so the electricity is ready to travel on distribution lines.

step 6
DISTRIBUTION LINES
Lower-voltage electricity travels through distribution lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road.



step 7
FINAL STOP
A transformer located on the ground or a utility pole reduces the voltage a final time, then electricity is sent inside your home, school or business.

Swap and Shop

Welcome to our Swap and Shop! Feel free to post and find classifieds from other members!

Visit www.hcelectric.com/swap-and-shop to view all listings or to submit/remove your own.

**Denotes photo available on website*

Small Square Wheat Straw Bales

30lb average - \$3 each. Located in Havre. Call (406) 230-2281.

Water Tank*

Estimated 350-500 Gallons. Call (717) 994-5076.

6 Lots with two buildings in Harlowton

Corner Lots on Central Ave, Harlowton, For Sale By Owner. (24,150 sq ft) with two buildings. Building #1 is a store front, shop and warehouse equaling 4,348 sq ft. and building #2 is 1,246 sq ft. Lots of space in a great location. \$350,000 for all. Call 406-350-1408.

Diamond Laser 3000 Glass Bandsaw*

Asking \$220. Call 406-547-2437.

Couch and Love Seat

Very good condition, tan color with matching decorative pillows. Call 406-378-2152.

1999 Pontiac Grand Prix

Runs, good tires, recent repairs made. Call 406-378-2152.

Round bale wool sacker gas motor

\$375 or best offer. Call 406-326-2287.

ISO Model T Car Body for Model T Frame

Call 406.945.2027.

Craftsman 28" Snowblower

Electric start, 2 stage snowblower with tire chains. Only used twice. Asking \$500. OBO 406-395-4581.

1976 GMC 4wheel drive

4 speed manual 350 V8, Very nice condition, new GM engine and all new interior, no rust P.S P.B. nice paint, runs great, long box. Call (406) 374-2458.

Sundance 7 Person Spa

300 gallon. In good working order - winterized and drained. Call (406) 632-5628.

WANTED: Clamp bumper hitch.

(VO type) with or without ball. For Shriner parade vehicle. Call (406) 390-3522.

Powder River Cattle Squeeze Chute

Call 808.391.0766 for more information.

German Shepherd Puppies For Sale

Two Female Black and Brown German Shepherd Puppies. Asking \$250.00. Call 406.326.2287.

Cajun electric smoker

Cajun electric smoker with timer, thermostat, burns pellets. Asking \$75.00, call 406.547.2184.

Mini Washing Machine For Sale

Mini washing machine, capacity 1KA,

B-Quick Bubbleator, portable, great for RV's or apartments. \$35.00. Call 406.547.2184.

Professional AG Lane Chicken Cages

Asking \$800 call 406.945.2027 with questions.

Flexi-Coil Sprayer

65XL Sprayer 130 ft booms, 1,000 gallon tanks, wind screens. \$750 or best offer, call 406.262.3969.

Sooner Aluminum 20 ft. Stock Trailer Gooseneck

Asking \$9,500.00. Call 406.326.2284.

Barrett Cattle Trailer

50 ft. Barrett Cattle Trailer. Asking \$10,000. Call 406.301.4035.

2021 Massimo 550 L Quad 4x4 EFI*

Power Steering, Hand Guards, 50-inch snowplow, winch, safety start, has reverse safety bell, parking brake, headlights and driving lights. Brake lights rear driving lights, two up seat, 145 miles with 16.7 hours, front and rear storage. Two-wheel and 4-wheel selector button, rear receiver hitch, liquid cooled, rear independent suspension, fixed issues with dash, new spark plug, fresh gas, checked all fluids and filters including coolant, battery checked out good. Asking \$5,995. Call 406.265.1735.

Swap & Shop is a classified advertising section of the Hill County Electric and Triangle Communications websites and newsletters. It is maintained as a service to members wanting to buy, sell and announce non-commercial items. To have an ad included, simply enter all the pertinent information on the online form. An administrator will review the information and if approved, the ad will be published. It will stay online for 1 year unless you notify us to remove or change it. Ads will also appear in our newsletters (space permitting). Due to print deadlines and space available, some ads may appear in the next month's issue. We reserve the right to abbreviate ads.

Happy swapping and shopping!