



*Welcome
to*



Bluebonnet
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**MEMBER
HANDBOOK**



About Bluebonnet

This handbook contains important information about your electric cooperative. Please read and keep it handy for future reference.

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative is a member-owned electric service provider. Distribution cooperatives such as Bluebonnet buy electricity from wholesale providers and arrange for its transmission and distribution to members through the co-op's power lines.

Covering 3,800 square miles, Bluebonnet is one of the largest electric cooperatives in Texas and one of the oldest, having served residents in all or part of 14 Central Texas counties since 1939.

Being a co-op member has benefits. At Bluebonnet's Annual Meeting every May, members/owners elect the 9-member Board of Directors who govern the cooperative. Also, Bluebonnet shares with its members any money it collects above what is required to

run the business. The money, similar to dividends paid to a company's shareholders, is called capital credits.

Most of Bluebonnet's employees are Bluebonnet members. Those employees have a vested interest in the cooperative and live and work by Bluebonnet's values.

Members of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative agree to purchase electric service from Bluebonnet and to comply with, and be bound by, the Articles of Incorporation, the Tariff, the Bylaws, the member handbook and any and all policies and procedures of Bluebonnet.

Bluebonnet's Tariffs and Bylaws may be accessed at **bluebonnet.coop/document-center**.



Member Agreement

All members who need power at a new location where there are no Bluebonnet poles, lines or equipment must sign Bluebonnet's Member Agreement. Any new or current members wanting to add a meter to their account or take over an existing meter must also sign a member agreement. Service cannot be completed until the agreement is signed.

The agreement must be signed electronically, either by email or by visiting one of the co-op's member service centers.

Find a sample copy of the agreement in English and Spanish at bluebonnet.coop/document-center and scroll down to the "General information" section.

If you have questions or need assistance, call member services at **800-842-7708**.



Starting electric service

If you are in Bluebonnet's service territory, you can apply for co-op membership and electric service by calling Bluebonnet member services at **800-842-7708** or by visiting any of Bluebonnet's five member service centers in Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart and Manor. Additionally, you can request service online at bluebonnet.coop by clicking on "Start/stop service" from the top of any page.

To connect service at a location where our power is already available, please allow one business day's notice.

To start new service in a location where no electric service is available, call **800-842-7708**. We will work with you to determine where poles, lines and equipment should be placed, provide an estimate for material costs, and construct the job after your payment for material is made.

Applicable fees may be paid with cash, check, money order or credit/debit card.



Deposit requirements

A deposit may be required to start residential and commercial service. For more information, call **800-842-7708**.

Return of deposit

Deposits accrue interest at a rate established annually by the Public Utility Commission of Texas. Interest will be credited to individual electric accounts monthly. All deposits are refunded to your account after 12 consecutive billings as long as the member has not had more than one late payment or had service discontinued due to non-payment. If electric service was discontinued, any outstanding balance is deducted from the deposit.



Privacy policy

The Federal Trade Commission's Red Flags Rule, passed in November 2007, requires certain businesses that maintain covered accounts, including utilities, to implement a written identity-theft prevention program designed to detect the "red flags" of identity theft in day-to-day operations and establish a program to identify, prevent and mitigate its damage.

Because Bluebonnet maintains accounts for its members and allows the members to pay for service after it has been rendered, it is considered a creditor and is subject to the Red Flags Rule.

For questions about Bluebonnet's privacy policy, call **800-842-7708** or write to **Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 729, Bastrop, TX 78602**. You may request a printed copy or find information online at **bluebonnet.coop**. Click on "Privacy and Legal" in the bottom of any page on the website.



Your bill

Seven ways to make a payment

- 1)** Online at **bluebonnet.coop** (Learn how to create an online account on page 10).
- 2)** Through an **automatic payment** plan which you can set up online or through our automated phone system with a MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express or bank draft.
- 3)** On Bluebonnet's free **mobile app** for iPhone and Android smartphones, available in the App Store or on Google Play.
- 4)** By calling **800-842-7708** to use our automated voice recognition system or to speak to a member service representative from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- 5)** At one of five Bluebonnet **member service centers**, which accept cash, check, money order or credit/debit card.

6) By mail to Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 240, Giddings, TX 78942. Include your Bluebonnet account number on your check. No cash please — Bluebonnet is not responsible for cash sent via mail.

7) In a payment **drop box** at a member service center. No cash please — Bluebonnet is not responsible for cash left in the boxes.

Paperless billing

To sign up, log in to your account at **bluebonnet.coop** and click the "Settings" tab, then the "Paperless Billings" tab. Toggle the "Paperless" button to "ON," and click "Yes." On our mobile app, log in, click the "More" tab at the bottom, click "Settings," then "Paperless Billing." Toggle the button to the right (or on), and click "Yes." If you have any questions or need assistance, call member services at **800-842-7708** or **512-616-7708**.



A past-due bill

A member has 16 days from the date the monthly bill is issued to pay. That payment due date is noted on the bill. Payments received after 16 days are considered delinquent and will result in a late payment fee. If the payment is delinquent, Bluebonnet will send a notice by mail about possible discontinuation of service. Once that notice is issued, the member has 10 days to pay his or her electric bill or service may be discontinued.

If electric service is discontinued because a bill was not paid, service will not be reconnected until the member pays the full amount owed, in addition to a service interruption fee and a deposit, if applicable. Reconnect payments may be made 24/7 by logging in at bluebonnet.coop or on our mobile app or by calling **800-842-7708** (option 2, then follow the prompts). Payments may also be made at a member service center during normal business hours.



Payment assistance

The State of Texas Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program offers aid for those who need help paying their electric bill. A list of providers is available at **tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs**.

Information is also available on our website. Go to **bluebonnet.coop/assistance**.

6

Report outages: 800-949-4414

bluebonnet.coop



To cancel electric service

Members should provide the following information in person at a Bluebonnet member service center or by calling

800-842-7708:

- The service address, Bluebonnet account number or meter number;
- Two forms of personal identification;
- The date electric service should be discontinued; and
- A forwarding address and telephone number.

Online, click “Start/stop service” from the top of any page and fill out the “Stop service” form. Your request will be complete after a Bluebonnet member service representative contacts you.

To cancel electric service, please allow one business day’s notice.



Statement of Nondiscrimination

Bluebonnet provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants without regard to protected status: race/ethnicity, color, national origin, ancestry, sex/gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, marital/parental status, pregnancy/childbirth or related conditions, religion, creed, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other protected status.

Additionally Bluebonnet is committed to employ and advance in employment qualified minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and protected veterans (including, but not limited to, disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, Armed Forces service medal veterans, and active duty wartime or campaign badge veterans). Equal Employment Opportunity is the law.



Reporting an outage

4 ways to report unplanned outages

- 1) Call **800-949-4414**. Our automated system is available 24 hours a day, every day.
- 2) On our **mobile app**. Download the app on your iPhone or Android smartphone.
- 3) Go to **bluebonnet.coop** and click on “Report outage” at the top of any page.
- 4) Members with a cell phone on file are automatically enrolled in Bluebonnet’s Outage Alerts text service. Save **44141** in your phone, perhaps as “Bluebonnet outages.” Then, you can text **OUT** to report an outage, **STATUS** to request an update, **HELP** to get more information, **STOP** to quit and **BBOUTAGE** to re-enroll.



Planned outages

Bluebonnet’s more than 12,000 miles of power lines require ongoing maintenance. Occasionally, power must be interrupted to homes and businesses to allow our crews to work safely, effectively and efficiently. A member who will be impacted by a planned outage should receive an automated call informing them about the outage in advance. There will also be information about these planned outages on **bluebonnet.coop** and on the cooperative’s social media pages.



Tree trimming

To maintain safe and reliable electric service, Bluebonnet trims trees and removes vegetation too close to power lines within our easements or rights-of-way. Trees near power lines can contribute to outages and, in some instances, be dangerous. To request tree trimming or to report a hazard, call **800-842-7708**, visit a member service center or go to **bluebonnet.coop/tree-trimming**.



Meters

Meter tampering

Tampering with Bluebonnet's metering or electrical equipment is illegal, dangerous and costly to all Bluebonnet members. If you suspect someone is tampering with a Bluebonnet meter or other electrical equipment, call **800-842-7708**, visit a Bluebonnet member service center or email **memberservices@bluebonnet.coop**.

Meter loops

Bluebonnet provides specifics about amp size and meter loop requirements for requested electric service. A meter loop may be purchased from Bluebonnet or members may provide their own. Should a member provide his or her own meter loop, it is their responsibility to ensure the meter loop is at the job site and completely assembled according to Bluebonnet specifications. This must be done before construction of electric service or upgrades to service begin.

A list of meter loop specifications is available at member service centers and at **bluebonnet.coop/document-center**. Scroll down to the "Meter loop specifications, line extensions, renewable energy" section.

Automatic meter reading

Bluebonnet installs meters that are read electronically, eliminating the need for Bluebonnet personnel to enter a member's property to read the meter.



Member wiring

YOU RELEASE Bluebonnet from any and all liability for damage that may occur from your defective wiring or from Bluebonnet's failure to inspect such wiring, and you INDEMNIFY and hold Bluebonnet harmless from any and all such liability.

9



Bluebonnet.coop and our mobile app

Our website and free mobile app let you do business with Bluebonnet anytime, anywhere.

Create an online account to track your energy use, pay your bill and report outages.

At **bluebonnet.coop**, in the top right corner of any page, simply click on “Log in,” then click “Don’t have an online account? Register now,” and follow the prompts.

Download the Bluebonnet app on your smartphone or mobile device from Apple’s App Store or Google Play. On the app’s launch screen, click on “Don’t have an online account? Register now.”

For either sign-up method, you will need your account number. Find it on your bill or by calling member services at **800-842-7708**.

Your digital dashboard

After logging in at **bluebonnet.coop**, you will see quick links on the left, including “Make a Payment” and “Notifications.” Your Account Overview is in the middle, and key communications and alerts are on the top. On the app, you’ll find quick links at the top, your Account Overview and your Usage Overview.

Billing & payments

The “Bill & Pay” tab shows current billing details. You can also enroll in automatic payments, view your billing and payment history, or request a payment extension. To store a payment method, go to the “Settings” tab (or “More,” then “Settings” on the app).

Other features

To update your contact information or set up paperless billing, click on the “Settings” tab.

10

Report outages: **800-949-4414**

bluebonnet.coop

Connect with Bluebonnet



bluebonnet.coop

Do business 24/7 with our virtual member service center. Create an online account, pay your bill, study your energy use, report outages, set up automatic payments, sign up for paperless billing, request services and more.



Outage viewer

Track the number, size, location and status of outages in real time across our service area on the outage tracker at **outage.bluebonnetelectric.coop**.



Texas Co-op Power magazine

Monthly news and features about the cooperative and its service area are featured on Bluebonnet's blue-bordered pages in the center of Texas Co-op Power Magazine, which is mailed to all co-op members at no cost. Downloadable pdfs are available at **bluebonnet.coop/tcp**.



Social media

Get updates on Facebook and X/Twitter about major power outages, emergency alerts, Bluebonnet news, photos, interesting energy information and money-saving tips.

Facebook: @BluebonnetElectric

X/Twitter: @BluebonnetCoop

Instagram: @bluebonnetelectric

YouTube: Bluebonnet Coop

LinkedIn: bluebonnet-electric-cooperative-inc-

Member service centers

Bluebonnet has five member service centers where members can pay their electric bills or get help with co-op related matters — from new service connections to information about saving energy.

MEMBER SERVICES: 800-842-7708

BASTROP

690 Texas 71 West, Bldg 1
Bastrop, TX 78602
Fax: 512-321-3471

BRENHAM

2401 U.S. 290 West
Brenham, TX 77833
Fax: 979-836-0801

MANOR

810 Lexington St.
Manor, TX 78653
Fax: 512-272-8920

GIDDINGS

3190 E Austin St.
Giddings, TX 78942
Fax: 979-542-2392

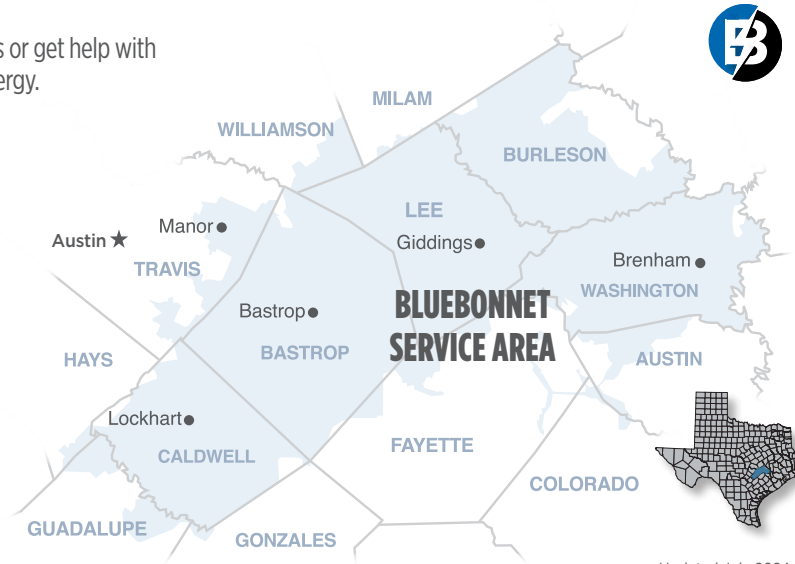
LOCKHART

1916 W. San Antonio St.
Lockhart, TX 78644
Fax: 512-398-9844

LOBBY & DRIVE-THROUGH HOURS:

8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Monday-Friday

Closed major holidays



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bluebonnet.coop