

Your Rights as a Customer/Member of Wharton County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

**1815 E. Jackson | P. O. Box 31
El Campo, Texas 77437
979-543-6271 or 1-800-460-6271**

Hours: Monday-Friday 7:30AM – 4:30PM (except holidays)

I. RATE AND SERVICE INFORMATION:

You may, either by phone or by personal visit to the Cooperative's business office located at the above address, request copies of any portion of the Cooperative's rate and service tariffs and rules as filed with the Public Utility Commission of Texas. A nominal reproduction charge will be made for each copy and postage will be added if the copies are mailed. Service Tariffs are also available online at www.mywcec.coop.

II. METER TESTING:

As provided by the Rules of the Public Utility Commission, a residential member may request a test of your electric meter if you believe that the meter is not accurately reflecting your actual electric consumption. This test will be made at no charge to you, provided that the meter has not been tested during the previous four years. In the event that you request a test more often than four years and the meter is not defective, you will be required to pay a charge of not more than \$15 for the test.

III. DELINQUENT BILLS:

Under the tariff of this Cooperative as filed with the Public Utility Commission of Texas, you have sixteen (16) days from the date of issuance to pay an outstanding bill before it becomes delinquent. An additional ten (10) days is allowed before it is disconnected for non-payment.

IV. TERMINATION OF SERVICE:

Your electric service may be discontinued after proper notice for the following reasons:

- A. Failure to pay an outstanding bill within twenty-six (26) days of issuance.
- B. Failure to pay a delinquent account or meet the terms of a deferred payment plan.
- C. Violation of the Cooperative's rules for the use of service in such a manner that interferes with the service of others or the operation of non-standard equipment, provided that the Cooperative will make every attempt to notify you of the problem and allow you to remedy the situation.
- D. Failure to comply with the Cooperative's deposit and guarantee requirements.
- E. Tampering with the Cooperative's meter or equipment or by-passing same.

The Cooperative may also disconnect service at once and without notice where a dangerous condition exists and such disconnection shall remain in effect so long as the condition exists. The Cooperative will either mail or personally deliver a written notice of termination at least ten (10) days prior to the date of disconnection and if mailed will not fall on a holiday or weekend. Such disconnection will fall on the next work day. If you are seriously ill or will become more seriously ill as a result of termination of service, you may have your physician call or contact the Cooperative office within sixteen (16) days of the bill issuance concerning your condition. The physician must provide a confirmation letter to the Cooperative within twenty-six (26) days of issuance of bill and the Cooperative will refrain from termination (disconnection) of service for sixty-three

(63) days from the issuance of the bill, unless a lesser period is agreed upon. If you make a request to avoid termination under this provision, you must enter into a deferred payment agreement.

V. SERVICE AND BILLING DISPUTES:

If you disagree with the Cooperative regarding any aspect of the Cooperative's service, you may request a supervisory review. If you make such a request, you have five (5) days to participate in the review before the Cooperative may terminate service if the dispute is one in which the issues may result in such termination, provided that notice has been given under standard disconnection procedures. If the billing dispute is not resolved by such review, may appeal to the Public Utility Commission of Texas, 1701 N. Congress Ave., P. O. Box 13326, Austin, Texas 78711-3326 agency switchboard: (512) 936-7000; hotline: 888-782-8477; email: customer@puc.texas.gov. During the pendency of such appeal or other resolution of a dispute, you may avoid termination of service by paying the average of your monthly bill for the past twelve (12) months as determined by the Cooperative. In the event the dispute is not resolved within sixty (60) days, you must keep all subsequent bills current.

VI. ALTERNATE PAYMENT PLANS:

As a member of the Cooperative, you have a right to request alternate payment plans.

- A. Deferred Payment Plan - If you have not been delinquent in paying your bill more than two (2) times in the last twelve (12) months and are unable to pay any or all of your bill, you are qualified for a deferred payment plan. Such plan requires that you keep all subsequent bills current and pay monthly an amount agreed upon by you and the Cooperative. Do not sign the agreement unless you agree that it accurately reflects your account and the amount you have agreed to pay. If you do not fulfill the terms of the agreement your service may be terminated under standard termination procedures. Such breach of the agreement voids your right to a deferred payment plan or renegotiation to avoid termination. The cooperative is not required to offer this arrangement if you have had service for less than three (3) months.
- B. Variable Billing - Variable billing is available upon request for residential consumers. Contact the WCEC office for details.

VII. SERVICE RECONNECTION:

If your service is interrupted for any of the reasons listed under Section IV, you may re-establish service when all outstanding and delinquent bills are paid and when a deposit or other evidence of payment guarantee is provided to the Cooperative.

VIII. METER READINGS:

If you would like information regarding the proper method of reading your electric meter, the Cooperative will provide, on request, the necessary instructions.

IX. PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Electric bills may be paid by mail, in person, or at any local bank drive thru: NewFirst National Bank, Commercial State Bank, First Prosperity Bank, and First State Bank of Louise. A depository is also available at WCEC for payments after hours.

X. DEPOSIT POLICY:

You will not be required to pay a deposit if:

- A. You are 65 years of age or older and do not have an outstanding bill with another utility for service which occurred during the last 12 months.
- B. It you had service with another utility in the past two years and:
 - 1. Do not owe an outstanding bill for such service;
 - 2. Did not have more than two (2) occasions during the last 12 consecutive months of service in which a bill was paid after becoming delinquent; and
 - 3. Did not have service disconnected for non-payment during the last 12 months of service.
- C. If you can provide letters of credit or guarantee which are acceptable to the Cooperative.
- D. Receive WCEC approval on an authorized credit check.
- E. You have a co-signer that is a current WCEC member in good standing.

The service deposit is limited to one-sixth (1/6) of the estimated billing for one year. Deposits accrue interest at an annual rate set by the Texas Public Utility commission. This rate is determined annually. Interest will be credited to the appropriate account or paid to the member. Deposits on residential accounts will be refunded after any twelve (12) consecutive monthly billings in which service was not disconnected for non-payment, nor paid late on more than two (2) occasions. Deposits will be refunded or applied against any outstanding indebtedness upon termination of service.

XI. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

In the event you need financial assistance in paying your electric bill, you may contact one of the following social service agencies:

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| Blessing Cup Storehouse 507 Bruns, P. O. Box 533 El Campo, Texas 77437 Hours: Monday & Thursday 9am – 12noon | Contact: Phone: Fax: | Annie Kaspar 979-543-8203 979-543-7522 |
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| Combined Community Action, Inc. 165 W. Austin Street Giddings, Texas 78942 (Wharton, Matagorda, Jackson and Colorado counties) Hours: Monday – Friday, 9-12am, 1-5pm | Contact: Phone: Fax: | Cynthia Bell 979-732-6390 979-542-9565 |
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| Economic Action Community of the Gulf Coast Box 1685 Bay City, Texas 77404-1685 (Matagorda County residents) Hours: Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm | Contact: Phone: Fax: | Jody Johnson 979-245-3250 979-245-5699 |
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| Galveston County Community Action Council P. O. Box 3206 Galveston, Texas 7550 (Galveston & Wharton County residents) Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30am – 5:00pm | Contact: Phone: or | Paula Sneed 979-543-1561 979-532-822 |
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SHARE
213-A N. Richmond Rd. Box 101
Wharton, Texas 77488

Contact: Nina Klingaman
Phone: 979-282-2021

Department of Human Resources
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
P. O. Box 149030, Mail Code 765-H
Austin, Texas 78714-9030
Hours Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm

Phone: 512-929-7330

XII. NONDISCRIMINATION:

Your Cooperative provides electric service without discrimination as to member's race, nationality, color, religion, sex, or marital status.

XIII. SPECIAL SERVICES:

This is to advise that the telephone number for the teletypewriter for the deaf at the Public Utility Commission is 1-800-735-2988. TTY-FOR THE DEAF Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Sat. & Sun. – Closed

10/05/2017