



# Co-op Community Rises to Storm's Challenge

MESSAGE FROM  
**GENERAL MANAGER/CEO JERRY BOZE**

**April 29th will be a day** folks in Henderson and Van Zandt counties will remember forever with multiple tornados ripping across our communities. From all of us here at TVEC, words cannot express our sorrow for the loss of life along with the devastation and destruction that many of our TVEC members experienced, as well as those served by other neighboring utilities.

When a disaster of this magnitude strikes, there are many well-trained people who spring in to action. A big THANK YOU is due to the many first responders and law enforcement personnel whose actions saved lives and provided assistance to those in dire need.

I also want to take this opportunity to mention some other people whose talents and skills were so greatly exemplified during this very difficult time. I am so proud of all my coworkers here at TVEC. Their response to the aftermath of these tornados was one of urgency, but not panic.

Here at TVEC we have a Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) that serves as a guide and blueprint for how, and what everyone is required to do in the event of a disaster. When management activated the DRP on Saturday night, personnel from every single department kicked into high gear.

The first thing on the list was to assess the damage, and it did not take long to see that this may have been the worst damage to the cooperative's system in its history. Not only were there miles of distribution lines torn down, but large transmission structures that supply power to our substations were ripped apart.

Just hours later on Sunday morning, utility contractors from

across the state began arriving to get to work rebuilding lines and restoring power to the communities who suffered so much. Grayson-Collin Electric Cooperative from Van Alstyne, TX was on site bright and early on Sunday to assist in any way needed. Other electric cooperatives across the state called and offered assistance as well. We are very grateful to our fellow cooperatives because one of the Seven Cooperative Principles we operate under is "Cooperation Among Cooperatives".

Also on Sunday, our statewide association, Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC) began delivering poles, materials and equipment to replace what had been broken and damaged.

When this kind of disaster upends lives of our members, our goal here at is to get everything back to normal as quickly as possible by restoring power. I know that for some, a new normal will have been forever altered by the loss of loved ones, the loss of property and even a loss of peace of mind.

There are so many people and organizations to thank for their hard work and assistance in restoring power to the TVEC members. At some point, we will recognize those companies individually so the cooperative membership will know who they are.

In closing, the patience and words of encouragement to the TVEC employees by members of the cooperative during this very difficult time meant more than you will ever know. Employees of TVEC clearly know the purpose and business model of an electric cooperative. In the co-op world, we don't have customers, we have member-owners. This is your cooperative, and we are simply the caretakers of your business.

**Newly installed power lines were the first signs of recovery amid paths of shattered homes, storm-tossed cars and unrecognizable landscape.**



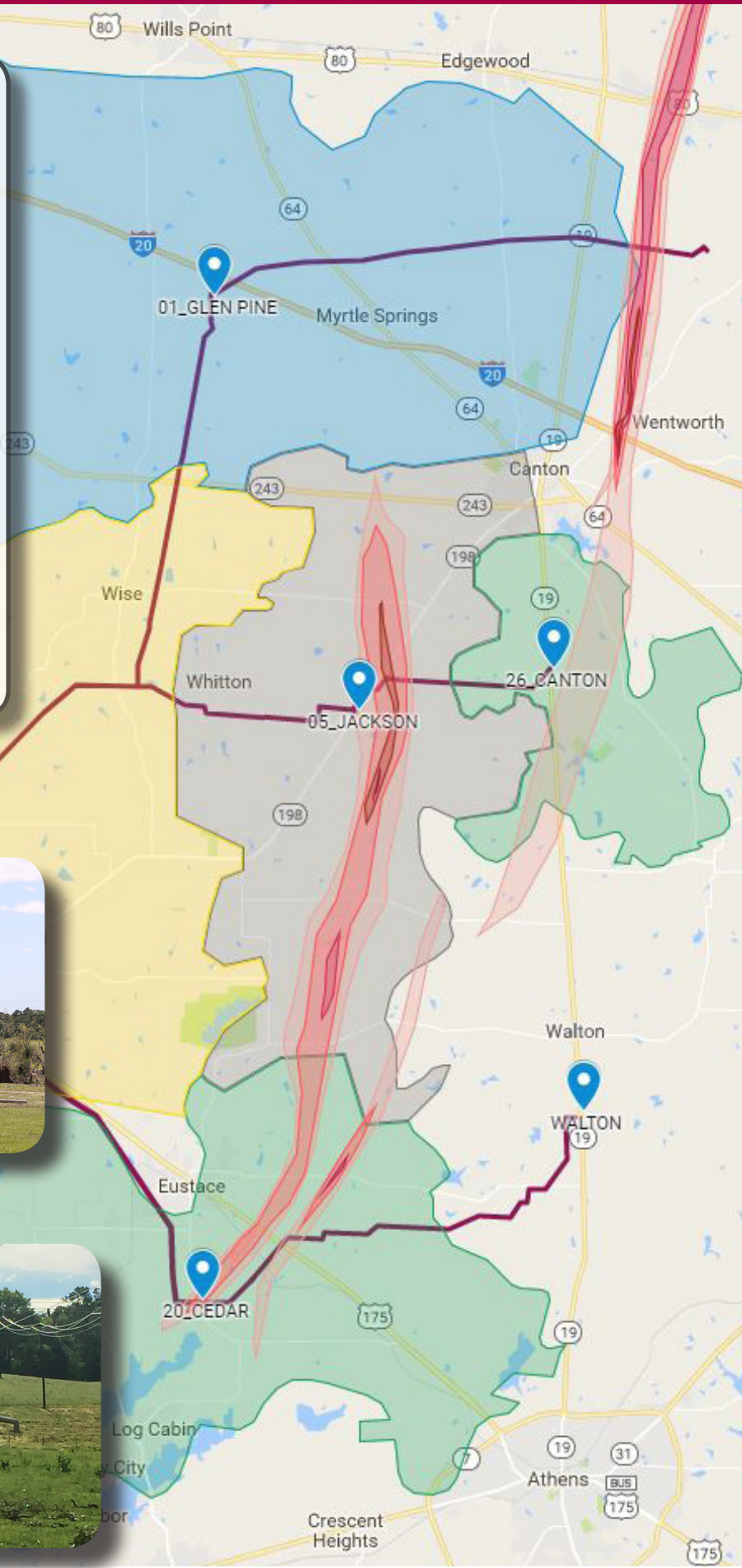
## Transmission Line Damage Widens Tornadoes' Impact

The damage in the area of the April 29 tornadoes was devastating and widespread.

While the Trinity Valley Electric Co-op grid is designed to accommodate re-routing lines around problem areas, these long-track twisters cut paths through multiple sections of high-voltage transmission lines.

With multiple substations isolated from power sources, the impact on electrical service spread to neighboring areas from Athens to Cedar Creek Lake and north through the eastern portions of Kaufman County.

Each colored section of the map represents the area served by an affected substation. The bold red line shows the route of TVEC transmission lines. Approximate tornado paths are shown in red shading.





# Powerless

*Tornados strike at the heart of the TVEC service territory*

**Paying attention to the weather is part of the job** for everyone at Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative, but by early afternoon on April 29, the predicted strong storms had failed to materialize. By early evening however, a series of tornados tore holes through the middle of the TVEC service area and beyond. Stretching from Eustace in the south to well past Canton in the north, more than 50 miles of destruction reduced homes to rubble, killed four people and injured dozens more.

As the extent of the damage became clear, the TVEC response changed from normal storm outage restoration to full-blown disaster recovery mode.

## **Working the Plan and Planning the Work**

“We fall back to the disaster recovery plan,” said TVEC Operations Manager Rodney Wesley. “This is what we have practiced for, and every storm is a form of this on a smaller

scale, but for this you get everyone moving, start to assess what it will take and then start making calls to bring in what we are going to need.”

The immediate needs included clearing fallen poles from roadways and opening switches to ensure that downed lines are not energized.

“A tornado does so much damage so quick, and this is the worst I’ve seen since I’ve been here,” said lineman Josh Lathem. “A lot of that mess was in the roads, and you have to clear the roads first, just to get emergency vehicles and ambulances through there.”

As darkness fell, TVEC staff began laying the groundwork for an all-out effort to determine the extent of the damage, locate the necessary resources and putting together a game plan for restoring power as quickly and safely as possible.

The exact damage was still unknown, but more than 23,000

TVEC members would be without power that night, in an area served by five electric substations, each cut off from their power source by the storm. Ninety-foot concrete transmission towers and heavy-gauge wire were no match for the high winds and flying debris.

“This got us on both sides,” said TVEC Chief Operating Officer Tony Watson. “Usually you can isolate the damage and get power back on from other areas. If it had not been for that, we probably could have had 15,000 back on Sunday. We practice disaster recovery scenarios, but this tested us.”

A helicopter inspection on Sunday courtesy of Mr. Dekkers at Twin Lakes sped up the assessment, allowing TVEC engineers and transmission personnel to have the necessary pieces expedited directly to damage locations. With plans underway for getting the substations back up and running, crews of linemen worked at breakneck pace to have as much distribution line back in service when the power came back on.

## Reinforcements

With almost 300 poles to replace, more than 15 miles of line to run and a lot of obstacles in the way, it was time to invoke Co-op Principle #6, “Cooperation Among Cooperatives.” In any major storm, electric cooperatives from around the state are key allies in providing resources for areas with damaged lines.

As calls went out, crews rolled in adding some 200 workers to the effort. Behind the scenes, the support and logistics functions were also rolling, securing lodging, meals, fuel and material support to keep everyone busy.

“From the outside, it probably looks like chaos, but it is controlled chaos,” Wesley said. “The information flow from our member services department is coming in and the supervisors are paying attention to everything and watching out for each other. And I can’t say enough about our dispatchers ... they keep everyone safe when the power is starting to come back on.”

Within the framework of the disaster recovery plan, TVEC many staffers took on roles outside their normal job descriptions. Reaching out to members who were affected by the storm brought home just how devastating the storm had been.

“I was returning outage calls to members who had used phone numbers that our system did not recognize,” said Stacie Clark, an administrative assistant in the TVEC operations department. “One that I called, he just said, ‘Yes ma’am, my house is completely gone,’ and that is horrible. You don’t expect that.”

With the workforce in the field more than tripled, technology played a key role in the coordination and flow of information. Location tagging for individual pole damage and Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) systems gave immediate information for the people managing the flow of supplies, allowing for efficient dispatching of men and materials.



TVEC | DON JOHNSON



TVEC | JESSE BELCHER



TVEC | DON JOHNSON

## Community Support

Disasters can bring out the best in people, and TVEC members were generous in supporting recovery efforts. From encouragement on social media to a constant flow of water and snacks to the crews in the field, it was plain to see that the rural spirit that led co-ops in the 1930s could still rise in support of a common cause.

“That really touched all of us. The outpouring of community is hard to explain, but you really saw that they knew that the work was critical to getting everything back to normal,” said TVEC General Manager/CEO Jerry Boze. “I think the outpouring from the community energizes all of us who are part of the recovery and the support was just amazing”

Out in the field, the kind words provided an extra boost during the long days of grueling labor.

“The community support, the comments on Facebook, those guys love seeing that—it really keeps them going” Wesley said. “They know that our members come first, and there was no complaining on our side. Everybody had one job in mind which was getting the lights back on and being safe, and they did those two things.”



TVEC | DON JOHNSON

## Looking Forward

Permanent repairs for Transmission lines and the many connections to homes and business that will have to be rebuilt will be ongoing for months. The cost will be hard to tabulate exactly, and for those who lost homes and loved ones, the losses are immeasurable. In whatever way possible we must look forward and find ways to learn from the experience of the storm.

“We have a mixture of youth and experience on our crews, with the experienced ones having helped with tornados, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita and things like that—they know what it takes,” said Wesley. “In storms like this the younger guys see what it is like and carry that on. Every storm is a training ground and every time they have proved themselves. I’m amazed at what they got accomplished.”



TVEC | DON JOHNSON



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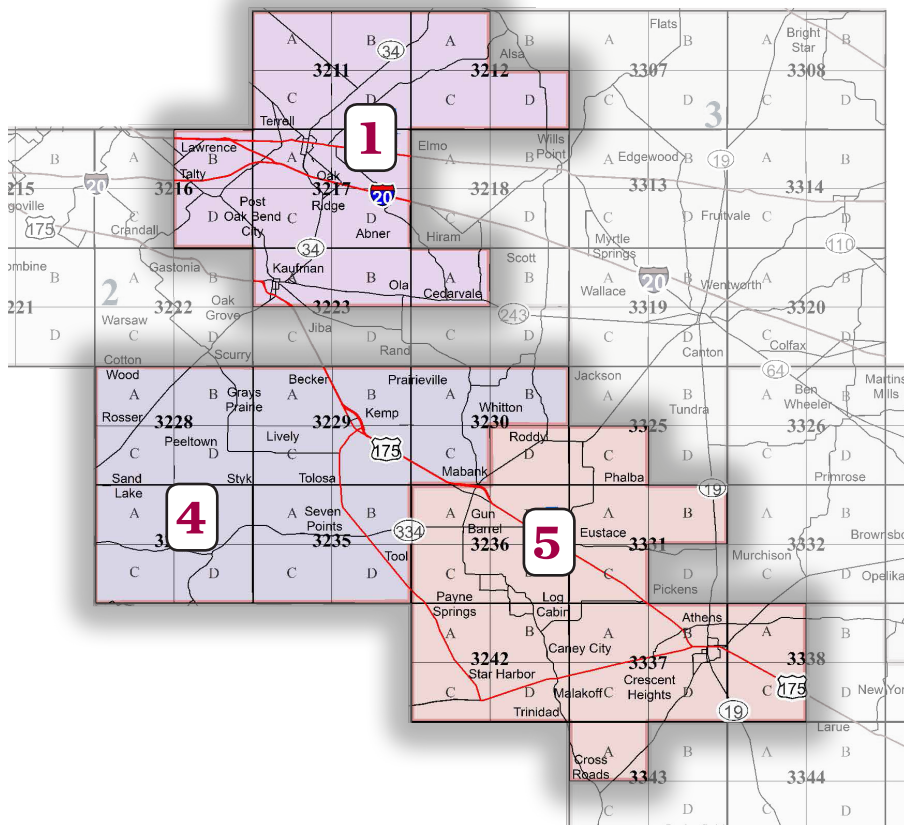


TVEC | CHRIS WALKER (2)



# Notice of Board Election

Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative will hold an election for board members representing districts one (Incumbent: Carolyn Minor), four (Incumbent: Jo Ann Hanstrom) and five (Incumbent: Edward Reeve) at the annual meeting to be held in October. As a member, if you are interested in having your name placed before the Nominating Committee to represent your district as a director, you must complete a nomination form. Qualifications are included on the form. Contact Leah Bass at 972-932-2214, ext. 2297 for information on how to obtain a nomination form. Forms must be received at the TVEC headquarters office in Kaufman by 4:45 p.m. on **July 3, 2017.**



TRINITY VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Operating in Anderson, Dallas, Henderson, Hunt, Kaufman and Van Zandt counties

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Howard Tillison, Chairman, District 6
- Carolyn Minor, Vice Chairwoman, District 1
- Jo Ann Hanstrom, Secretary, District 4
- Jerry Priest, District 2
- Paul Weatherford, District 3
- Edward Reeve, District 5
- David Lang, District 7

**GENERAL MANAGER/CEO**

Jerry B. Boze

**Kaufman District Headquarters**

1800 E. Highway 243, Kaufman

**Athens District Office**

909 W. Larkin St., Athens

**Cedar Creek District Office**

1012 W. Main St., Ste. 102  
Gun Barrel City

**Wills Point District Office**

582 N. Fourth St., Wills Point

**Lobby Hours**

Monday-Friday-8:15 a.m.-4:45 p.m.



## Contact Us

For information during office hours and outages after hours

**CALL US**

**(972) 932-2214** local or  
**1-800-766-9576** toll-free

**24-HOUR AUTOMATED ASSISTANCE**

**1-800-720-3584**

**24-HOUR OUTAGE REPORTING**

**1-800-967-9324**

**FIND US ON THE WEB AT**  
**tvec.net**

60128540001

**Texas Division of Emergency Management**

**Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines**  
**Preparing for Hurricane Season: June 1- Nov.30**



**Evacuation Planning:** When a hurricane threatens, listen for instructions from local officials. When they call for an evacuation in your area, get going without delay.

Discuss evacuation plans with your family **BEFORE** hurricane season June 1 – Nov. 30. Make a checklist of what you need to do before you leave town and review it.

Monitor NOAA weather radio and local TV and radio broadcasts during storm season.

Prepare an emergency supply kit including: radio, flashlight, extra batteries, extra eye glasses, bottled water, non-perishable food, dry clothes, bedding, insurance information, important documents, medications, copies of prescriptions and special products for babies, seniors, medically fragile family members, and pets.

Learn evacuation routes before storm season. When there's a hurricane in the Gulf, keep your gas tank as full as possible. Expect traffic delays in an evacuation.

Register in the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) online at <https://STEAR.dps.texas.gov> or Dial 2-1-1 to register if you have a disability or medical needs or if you simply do not have transportation: Gulf coast residents in evacuation zones with a disability or medical needs -- who do not have friends or family to help -- or do not have transportation should register in STEAR in advance.



# TYA Takes Sports Beyond the Court

*Travel and volunteerism build life skills and open doors for Palestine-area youth*

The benefits of participation in youth sports easy to see, but for one Palestine area organization the teamwork, sportsmanship and physical activity is all just a starting point.

Starting with only 13 kids in 2010, Jonathan Cary and Daniel Tatum founded Texas Youth Advocates with a goal much bigger than just playing basketball.

“The sports part is just the carrot,” Cary said. “It is a teaching mechanism, but the substance is in the other activities, the businesses we visit, the colleges we go to, the real-life application of experiences outside what they see every day.”

Cary knows from personal experience how getting to view the wider world can allow young minds to consider life’s possibilities on a grander scale.

“I went to Rice University and played football, but the football was just a vehicle to get my education,” he said. “It was the experiences outside of athletics that were the catalyst for this organization. The idea is giving kids the same opportunities and access to information as they would receive in a metropolitan area.”

Texas Youth Advocates currently sponsors youth basketball and volleyball teams, as well as Westwood Little Dribblers basketball for ages 5-14.

Team members are also required to participate in community service projects throughout the year including volunteering at Meals on Wheels of Palestine, Adopt-a-Street with the City of Palestine, lawn cleanup for elderly citizens and food drives for local organizations.

After seven years of growth, TYA is now working with more than 300 kids.

“People are starting to understand that what we are doing is different, and what is needed,” Cary said. “Kids may want to be pro athletes, but the odds are that going to college is what will lead to a better life outcome. It sounds cliché, but this is investing in our youth. It is like investing in infrastructure ... a commitment to their future.”

You can find more information at [texasyouthadvocate.org](http://texasyouthadvocate.org)



**Texas Youth Advocates - \$2,000**

**God’s Helping Hands  
\$5,000**

Operated by the First United Methodist Church of Mabank, God’s Helping Hands offers food assistance to families and individuals.

**Henderson County  
Interdenominational Alliance  
\$1,800**

The HC Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance operates a prison ministry as well as individual assistance for anyone in need.

**Henderson County Black History  
Committee - \$2,000**

The HC Black History Committee raises funds for college scholarships available to all students from Henderson County high schools..

**United Way of East and Central  
Texas - \$1,000**

United Way supports many area non-profit organizations and efforts including the Dogwood Children’s Literary and Arts Festival.

**Hidden Acres Camp - \$3,000**

Hidden Acres provides summer camp opportunities for refugee children and area youth groups, churches and organizations.

**Win \$25 Just for Reading**

Somewhere, hidden on Pages 18–25, is a TVEC account number. Read closely. If the account number is yours, contact the Member Services Department by June 30 to receive a \$25 credit on your electric bill. Don’t miss out—you could be a winner.

Founded in 2013, the TVEC Charitable Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization. The foundation was created to serve the community and help improve the quality of life for residents in our service area. **The foundation is funded entirely by donations from TVEC members who participate in Operation Round Up.** For more information, please call 1-800-766-9576 or visit [tvec.net](http://tvec.net).