

NEWSLINE

A PUBLICATION OF SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

SAM HOUSTON EC HELPS BRING NOAA WEATHER RADIO TO EAST TEXAS

Thanks to Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, area residents can now get up to the minute, accurate weather information. Sam Houston Electric became an instrumental part in bringing the new NOAA radio weather station to East Texas when the Cooperative voluntarily upgraded the new tower at the Onalaska electric substation from the planned height of 100 feet to the 400-foot height required by the weather radio transmitter. H.E. Striedel, General Manager/CEO of Sam Houston EC commented, "We're glad there was something we could do to help bring NOAA weather radio to our area."

On May 30, Bernard Henderson, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative Engineer, cut the ribbon at the official dedication of the new NOAA Weather Radio Transmitter and Tower. Located on FM 3459, three miles north of Onalaska, the new station operates on weather radio frequency 162.500. Mr. Striedel was present, along with officials from the surrounding counties, school districts and businesses who shared the costs for the new weather radio transmitter.

Thanks to this cooperative community effort, weather broadcasts can now be heard by programming the frequency on a police scanner or on special weather warning receivers available from several manufacturers. By monitoring the new station, local school districts, businesses and citizens will be better able to take action before severe weather strikes in the five-county area the signal covers. This service is particularly important as we head into the stormy season.



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LETTER FROM THE DESK OF H.E. STRIEDEL

*General Manager
Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, Inc.*

We at Sam Houston Electric Cooperative realize that electric deregulation is a confusing issue for many of our member-owners. That's why Sam Houston Electric Cooperative has launched a deregulation education initiative to help you, our member-owners, and the community better understand what Senate Bill 7 means to you.

We've posted a comprehensive question and answer section on the Sam Houston EC web site devoted exclusively to deregulation. The site covers the most frequently asked questions we encounter about deregulation and presents simple answers in a format that is easy to search and review. We hope you will find it to be a valuable resource in your efforts to gain a better understanding of this complex subject. Please take a minute to review the site by logging on to www.samhouston.net/deregulation.

If you do not have Internet access or prefer to speak to someone directly about deregulation, call us at 1-800-458-0381.

In addition to this public resource, we've initiated a community outreach program. Keith Stapleton, our Manager of Communications, is currently touring the community giving a presentation entitled, "Electric Utility Restructuring in Texas" to local organizations and clubs. The presentation is designed to illustrate key points about deregulation and provide the community with a better understanding of key issues surrounding this hot topic. Associations or organizations interested in scheduling a time for Keith to present to their membership are invited to call our offices and make an appointment.

All the details and in-depth questions aside, there is a bottom line of the utmost importance for members to know. That is the fact that things will stay the same at Sam Houston Electric after deregulation takes effect in January 2002; at least for now. Because cooperatives are member-owned and do not operate for a profit, Senate Bill 7 granted co-ops the option to "wait and see" how deregulation affects the marketplace before entering into the competitive environment. Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, along with most Texas cooperatives, is planning to exercise that right come January 1. By taking the time to examine the effects of deregulation we believe we will be better equipped to determine if entering into the deregulated marketplace is the right decision for our member-owners.

In the meantime, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative will work to educate you about the ins and outs of deregulation, keep you informed and up-to-date as we come to know the true effects of this legislation and address any concerns you have surrounding the issue.

REMEMBER THIS

SAM HOUSTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SALUTES SCHOLARS

For the past nine years, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative has sponsored a Scholarship Program for area students whose parents or guardians are cooperative members. In that time, we've awarded nearly \$90,000 in scholarships to more than 100 local students. This year, 20 graduating seniors were selected as winners from 136 applicants. Each winner received a \$1,000 scholarship to apply to higher education at a university in the state of Texas. The winners are:

Katy Marie Anderton—Tarkington High School

Rebekah Lynn Aranda—Caney Creek High School

Rebekah Bowen—Coldspring Oakhurst High School

Brandy Cordelia Butler—Livingston High School

Edwin Douglas Fann—Corrigan Camden High School

Lindsay Beth Hardy—New Waverly High School

Adam Wayne Jenke—Coldspring Oakhurst High School

Timothy Magee II—Tarkington High School

Crystal Lynne Mills—Shepherd High School

Jennifer Oldham—Goodrich High School

Thomas Edward Plaster, Jr.—Caney Creek High School

Tina Marie Richard—Hardin High School

Amber K. Risenhoover—Corrigan Camden High School

Alisha Marie Roman—Trinity High School

Valerie Diana Shores—Leggett High School

Ashley Dianne Singleton—Vidor High School

Trinna Diane Sullivan—West Hardin High School

Maria Torres—Goodrich High School

Tiara Lee Westcott—Livingston High School

James Cory Whitworth—Chester High School

A reception was held at Sam Houston Electric headquarters in Livingston, where H.E. Striedel, Sam Houston Electric's General Manager/CEO, presented each winner with a certificate acknowledging their accomplishment.

Winners were selected based on criteria of grades, character, need and goals. Each applicant was required to submit an application outlining their current class standing, work experience, extra curricular activities and a short essay entitled "My Future Life Plans." Two recommendations in which teachers, counselors, principals and others rated qualities such as initiative, intellectual curiosity, creativity, leadership, integrity, sense of humor and self-confidence were also required.

The Scholarship Program is funded by unclaimed capital credit payments returned to the Cooperative by the state and is part of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's continuing effort to support the youth of our community. Scholarships are awarded annually on a funds available basis.

Sam Houston EC congratulates these scholarship recipients and wishes them well as they embark on their college careers.





HOT

SAFETY MATTERS

SCALDING RISKS ARE REAL

Every year, almost 4,000 people are scalded by hot tap water. Most of these accidents involve the elderly and children under the age of five. You might be surprised to find out that just two seconds of exposure to water that's heated to 150 degrees will cause a third-degree burn—the most serious type—in most adults. And if water is heated to 140 degrees, that serious burn can occur in just six seconds. But if water is kept at 120 degrees, it takes five minutes of exposure to develop a serious burn.

Truth of the matter is that very few of us need to set our water heater temperature at more than 120 degrees and doing so is just an invitation for a serious accident. Plus, the hotter the temperature your heater is set at, the higher your electric bill. Why make your water heater work harder than it needs to?

Check the temperature setting on your electric water heater. If it's higher than 120

degrees, you may want to reduce the setting. If you plan to reset your thermostat, don't use hot water for two hours before resetting your thermostat. Start by shutting off the current to the water heater, then turn off the circuit breaker to the heater or remove the fuse that serves the heater. Most electric water heaters have two thermostats; you must set both to the same temperature for proper operation. To reach these thermostats, remove the upper and lower access panels. Adjust the thermostat following the instructions provided with the water heater. To check your water heater's temperature, hold a candy thermometer or meat thermometer under the faucet.

If you're not sure how to adjust your electric water heater, play it safe and call your electric cooperative for help. If you have a gas water heater, call your gas company for information.



COVER YOUR KIDS WITH THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is operating in accordance with the Texas State Plan as approved by the Health Care Financing Administration June 15, 1988 and amended November 5, 1999. It provides children's healthcare insurance for families who earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid health care, yet cannot afford to buy private insurance. CHIP is the perfect healthcare insurance solution for parents whose employer programs don't offer healthcare insurance coverage for children or parents whose employer-provided insurance is cost prohibitive.

CHIP is offered by private health plans and coverage is comparable to that provided to families who get insurance through employers. CHIP insurance is designed to solve insurance cost problems for many Texas families. Most families with coverage through the CHIP program will only pay an annual fee of \$15 to \$18 to cover all the children in their family.

CHIP is designed specifically to cover the unique healthcare needs of children and therefore covers services such as routine check-ups and vaccinations that all children require on a regular basis. In addition, co-payments for doctor visits, prescription drugs, and emergency care are an added benefit. More in-depth medical services such as hospital care, surgery, x-rays, therapies, mental health and substance abuse treatment, eye tests, glasses and dental care are also covered under the plan.

To qualify for CHIP a child must be:

- A Texas resident
- A US citizen or legal permanent resident (the citizenship or immigration status of the parents *does not affect the child(ren)'s eligibility* and is not reported on the application form)
- Under age 19
- Be uninsured for at least 90 days (although there are several exceptions to this requirement)
- Living in a family that meets CHIP income requirements

To find out about this program or to apply, call 1-800-647-6558. Operators take calls and questions from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Central Standard Time, Monday-Friday and until 3 p.m. on Saturday. You can also visit the TexCare Partnership web site at www.texcarepartnership.com for more information or to download an application.



BEST CHICKEN PASTA SALAD

Beat the August heat with this cool summer salad. It's perfect for any ladies' luncheon, yet hearty enough for bigger supper appetites.

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
- 1/2 cup steak sauce
- 1 12 ounce package fusilli pasta
- 2 cubes chicken bouillon
- 1 Vidalia onion, diced
- 2 avocados – peeled, pitted and diced
- 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup Ranch-style salad dressing

Preheat an outdoor grill for high heat. Place breasts into a glass baking dish and marinate in steak sauce for 15 to 60 minutes. Grill chicken until no longer pink and juices run clear. Remove from grill and chop into bite-size pieces.

To a large pot of boiling water, add bouillon cubes and pasta. Cook pasta until al dente. Drain well.

In a large bowl, combine chicken, pasta, onion, avocados and tomatoes. Mix in salad dressing; cover and refrigerate until chilled.

Serves 8.