

# MEMBER HANDBOOK 2021

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is local and built by the communities we serve. Our consumer-members have guided Sam Houston Electric Cooperative and their own electricity needs since our founding in 1939. Unlike investor-owned utilities, where the focus is on profits, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is not-for-profit and focused on providing reliable service and cost-effective power.

**Membership in the Co-op provides** special benefits such as capital credits, the opportunity to elect the 11-member board of directors, and a voice in Co-op business.

**The Co-op's job doesn't stop once electricity is delivered.** We provide value-added member and community services, and we are residents of East Texas with a vested interest in serving you — be it through education initiatives or community development programs.

## YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Sam Houston Electric Cooperative Board of Directors is made up of active and engaged Co-op members. The board members represent their neighbors' and communities' best interests and provide direction for the Co-op's priorities and future. Each one commits time to education, training and listening to their communities.



Don Boyett  
DISTRICT 1



Mike Oldner  
DISTRICT 1



Milton Purvis  
DISTRICT 1



Casey Evans Davis  
DISTRICT 1



James Elmore  
DISTRICT 2



Gary Jenke  
DISTRICT 2



Robert C. Boyd  
DISTRICT 3



Katherine Hardin  
DISTRICT 4



Chuck Turner  
DISTRICT 4



W.E. "Ernie" Miles  
DISTRICT 5



Jim Seale  
DISTRICT 5

DISTRICT 1 Angelina, Polk and Trinity Counties

DISTRICT 2 San Jacinto County

DISTRICT 3 Tyler and Jasper Counties

DISTRICT 4 Hardin and Liberty Counties

DISTRICT 5 Montgomery and Walker Counties

## MEMBER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Sam Houston Electric Cooperative member, you have the right to:

**Receive adequate and dependable electric service.** From maintenance to upgrades, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is proactive in preventing unnecessary power interruptions.

**Have privacy. Sam Houston EC complies with the Open Records Act.** However, we respect the privacy of our members, and keep the information in our member files confidential.

**Be heard at member meetings.** You are entitled to be recognized and to be provided an opportunity to speak at meetings on the condition that you observe the rules of parliamentary procedure.

**Receive your share of capital credits.** The Cooperative distributes excess capital to its members as financial conditions permit.

**Be informed about Sam Houston EC.** We are happy to provide you with information about the Cooperative's rates, tariffs, programs, special services and operating procedures.

**Have your property treated with care by Sam Houston EC personnel.** When it is necessary for our employees to access your property for maintenance or construction, special care will be taken to ensure that we leave the area as undisturbed as possible.

**Be heard if you have a dispute or complaint with Sam Houston EC.** We want to hear from you. Contact a member service representative at 1-800-458-0381.

**Experience service without discrimination.** We ensure that Cooperative members will not be discriminated against based on race, color, sex, nationality, religion or marital status.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is dedicated to increasing value to members by achieving and sustaining:

- a strong safety culture;
- consistent reliability improvement;
- service excellence;
- financial stewardship; and
- a strategy for the future.

== LIFE IS GOOD ==  
In CO -OP Country

# MEMBER HANDBOOK 2021

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## CONNECTIONS

Getting Connected, Reconnected or Disconnected

### Establishing Credit for Service

If you are applying for service for the first time or reapplying after a discontinuance of service, you may not be required to pay a deposit if you meet the requirements for waiving deposits, as detailed in Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's deposit policy. The basic guidelines are outlined below. For complete details of the deposit policy, visit [SamHouston.net](http://SamHouston.net) or call us at 1-800-458-0381.

You may be exempt from paying a deposit for residential service if you meet any one of the following conditions:

- You can provide an acceptable letter of credit showing all the following:
  - You have been a customer of any electric utility for the same kind of service within the last two years;
  - You are not delinquent in payment of any such electric utility service account;
  - You were not late more than twice in paying a bill during the last 12 months of service; and
  - You did not have service disconnected for nonpayment.
- You can demonstrate a satisfactory credit rating by an acceptable credit agency, as defined by Sam Houston Electric Cooperative.
- You are medically indigent.
- You are a member who currently has service with the Cooperative. The deposit for additional service will be waived if:
  - You have not been late more than twice in paying a bill in the last 12 months of service; and
  - You have not been disconnected for nonpayment.
- You are 62 years or older and do not have an outstanding account balance within the last two years with Sam Houston Electric Cooperative or another electric utility for the same type of service.
- You show proof of having been a victim of family violence.

**Reconnection** - If your service is terminated, you may reestablish service when all amounts due to Sam Houston Electric Cooperative are paid.

**Voluntary Disconnection** - If you are moving or otherwise choose to have your service disconnected, please contact our business office as soon as possible to arrange for disconnection and a final meter reading.

**myPrePay Program** - Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is proud to offer "pay as you go" electricity via myPrePay. There's no difference in the service you'll receive — just in how and when you pay for it. You're in control. You can pay \$10 at a time, or you can pay enough to cover several months. myPrePay offers Sam Houston Electric Cooperative members electric service without deposits and reconnect fees. Each payment transaction must be a minimum of \$10. And best of all, electricity is the same price for myPrePay accounts, without any fees or markups. To learn more, call a member service representative at 1-800-458-0381.

**Landlord Connect Program** - Active Sam Houston Electric Cooperative members who own rental property may wish to participate in the Landlord Connect Program, which automatically puts a rental property's service back into the landlord's name when a renter requests a disconnect. The landlord will be charged only a \$25 fee for transferring service from the tenant. To participate in this program, please contact the Co-op to fill out a Landlord Agreement.

### Termination of Service

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

- Failure to pay an outstanding bill in full within 30 days of issuance, or failure to meet the terms of a deferred payment plan;
- Violation of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's rules for the use of service in such a manner that interferes with the service of others, or the operation of nonstandard equipment, provided that the Cooperative attempts to notify you of the problem and allows you to remedy the situation; or
- Failure to comply with Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's deposit and/or fee requirements.

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative may disconnect service at once and without notice:

- In instances of bypassing or tampering with meters or equipment, or other instances of diversion; or
- Where a dangerous condition exists.

**Getting Your Deposit Back** - Following disconnection, the Cooperative will promptly and automatically refund deposits plus accrued interest, or the balance, if any, in excess of the unpaid bills for service furnished.

When a member has paid for service for 12 consecutive residential bills or for 24 consecutive commercial or industrial bills without service being disconnected for nonpayment and without more than two delinquent bills, and is not delinquent in the payment of current bills, the Cooperative will refund the deposit plus accrued interest in the form of a credit to the member's bill.

Subject to the above provisions, deposits may be held for the term of service as rendered necessary by the Cooperative.

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## PAYMENT AND BILLING OPTIONS

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative provides a variety of payment options designed to simplify bill paying

**Billing and Payment Basics** - Sam Houston Electric Cooperative statements are sent monthly. Payment is due 20 days after issuance. A bill is considered delinquent if payment is not received at Sam Houston Electric Cooperative by 5 p.m. on the due date indicated on your statement.

**Group Billing** - Members with multiple accounts can receive a single itemized statement each month that includes a total payment due for all their accounts with the Cooperative. For more information, contact Sam Houston Electric Cooperative about Group Billing at 1-800-458-0381.

## EASY WAYS TO PAY

### 1. Pay With Cash, Check or Credit Card

You can make payments at one of our branch offices, online through your mySamHouston account, or by phone (1-800-458-0381) with a credit card and selecting option No. 1. Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express cards are accepted. You can also make payments through our mobile mySamHouston app.

### 2. Even Monthly Payments Help Balance Your Budget

Qualifying accounts can evenly divide anticipated annual electric costs throughout the year, ensuring that your bill doesn't fluctuate from month to month. Even monthly billing is a great way to reduce the impact that fluctuating energy use can have on your monthly budget.

### 3. Automatic Payments Are Easy

When you enroll in our safe, free automatic payment program, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative will draft your bank account or charge your credit card in the amount of your electric bill each month.

### 4. Visit Fidelity Express Payment Centers

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative has teamed up with Fidelity Express to offer members the ability to pay their bills with cash at conveniently located payment stations in stores and businesses throughout the Co-op's service area. There is a \$1.50 fee per transaction for this service. For payment station locations, visit SamHouston.net or give us a call (1-800-458-0381).

### 5. The Deferred Payment Plan Can Help in a Pinch

Members who maintain a payment record with no more than two delinquent notices during the preceding 12 months are eligible to request a deferred payment plan, which allows payment of an outstanding debt in monthly installments.

### 6. myPrePay Requires No Deposit

Electric service can be established without deposits and reconnect fees with myPrePay. Each payment transaction must be a minimum of \$10.

## ENERGY SERVICES

Surge Protection, Area Lighting, Efficiency and Accuracy

**mySamHouston Online Portal** - Sam Houston Electric Cooperative members have access to detailed data about their energy use in real time. This helps you identify ways to use less electricity and reduce your monthly bills. Set up your own alert preferences, and we'll let you know when your bill is due, when a payment is received, when you're close to your desired monthly energy usage, or even when your power is out — and an estimated restoration time.

**mySamHouston Mobile App** - Access to your mySamHouston account is now available through a free mobile app for your Apple or Android device. Download the mySamHouston app today and start enjoying its benefits wherever you go!

**Area Lighting** - Sam Houston Electric Cooperative offers commercial-grade LED area lighting. These lights automatically come on at dusk and turn off at dawn. Service costs include all maintenance and will appear on your monthly bill. Sam Houston Electric Cooperative area lights are often more energy efficient and less expensive than alternatives you might purchase and install yourself.

**Energy Audits** - Energy audits are available free to all our members. This service enables a better understanding of how your energy dollars are spent, and pinpoints ways to reduce your energy use and save money. An energy audit includes a home or business inspection and a personalized report of recommended actions for improved energy efficiency.

**Meter Reading and Testing** - The Co-op's meter readings are the basis of your monthly billing. If we are unable to read your meter, billing will be estimated until an actual reading is obtained, at which time an adjustment will be made to your account if necessary. Meter tests are free of charge, provided a similar request has not been made during the previous four years.

**Upgrades** - If you're planning to upgrade the electrical service facilities at your home or business, call Sam Houston Electric Cooperative first. Our experts keep up with ever-changing specifications and electrical codes. We can help make the transition a smooth one.

# MEMBER HANDBOOK 2021

## SERVICE CHARGES AND RATES

### Making Sense of Rates

#### We're a Not-for-Profit Business

Our primary focus is to look out for your best interests. Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's bottom-line commitment is delivering reliable power at some of the most reasonable rates around.

#### Stewardship of Resources

Our mix of electric generation sources is distributed over a variety of natural resources. The electricity we deliver to our members is generated by wind, hydropower, coal and natural gas. We're keeping an eye on the future as well with renewable green projects such as solar and hydropower. By diversifying our electric generation sources, we are able to ensure reliable, low-cost electricity for years to come.

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative wants to help its members conserve energy while also saving money. You can reduce your annual electric costs up to 30% by taking steps to conserve energy. Find out how the little changes add up at [TouchstoneEnergy.com](http://TouchstoneEnergy.com).

#### Maintaining Stable Rates

Our not-for-profit cooperative business model helps us provide our members with safe, reliable and cost-effective electricity. In an increasingly volatile energy market where costs are rising to purchase power, maintain delivery systems and distribute power, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative will continue to do everything possible to maintain stable rates.

#### Cooperation Works

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative works with nine other co-ops in East Texas to purchase electricity at a bulk rate. Working with other cooperatives to produce and purchase electricity helps control wholesale power costs and saves you money.

Service	Charge
Connection Fee (trip required)	\$75.00
Connection Fee (no trip required)	\$25.00
Connect Security Light (existing pole)	\$50.00
False Call for Service (business hours)	\$75.00
False Call for Service (after hours)	\$150.00
Trip Fee (business hours)	\$50.00
Trip Fee (after hours)	\$150.00
Late Payment	5%
Insufficient Funds Check	\$25.00
Trip Reconnect Fee (business hours)	\$75.00
Trip Reconnect Fee (after hours)	\$150.00
Remote Reconnect Fee	\$25.00
Meter Test Single Phase <sup>1</sup>	\$75.00
Meter Test Three Phase <sup>1</sup>	\$150.00
Meter Tampering	\$300.00
Nonstandard Meter Setup Fee	\$125.00
Nonstandard Meter Monthly Fee	\$50.00
Prepaid Metering Monthly Fee	N/A
Special Pole Fees:	Actual Cost <sup>2</sup>
• Moving poles	
• Moving/Installing anchors and guy anchors	
• Moving/Raising lines to provide temporary clearance	
Special Services	Actual Cost <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If the meter has passed a test in the last four years.  
No cost if meter fails.

<sup>2</sup> Actual cost of material and labor plus standard mileage fee.

Service	Rate	Base Charge	Demand	Energy Charge*	Delivery Charge (per kWh)	Delivery Charge (per kW)	PCRF
Residential	R01	\$19.75	N/A	0.0744	0.0310	N/A	N/A
Small General Service Single Phase	SG1	\$20.50	N/A	0.0687	0.0389	N/A	N/A
Small General Service Three Phase	SG2	\$39.50	N/A	0.0687	0.0413	N/A	N/A
General Rate Service Single Phase	G1	\$20.50	\$0 for first 10 kW \$4.15 over 10 kW	0.0579	0.0374	\$0 for first 10 kW \$1.60 over 10 kW	N/A
General Rate Service Three Phase	G2	\$39.50	\$0 for first 10 kW \$4.15 over 10 kW	0.0579	0.0398	\$0 for first 10 kW \$1.60 over 10 kW	N/A
Large Power Service	L1/L2	\$175.00	\$5.07	0.0525	0.0305	\$1.18	N/A
Large School Service	LSS	\$150.00	\$2.98	0.0527	0.0227	\$1.77	N/A
Outdoor Lighting Service LED (150 watt equivalent)		\$9.75	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outdoor Lighting Service LED (250 watt equivalent)		\$17.10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outdoor Lighting Service LED (400 watt equivalent)		\$21.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outdoor Lighting Service LED (1,000 watt HPS) at 320 kWh/Month		\$40.14	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

\*Energy Charge, which reflects the pass-through wholesale cost of electricity, is subject to change, as wholesale power costs fluctuate from time to time. Updated 11-1-2020.



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## COMMUNITY

### Serving Beyond Our Lines

Cooperatives were created to serve the best interests of their consumer-members. Everything we do at Sam Houston Electric Cooperative contributes to fulfilling that mission.

**Scholarship Program** - High school seniors whose parent or legal guardian is a current Cooperative member are eligible to apply for the Co-op's annual scholarship program. Twenty-two \$3,000 scholarships and six \$1,500 vocational scholarships are awarded each year. Scholarship awards are funded by unclaimed capital credits returned by the State of Texas. Interested students can contact their high school counselors, call a member service representative, or download a scholarship application at SamHouston.net.

**Operation Round Up®** - Members can elect to have their bills rounded up to the next dollar (e.g., a \$125.75 bill becomes \$126.00) through the Operation Round Up Program. The difference (\$0.25) is invested back into our communities through grants to local nonprofit, civic or community-based organizations to enhance the quality of life in our communities. To participate in Operation Round Up, call us at 1-800-458-0381 or visit our website at SamHouston.net.

**Helping Hands** - The nonprofit Helping Hands program assists members who are unable to pay their electric bills due to financial hardship. The program is funded entirely by donations from Sam Houston Electric Cooperative consumer-members, employees and directors. Since 1992 we have collectively donated \$500,000 to those in need. Donations are distributed by local social service agencies. Qualifying members can receive assistance once per year.

**The Government-in-Action Youth Tour** is a youth leadership program sponsored by Sam Houston Electric Cooperative and organized by Texas Electric Cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Highlights of the trip include meeting congressional leaders, visiting national monuments, and learning from inspirational leadership speakers. Eligible applicants must be a high school sophomore or junior, and a dependent of a Sam Houston Electric Cooperative member with permanent resident status in the Co-op's service area. For more information about Youth Tour, visit YouthTour.org and TexasYouthTour.com or SamHouston.net.

**Educational Programs** - Cooperative Principle No. 5 states, "Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation."

Education, training and information are among the cornerstones of the of the Cooperative's principles. Sam Houston Electric Cooperative sponsors presentations and educational programs for local civic organizations, school students and youth groups. Safety, renewable energy and conservation are just a few

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

### When the Power Goes Out, so Do WE

**Time Is of the Essence** - Although Sam Houston Electric Cooperative takes preventive measures to maintain rights-of-way and strengthen our electrical distribution system, power outages are still caused from time to time due to fallen trees, lightning or equipment failure. Regardless of the cause, rest assured the power-restoration process starts as soon as an outage is reported. Our member service representatives, dispatch department and line technicians are committed to getting your lights back on as quickly as possible.

**Report the Outage** - Member calls help us locate the outage source and restore power faster. To report an outage, call 1-888-444-1207, or report it via the mySamHouston app. Members can also report outages by texting OUT to 76848. Members must first enroll in this service to authorize the Co-op to send information by text message. Visit SamHouston.net/account/account-notifications to learn more.

### Tips for Managing an Outage

**Have an Outage Kit on Hand** - Store essentials such as a flashlight, first-aid kit and nonperishable food in a central location where they can be easily located to help ease the inconvenience of an outage.

**Check the Outage Viewer** - For detailed outage information and updates, visit Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's website or mobile app to access the online outage viewer. The interactive map offers details about current system outages, including locations, members affected and restoration estimates.

**Find Us on Facebook and Follow Us on Twitter** - For quick access to news, programs and major outage information, connect with Sam Houston Electric Cooperative on Facebook at Facebook.com/SamHoustonEC. Our Facebook page does not have a representative available 24/7 to respond to postings, so please be sure to report any outages toll-free at 1-888-444-1207 or use our mySamHouston mobile app. You can also follow the Co-op on Twitter: @SamHoustonEC.

**If You or Someone in Your Home Require(s) Life-Sustaining Equipment** - Please notify the Co-op if you, a family member, a tenant or anyone in your home are/is dependent on electrically powered medical equipment. Likewise, if your situation changes, and the equipment is no longer needed, please notify us so we may keep your account current. While this alert will notify us that a condition exists at the location, it will not prevent the account from being subject to disconnection for non-payment if the bill becomes delinquent.

# MEMBER HANDBOOK 2021

## CONTACT US

### Calling Sam Houston Electric Cooperative

**Billing- or Service-Related Calls** - To help us serve you better, we use an automated phone system. This system helps us process more calls than would be humanly possible, and it's easy to use. Just call us toll-free at 1-800-458-0381, follow the voice prompts, and have your account number and PIN number ready. It's your ticket to faster service!

**To Report an Outage** - Call our toll-free outage line at 1-888-444-1207 and follow the voice prompts. Be sure to have your account number ready. Never assume someone else will call to report an outage. By reporting outages promptly, you help us pinpoint problem areas, which allows our crews to restore your power faster. You can also use our mySamHouston mobile app to quickly and easily report outages.

**Billing Disputes** - If you have a dispute regarding the amount of your electric bill, you may request a supervisory review by the Cooperative. If you do not participate in such a review, electric service may be disconnected, provided a notice of disconnection has been issued. The Cooperative must complete its determination within 60 days.

**Problems or Concerns** - If you have a problem or concern about any action of the Cooperative, you may request a supervisory review. If you are dissatisfied with the supervisory review, you may submit your complaint to the management review team.

### Do We Have Your Current Contact Information?

For us to serve you best, it's important that we know how to contact you. If you've recently moved, you can update your address and phone information online at SamHouston.net or contact a member service representative at 1-800-458-0381.

*Calendar photos taken by Communications Specialist Chad Simon.  
January taken by Chief Communications Officer Keith Stapleton.*

## LOCATIONS

### Contacting Sam Houston Electric Cooperative

#### Livingston Headquarters

1157 East Church Street  
P.O. Box 1121  
Livingston, TX 77351-1121  
Local: 936-327-5711

#### Coldspring Branch Office

14201 Highway 150 West  
P.O. Box 1726  
Coldspring, TX 77331-1726  
Local: 936-653-5400

#### Social Media

Facebook.com/SamHoustonEC  
Twitter: @SamHoustonEC  
Instagram: @samhoustonec

#### Woodville Branch Office

1424 Highway 287 North  
P.O. Box 2280  
Woodville, TX 75979-2280  
Local: 409-283-8251

#### Toll Free, Número Gratuito

1-800-458-0381

#### To Report Outages

Local: 936-653-5400

#### Para Reportar un Apagón Llame al Número Gratuito

1-888-444-1207

## HOURS OF OPERATION

#### Business Hours

Monday - Friday  
7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

#### Call Center

Monday 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Tuesday- Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday 8:00 a.m. - noon  
24-Hour Outage Reporting

The information included in this handbook is available in Spanish upon request.

To review a complete copy of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's bylaws, please visit SamHouston.net.

#### Horas de Negocio

Lunes a Viernes  
7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

#### Centro de Llamadas

Lunes 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Martes a Viernes 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Sábado 8:00 a.m. - mediodía  
Servicio al cliente las 24 horas

Información en este libro es disponible en Español.