

POWERLINE

A monthly newsletter for co-op members of Corn Belt Energy

September 2012

Shedding the Light on Lighting Options

If you've ever had to shop for new light bulbs, you know it can be a confusing and overwhelming experience. Thankfully, the Federal Trade Commission now requires Lighting Facts Labels on bulb packaging which makes it easier to compare bulb brightness, the estimated annual operating cost, and the color of the light. Switching to energy efficient lighting is a smart way to save on your electric bills; upgrading fifteen incandescent light bulbs in your home with CFLs could save you about \$50 per year.



LIGHTING OPTIONS

Three of the most common energy-efficient lighting types include energy-saving incandescents, CFLs, and LEDs. You can find these in most hardware and home improvement stores, and they are all more energy-efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs.

Energy Saving Incandescents *25% energy savings*

Energy-saving, or halogen, incandescents have a capsule inside that holds gas around a filament to increase bulb efficiency. This type of incandescent bulb is about 25% more efficient and can last up to three times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. They are available in a wide range of shapes and colors, and can be used with dimmers.

CFLs *75% energy savings*

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) are simply curly versions of the long tube fluorescent lights you may already have in a kitchen or garage. Because they use less electricity than traditional incandescents, typical CFLs can pay for themselves in less than nine months, and then start saving you money each month. An ENERGY STAR-qualified CFL uses about one-fourth the energy and lasts ten times longer than a comparable incandescent bulb that puts out the same amount of light.

CFL bulbs are available in a range of light colors, including warm (white to yellow) tones that were not as available when first introduced. Some are encased in a cover to further diffuse the light and provide a similar shape to the bulbs you are replacing. If you are looking for a dimmable bulb, check the package to make sure you purchase a CFL with that feature.

Fluorescent bulbs contain a small amount of mercury, and they should always be recycled at the end of their lifespan. Many retailers recycle CFLs for free. See www.epa.gov/cfl for more information.

LEDs *75% – 80% energy savings*

The light emitting diode (LED) uses the same technology as the little indicator light on your cell phone, but designed to light your home. It is one of today's most energy-efficient and rapidly developing technologies. ENERGY STAR-qualified LEDs use only 20% – 25% of the energy and last up to 25 times longer than the traditional incandescent bulbs they replace.

LED bulbs are currently available in many products such as replacements for 40W, 60W, and 75W traditional incandescents, reflector bulbs often used in recessed fixtures, and small track lights. While LEDs are more expensive at this early stage, they still save money because they last a long time and have very low energy use. As with other electronics, prices are expected to come down as more products enter the market.

Nicor Gas Customers: You have a choice!

With cooler weather just around the corner, it's time to think about your natural gas heating costs. If you're a Nicor Gas customer, you can choose who supplies your gas through their Customer Select program.

Nicor will continue to deliver your gas, but you can select Corn Belt Energy to supply your natural gas. We offer two competitive variable therm rates and convenient billing options. There are no monthly fees or termination fees and no equipment to install. The Corn Belt Energy supplier cost will be conveniently included on your Nicor Gas statement, so you only receive and pay one bill.

Enroll by October 31 and we'll send you a \$20 check after your first bill!



GREAT RATES • NO FEES • LOCAL SERVICE

Current Rates per Therm:

34¢
Market Advantage Plan

35¢
Winter Protection Plan

Market Advantage Plan

By selecting this plan, your natural gas therm cost will fluctuate according to current market conditions. You will benefit from this plan if it's a mild winter and market prices remain stable or decline.

Winter Protection Plan

With this plan, the goal is to protect you from the volatility of the winter market. You'll benefit from this plan if it's an extremely cold winter causing higher market prices.

\$20 Switch now and get \$20!
www.countoncornbelt.com

Treat Power Tools with Care

Before you fire up that power tool for your next do-it-yourself home project, remember that these electrical devices must be treated with care. Even though many tools are equipped with safety mechanisms, it's still important to heed precautions.

Keep in mind these tips from the U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) when using power tools:

- Pull the cord out of the outlet by the plug, not by pulling on the cord.
- Ensure that all extension cords are not worn or frayed.
- Do not carry tools by their cords.
- Do not use in a wet or damp job sites, unless the tool is specifically approved for those conditions. Store them in a dry place when not being used.
- While carrying a tool, do not touch the switch or trigger that operates it to avoid accidental starts.
- Unplug tools when cleaning or fixing, while changing other parts of the tool such as blades or bits, and when not in use.
- Wear proper clothing – no ties, jewelry, or other loose items that could get caught.



Whether you're on the job or working at home, staying safe around power tools is a must. Following a few rules could mean the difference between a successful project and an accident.

Source: U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration



Prescription Discounts

Use your free Co-op Connections card to save 10% to 60% on prescriptions not covered by insurance at participating pharmacies including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Target and many more! Simply present your card with your prescription at any participating pharmacy and pay the discounted price; no additional forms or paperwork are needed. Visit www.connections.coop to search for participating pharmacies. Need a card? Call us at 1-800-879-0339.

WATER HEATER REBATES

If you're purchasing a new *electric* water heater, Corn Belt can help defray the cost.

Buy an electric 40-gallon water heater and you'll receive a \$100 rebate; purchase a 50-gallon or larger unit and we'll give you a \$125 rebate. You can purchase your water heater from any retailer, and we encourage you to buy an energy efficient model with good insulation.

To claim your rebate check, send a copy of your receipt to us, making sure the receipt indicates the size of the water heater. Include your Corn Belt account number and send to:

Corn Belt Energy
Attn: Justin Stuva
1 Energy Way
Bloomington, IL 61705-6356



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Always call JULIE at 8-1-1 to have underground utilities located before you dig.

To avoid personal injury and damage to underground lines, state law requires you to contact Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE) before any digging project, regardless of the project size or depth. The call is free, and so are the services.

According to state law, the person doing the digging is required to call JULIE with the locate request information at least 48 hours (*two working days, excluding weekends and holidays*) in advance of the start of excavation. You must begin your project within 14 days from the time you call and if you want to start your project over the weekend, remember to contact JULIE by Wednesday at 4:00 PM.

In order to help the utility locator properly identify your project area, JULIE recommends that you mark the area where you will be digging with white paint and/or flags.

Each JULIE utility member is responsible to mark their own underground facilities with paint or flags within the two working day period required by law (*excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays*).

Visit www.illinois1call.com to learn more about the process.

Just for Kids!

If you're looking for a great way to entertain and educate your kids on a rainy day, then check out www.kidsenergyzone.com!

The website promotes energy efficiency and electric safety, designed specifically for grade school kids. CFL Charlie welcomes kids with a number of activities including videos, coloring pages, and online games that scroll across the screen. The site also has links to resources for educators and parents including lesson plans, activities and energy efficiency programs.



kidsenergyzone.com

Energy Efficient Rebates Now Available

Wabash Valley Power Association, the cooperative that supplies power to Corn Belt Energy, is offering several rebates to our residential and commercial member-owners through a program called Power Moves. The incentives are designed to promote energy efficiency upgrades in homes, businesses, schools and farms.

Visit www.powermoves.com to view available rebates and to print the appropriate forms. For more information, contact Justin Stuva, Energy Advisor, at 1-800-879-0339 x235 or email him at justin.stuva@cornbeltenergy.com.



Contact Us

1-800-879-0339

Call this number to report an outage and call from a phone associated with your account if possible.

LOCATION

1 Energy Way
Bloomington, IL 61705

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Monday - Friday

cbec@cornbeltenergy.com
www.cornbeltenergy.com



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

ELECTRIC HEAT RATE

If your home utilizes an electric heat source - including geothermal - you can take advantage of Corn Belt's Electric Heat Rate of 4.45 cents/ kWh (plus any additional current cost of power as indicated by the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment on your monthly statement).

All electric heat is sub-metered through equipment supplied by Corn Belt Energy and the Electric Heat Rate is applied to your sub-metered usage from Oct. 1 through April 30.

This rate is applicable when at least 50% of the square footage of a home is heated electrically from a hardwired 240 volt electric heat source.

To see if you're already receiving this rate, check for a Rate 10 or Rate 19 line item charge on your monthly statement. For more information contact Justin Stuva, Energy Advisor, at 1-800-879-0339 x235.

MONITOR YOUR USAGE

Corn Belt Energy has several Kill A Watt™ usage monitors available for our members to purchase. Learn which appliances are costing you the most and identify those energy hogs.

To use, simply plug the Kill A Watt unit into an outlet and plug your appliance or electronics device into the monitor. The large LCD display will track the device's consumption by kilowatt-hour and you can calculate your electrical expenses by the day, week, month or annually.



Purchase a Kill A Watt monitor for \$25 (plus \$5 shipping) by contacting Justin Stuva, Energy Advisor, at justin.stuva@cornbeltenergy.com or 1-800-879-0339 x235.

Connect with your Co-op!

Keep in touch with your electric cooperative throughout the year for safety information, energy efficiency tips, outage updates and more! If you have a Quick Response Code app on your smartphone, simply scan these QR codes to connect with us online.



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