

# THE OBSERVER/ ENTERPRISE

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*Serving Coke County*

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## Local Electric Co-op responds regarding price hike

Years ago, Coke County residents didn't really have a choice as to their electricity provider. It depended on the location where you needed the electricity as to whether you used Concho Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC) or West Texas Utilities (WTU). That all changed on January 1, 2002, when Texas Senate Bill 7 began the process of deregulating Texas' energy market.

Municipality owned electric companies and utility cooperatives could opt out of this process and CVEC chose to do just that. With the deregulations, West Texas Utilities split into two companies - WTU Retail Energy and AEP North. American Electric Provider (AEP) actually owns and is responsible for maintaining the power lines previously serviced by WTU. Only Coke County residents who previously were served by WTU could choose a new retail electric provider from a growing list of companies.

Deregulation provided a competitive market for consumers, eventually allowing

them to lower their electric bills. In the years since deregulation, some companies offer consumers wholesale pricing tied to supply and demand. Most of the time, this can provide consumers with significant savings. However during the disastrous recent storm, wholesale energy prices increased by up to 10,000 percent.

When contacted this week, Concho Valley Electric Co-Op's Public Relations Specialist Krysha Bursen replied with the following. "At this time, we do not have an official statement regarding an increase on our rates. We do not have all of the information yet to make that decision. We do know our members should not see a drastic increase on their bill."

If you are not served by CVEC, you can go to your retail electric provider's website for more information. Most consumers should have had plans or contracts with their retail electric provider locking their pricing in at a specific rate. These customers should not be affected by wholesale price spike.



**Coke County Send Off!** Local residents, as well as Coke County first responders, gathered together on Friday, February 19, 2021, to send off the Robert Lee High School Lady Steers basketball team to their area playoff game in style. The Lady Steers faced off against the Rankin Lady Red Devils at Lake View High School in San Angelo. Unfortunately, the Lady Steers were not able to pull off another win and their record smashing season ended with a loss to Rankin with a score of 51 - 61.

## Winter storm still affecting water supply; Covid cases drop to one in county

By Hal Spain

It seems that most of the electricity has been restored throughout the county; however, we are still experiencing some water issues that may remain for a considerable period of time. According to Bronte Mayor Paul Gohman, our water supply is currently operating at about 50 percent from Oak Creek and what few wells can be thawed out around Blackwell. These water woes will continue as we warm up and the frozen leaks in the system thaw out and release more water into the ground structure. County residents are advised to shut water off until you can fix any leaks, and to conserve water in whatever manner possible.

The best news I have is that

reported COVID cases are down to almost none this week in Coke County. Total confirmed plus probable cases as of Wednesday, February 17, 2021 were at 1 compared to 6 cases being reported last week. That one case was reported as a lab confirmed case at Bronte.

Overall for the length of the pandemic, the State Health Department Dashboard lists Coke County with 212 confirmed cases, and 224 probables, for a total of 436. 430 cases are listed as recovered, along with 11 fatalities.

According to the COVID vaccine provider website, I have several area locations who have supplies of the vaccine. The locations and phone numbers are Shannon Pharmacy, 655-

8191; La Esperanza Clinic (2 locations), 658-5339; the San Angelo Health Department, 657-4214; HEB Pharmacy (2 locations), 223-0771; and Albertson's Pharmacy on Sunset Dr., San Angelo.

Residents may also register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LXX7S6V>, [cosatx.us/vaccineform](https://cosatx.us/vaccineform), or contact the Ballinger Hospital Clinic at (325) 365-5737 to register for vaccination. Currently only those 65 or older, first responders, and those 16 or over with health conditions are eligible to register for the vaccine.

County residents can find up-to-date coronavirus information and what to do if you're sick, testing, and information at [dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus). Those with local issues and questions are advised to contact the County Judge's office at 325.453.2641.

## WEEK AT A GLANCE

### Monday, March 1

High School Golf -  
Robert Lee Girls at Robert Lee Tournament

### Wednesday, March 3

District One Act Play -  
Blackwell at Sterling City

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High School Golf -  
Robert Lee Boys at Robert Lee Tournament

### Thursday, March 4

Junior High Track -  
Robert Lee at Water Valley Wildcat Relays  
Bronte at Hermleigh Relays

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High School Track -  
Bronte at Hermleigh Relays

### Friday, March 5

High School Track -  
Robert Lee at Junior Water Valley Wildcat Relays

### Sunday, March 7

Bronte ISD Chicken Spaghetti Fundraiser,  
10:30 am - Sold Out, First National Bank Parking Lot

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Kobe Smith Benefit Lunch, 12 noon,  
Robert Lee Baptist Church

## Citizens urged to file storm damage assessment

The Governor of Texas has provided the following link in order to file damage assessments from the unprecedented winter storm we have recently experienced. Businesses and individuals in Coke County are encouraged to file a damage assessment, along with pictures of the damage, on this link. At the present time, Coke County is not on the list of 108 of 254 counties in Texas to receive federal funding. This will help add our county to the list of

those who will be receiving federal disaster funding. The link is <https://arcgis/uOrOb>.

For more information contact the County Judge's office at 453-2641.

## Emergency Siren Signals

*Cities of both Bronte and Robert Lee*

1 Long Ring - Wind Advisory over 60 mph

2 Rings - Fire or VFD Meeting

Another 2 Ring - Call for Additional Firefighters

3 Rings - Tornado Warning

1 Long Continuous Ring - All Clear for Tornado