

SAVE the date

SEPTEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

September 24, 2024

Member Appreciation Open House 4-7:00 p.m.
Virtual Annual Meeting online all day!

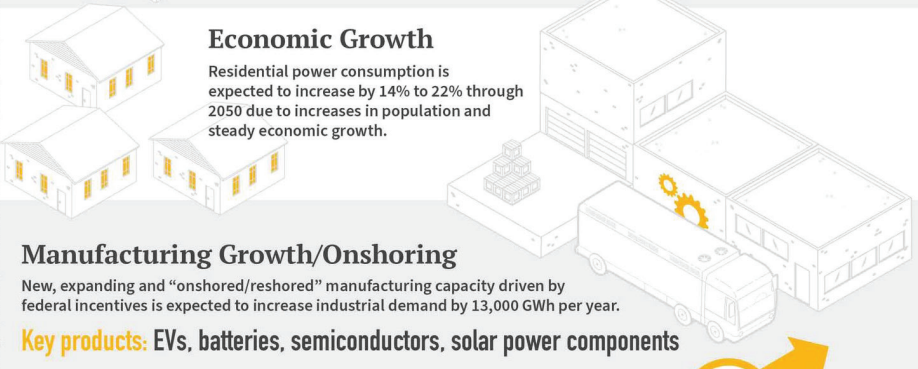
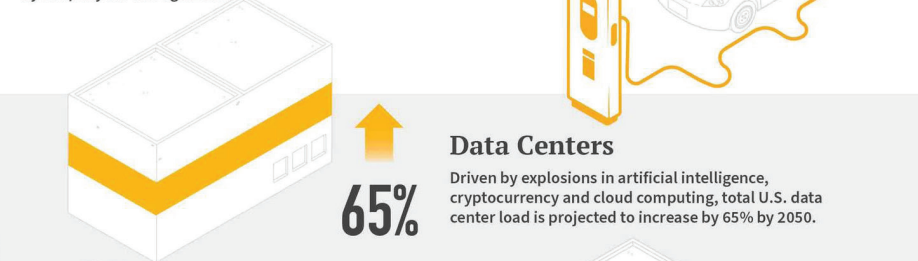
Soaring Demand

Second in a series

After decades of flat or declining electricity demand, the United States is in the midst of a boom in power use. Recent data shows that power consumption nationwide is set to increase by at least 38 gigawatts between now and 2028. This trend would ordinarily be great news for the power industry. But government policies aimed at shutting down fossil-fuel-based generation and years-long delays in permitting and siting for new transmission lines are turning this power boon into a capacity crisis. Here are the primary demand drivers:

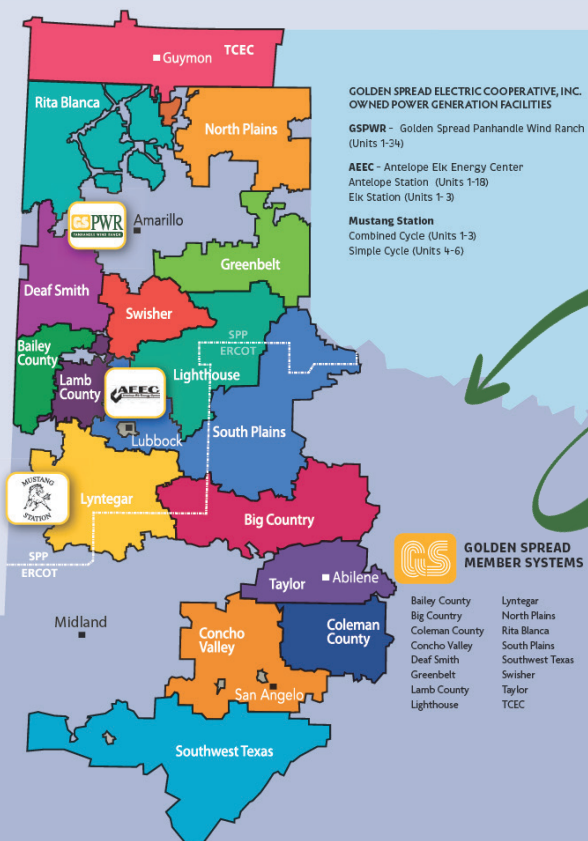
Electrification

Electric vehicle adoption, electrification of home heating and industrial electrification are expected to increase overall U.S. energy consumption by 1% per year through 2026.



Total Demand

Analysts predicted in 2023 that U.S. peak demand will increase by at least 38 GW over the next five years, nearly double the growth rate predicted in 2022.



Golden Spread Electric Cooperative, Inc.
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

BIG COUNTRY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Membergram



Youth Tour: A Trip of a Lifetime

Big Country EC proudly sponsored three outstanding students—Colton Hopkins, Kaitlyn Saffel, and Haelynn Logan—on the 2024 Government-in-Action Youth Tour. In June, these exceptional young people embarked on an exciting week-long adventure in Washington, D.C.

During their visit, Colton, Kaitlyn, and Haelynn explored some of the nation's most iconic landmarks and historical sites. Their journey included tours of the U.S. Capitol, insightful visits to museums and monuments, and meaningful moments at the National Cathedral, the Iwo Jima Memorial, and Arlington National Cemetery.

This immersive experience provided them with a unique perspective on American history and government, deepening their appreciation of our country's heritage.



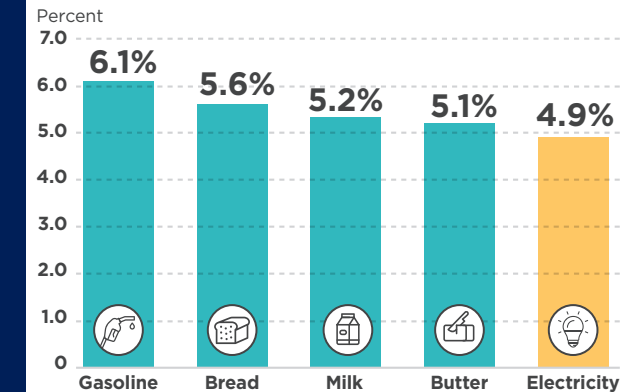
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August 2024

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. Looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains a good value.

Average Annual Price Increase 2018-2023



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Placing heat sources, such as lamps, computers or TVs, near your thermostat can result in false temperature readings, increased energy use and inconsistent cooling/heating. Make sure your thermostat is installed in an area clear of obstructions, electronic devices, direct sunlight and drafts.

Ensuring your thermostat is free from these types of interferences optimizes energy efficiency, improves indoor comfort and reduces wear and tear on your cooling/heating system.

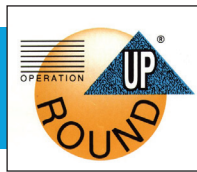
Source: energy.gov

Filter Easy

Home Air Filters Delivered When It's Time To Change Them.

When was the last time you changed your air filters? Chances are it wasn't recently. Let FilterEasy do the remembering while you enjoy improved indoor air quality, lower bills, and better maintenance of the most expensive appliances (HVAC & furnace) in your home!





Committed to Community

For complete information about our Operation Round Up program or to opt out of participation, visit bigcountry.coop/operation-round-up.

Operation Round Up Deadline Approaching

The Operation Round Up program is supported by BCEC members whose electric bills are “Rounded Up” to the nearest dollar. The “Round Up” amounts fund Operation Round Up for distribution to individuals and organizations with demonstrated financial need in the counties we serve: Borden, Fisher, Garza, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Mitchell, Nolan, Scurry, Shackelford, Stonewall and Throckmorton.

Every penny stays right here at home!

Who can apply to Operation Round Up?

- Local organizations or programs that provide vital community services, such as food banks, shelters, medical and health needs, rescue organizations, educational projects, childcare programs, and other community needs.
- Families and individuals with demonstrated financial need due to life-altering circumstances.

The next deadline for applications is at 5:30 p.m. on August 20, 2024.

LABOR DAY
BCEC WILL BE CLOSED ON
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, IN
OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY.
PHONES WILL BE ANSWERED
AND CREWS WILL RESPOND
TO OUTAGES.

Agricultural Tax Exemptions - In order to claim an exemption from Texas sales and use taxes on electricity and other items used in agricultural and timber operations, you are required to provide us with a registration number on Texas Agriculture Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification Form 01-924. All water wells should be exempt if used for irrigation or watering livestock. The Texas Comptroller's Office issues the registration number and those wanting to claim the exemption must fill out an application. Registration numbers must be renewed every four years. Applicants can request a paper application to mail in by calling 1-800-252-5555 or download a copy from the comptroller's website, www.getreadytexas.org. The generic exemption certificate, Form 01-339, cannot be used to claim the agricultural exemption. Accounts that do not have the new required form on file will be subject to taxation.

Commercial Tax Exemption Records - A completed and signed exemption form is required for each commercial tax exempt account. Accounts that do not have current exemptions on file will be changed to taxable accounts. Any refunds for taxes must be claimed from the State of Texas. Thank you for your help.

IMPACTS OF THE EPA'S POWER PLANT RULE

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) power plant rule threatens access to reliable electricity for millions of Americans. The EPA's power plant rule will:



- 1 Force the premature closure of many power plants that currently provide electricity 24/7.
- 2 Mandate the deployment of unproven carbon capture and storage technology.
- 3 Jeopardize the reliability of the grid at a time when America is already facing a surge in electricity demand.
- 4 Heighten the risk of rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the electric grid.
- 5 Increase costs for consumers as utilities are forced to pay for new power generation to comply with the EPA rule.

PCA Delivers Credit in July

As you may have noticed on your previous electric bill in July, there was a credit from the PCA. The PCA, or Power Cost Adjustment, is a mechanism we use to adjust your bills based on changes in the average price we pay for the power we provide.

How does Big Country manage the PCA?

Our primary goal in managing the PCA is to keep your bills as stable as possible and minimize any surprises. Our budget assumes a base cost of 6 cents per kilowatt-hour. However, actual prices can vary, primarily due to changes in natural gas prices. Depending on these fluctuations, the PCA can result in either an additional charge or a credit on your bill.

Each month, we monitor the fluctuations in our average cost of purchased power. If our costs are significantly higher or lower than budgeted, we use projections for the rest of the year to determine stable adjustments needed to our PCA rate. This approach helps us avoid abrupt changes and ensures a more predictable billing experience for you.

Recent Decrease in Power Costs

Over the past year, we have seen a significant drop in our power costs, largely due to lower natural gas prices. For example, from January to June of this year, the portion of our costs driven by natural gas prices decreased by 17% compared to the same period last year. This reduction in costs allows us to pass savings back to you through PCA credit.

Impact on Your Bills

Because of these lower costs, you will see a PCA credit of half a cent per kilowatt-hour on your July bill. **For an average household using 2,000 kilowatt-hours per month, this translates to a credit of about \$10.**

Looking Ahead

While we anticipate a slight increase in costs in 2025 due to expected changes in natural gas prices and other factors, we are optimistic about continuing the PCA credit for the rest of this year. However, we cannot guarantee that the credits will remain. We will keep you informed about any changes through our regular communications.

Golden Spread EC: A Bridge Between ERCOT and SPP

Golden Spread EC (GSEC), our generation and transmission cooperative, operates at the intersection of two major electricity markets: ERCOT (Electric Reliability Council of Texas) and SPP (Southwest Power Pool).

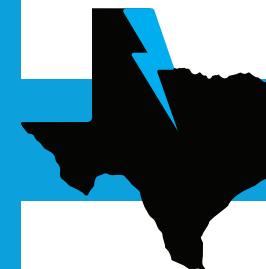
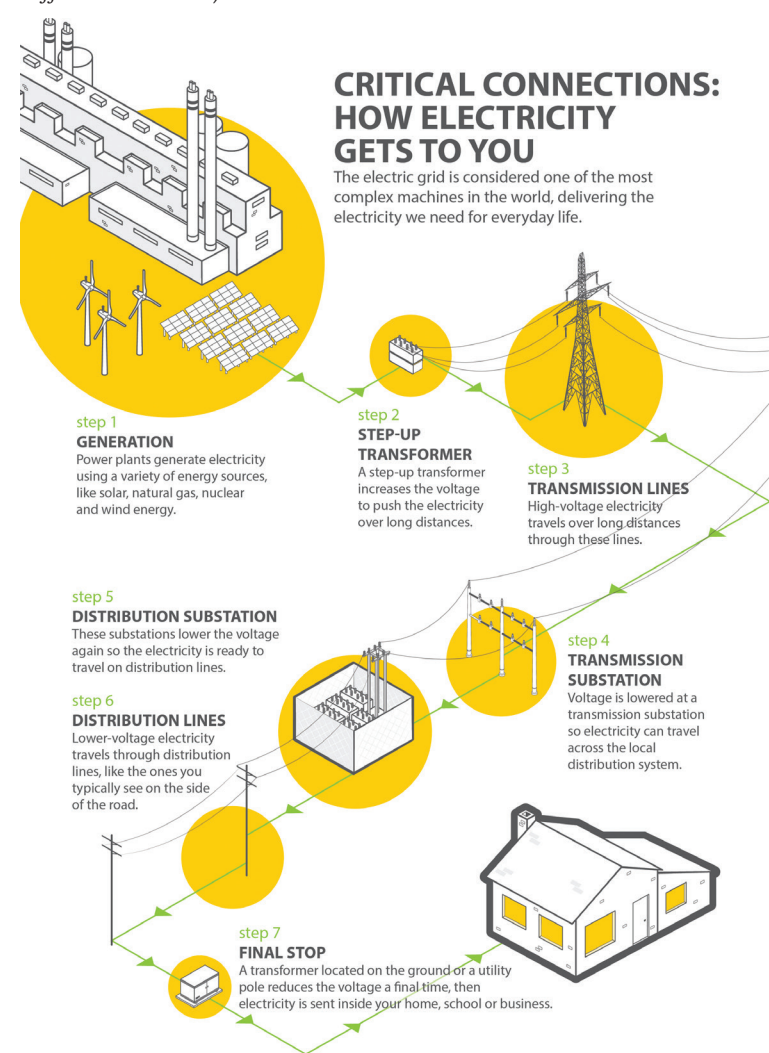
Here's why this dual presence matters:

Market Advantage: By participating in both ERCOT and SPP, GSEC gains access to a broader range of power transactions. This flexibility allows GSEC to optimize purchases and sales, ultimately benefiting our members.

Risk Mitigation: Both ERCOT and SPP face challenges related to resource adequacy. Factors like unconventional load growth (i.e., data centers) impact demand during peak periods and the transition to cleaner energy sources (like renewables) plus the retirement of older power plants pose challenges. However, by being a part of both ERCOT and SPP, GSEC reduces its reliance on a single grid.

In summary, GSEC's strategic positioning within these grids ensures reliable electricity supply for our cooperative members. Next time you flip that switch, remember the cooperative effort that keeps our lights on!

(Check out the graphics on the back page that illustrate BCEC's place within Golden Spread's service territory, and their place within the different markets.)



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Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 7:30-12:00, 1:00-5:30
Friday: 7:30-11:30

Contact Us

Toll Free: 1-888-662-2232
Roby: (325) 776-2244
Stamford: (325) 773-3684
Snyder: (325) 573-3161

Report Outages

Please **call** your local BCEC office to report power outages.



We're Mobile!



Access your BCEC account anytime with SmartHub! Download the app for your mobile device today by visiting www.bigcountry.coop or searching for SmartHub in the app store.

Ask about our partnerships with:



Rural Development Assistance Available Through BCEC
BCEC is an Equal Opportunity Lender.

Big Country Electric Cooperative, Inc. has a limited amount of funds available for low-interest loans to qualified applicants to stimulate rural development. Applicant does not have to be a member of Big Country Electric Cooperative. Please contact Sarah McLen at smclen@bigcountry.coop for details.



Call 811 at least 2 working days before you dig.
Visit www.texas811.org for more information.