

## Spring break health tips

**S**pring break — a time for sun, fun, and relaxation. But if there's too much sun and fun, spring break vacation can be an unhealthy experience. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) offers the following tips to protect you and your children during spring travels.

**Sunscreen, sunscreen, sunscreen.** Excess sun exposure is especially dangerous for young children. Sunscreen of at least SPF 15 should be applied before venturing out for the day and reapplied after sweating or swimming. Babies younger than six months should be covered completely by clothing and kept in the shade, but you may apply sunscreen

to exposed areas like their faces and hands. One note: If you also apply a bug spray containing DEET, it may reduce the effectiveness of the sunscreen by one-third, so reapply more often or reduce your time in the sun.

**Reduce travel stress.** Changes in children's routines can be upsetting and stressful. Involve your kids in planning the big trip, and bring along favorite toys or stuffed animals for added comfort on the road.

**Prepare for air travel.** You can't predict whether your child will be fussy on an airplane, but you can reduce their discomfort during ascent. Some children experience ear pain as the plane rises, so chew-

ing or swallowing can help. Have a pacifier ready or plan to nurse your baby, and keep some chewing gum on hand for older children.

**Assemble a travel health kit.** In addition to basic first-aid items like adhesive bandages, antiseptic, tweezers, aloe gel, anti-itch cream, and hydrocortisone cream, add your regular medications in their original containers, and in quantities to last your trip and then some. Also, bring along remedies for pain or fever, upset stomach, diarrhea, sore throat, stuffy nose and motion sickness.

*Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control*



*Remember to use sunscreen  
when enjoying time outdoors  
on spring break.*

Source: Whirlpool Corporation

# Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

## Regular meeting January 30, 2012

**T**rustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Bill Croy, Neil Gould, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, Richard Rudolphi, Danny Schnepfer and Greg Smith. Also present were Executive Vice President/General Manager John Meng, and Cooperative Attorney Melanie Pearce. The invocation was given by Bill Croy.

**Approved** the minutes of the regular meeting held December 19, 2011.

**Accepted** 6 new members for service.

**Canceled** 8 members no longer receiving service.

**Approved** work orders in the amount of \$29,426.31.

**Accepted** the disbursement list for the month of December, 2011.

**Heard** a report by Trustee Logan regarding the recent AIEC Board Meeting along with the Executive Summary.

**Heard** a report by Trustee Herman concerning the recent SIPC Board meeting, including

the financials, Prairie State financing strategies, Powerholdings, and Strategic Planning schedule. Resolved the appointments of delegates for the SIPC Annual Meeting being Trustees Rudolphi, Herman, and Smith.

**Approved** the financial and maintenance reports for the month of December, 2011 as presented by Gen. Mgr. Meng.

**Collected** form 990 from Board Members.

**Heard** a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding FEMA disbursements.

**Discussed** upcoming NRECA Annual Meeting plans.

**Appointed** John Meng as Delegate and Doug Hockman as Alternate for Worker's Comp and Rochdale Services.

**Approved** the Clay Electric Annual Meeting of Members to be held on the date of September 6, 2012 and the time of 5:15 P.M. for the meal and registration and 6:30 P.M. for the business meeting at Charley Brown Park.

**Reviewed and Approved** the Budget as presented by Gen. Mgr. Meng.

**Reviewed** the Letter of Agreement to change the Medical Plan.

**Disbursed** the recently amended Policies 800 & 1000.

**Reviewed and Discussed** the article discussing FERC rule regarding wind turbines.

**Informed** by Gen. Mgr. Meng that the new rate increases are now in effect.

**Reminded** of the program on anaerobic digesters for livestock producers being held at various locations in Illinois.

**Informed** of expiration date of Federated Insurance.

**Informed** that Gen. Mgr. Meng and Doug Hockman will be attending a seminar on new IEPA rules.

**Informed** of issues relating to the radio tower and two way radios.

**Viewed** the NRECA video "The Electric Cooperative Story."

**Adjournment.**



## Clay County Water Update

**C**lay County Water, Inc. has awarded the Phase 3 construction bid to Wayne Lapington of Louisville, Ill. The construction will begin as soon as working conditions allow. We continue to work on obtaining the necessary easements required for the project. Even if you do not intend to connect to the water, please be considerate of your neighbors that would like to connect.

The Phase 3 project includes about 50 miles of water line located in Southeast Xenia, Stanford, Harter, South Clay City Townships, and a few other short line extensions in the area.

If you have not been contacted, or would like to sign up for water service to your location, please call. Do not put this off any longer.

- Doug Hockman 662-6666, Sue Pettit 662-4305,
- Bob Pierson 662-7471, Kye Hemphill 662-4590,
- Bill Seelman 662-8479, Dwight Edgington 678-2782
- Kevin Henry 618-838-6123, or Hank Hilmes 662-2388.

# How to buy an energy-efficient appliance

**Y**ou go shopping for a new refrigerator and you're on a budget. The best buy is the fridge with the lowest sales price, right?

Not necessarily. If you buy the lowest-priced refrigerator, you may end up spending more than if you buy a more expensive one. The reason? The cost of owning a home appliance has three components: the initial purchase price, the cost of repairs and maintenance and the cost to operate it.

To figure out how much you'll spend over the lifetime of the appliance, you have to look at all these factors. The appliance with the lowest initial purchase price, or even the one with the best repair record, isn't necessarily the one that costs the least to operate. Here's an example of how an appliance's energy consumption can affect your out-of-pocket costs.

Suppose you're in the market for a new refrigerator-freezer. Different models of refrigerators with the same capacity can vary dramatically in the amount of electricity they use. For one popular size and configuration, for example, the annual electricity consumption varies across models from a low of about 600 kilowatt-hours a year to a high of more than 800 kilowatt-hours a year. Based on national average electricity prices, that means the annual cost to operate this refrigerator can range from about \$50 to \$70, depending on which model you buy.

A \$20 difference in annual operating costs might not sound like much. But remember that you will enjoy these savings year after year for the life of the appliance, while you must pay any difference in purchase price only once. As a result, you may actually save money by buying the more expensive, more energy-efficient model.

You can learn about the energy efficiency of an appliance that you're thinking about buying through the yellow-and-black EnergyGuide label. The Federal Trade Commission's Appliance Labeling Rule requires appliance manufacturers to put these labels on:

- Refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers
- Water heaters, furnaces, boilers
- Central air conditioners, room air conditioners, heat pumps
- Pool heaters

When you shop for one of these appliances in a dealer's showroom, you should find the labels hanging on the inside of an appliance or secured to the outside. The law requires that the labels specify:

- The capacity of the particular model
- For refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers and water heaters, the estimated annual energy consumption of the model
- For air conditioners, heat pumps, furnaces, boilers and pool heaters, the energy efficiency rating
- The range of estimated annual energy consumption, or energy efficiency ratings, of comparable appliances.

Some appliances also may feature the ENERGY STAR logo, which means that the appliance is significantly more energy efficient than the average comparable model. To compare how updating appliances and making other changes around your home can impact your electric bill, visit [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com).

*Source: Federal Trade Commission, U.S. Department of Energy*

## For an energy-smart deal on your next appliance ...

- Read the EnergyGuide label (required for refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers, water heaters, and select HVAC systems)
- Compare the energy use of competing models.
- Estimate their differences in energy costs.
- Consider both purchase price and estimated energy use when deciding which brand and model to buy.

*Source: Federal Trade Commission*



## Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Office hours: 7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

# Prepare your home to beat the heat this summer

**D**uring the sweltering summer months people nationwide crank up their air conditioners in an effort to stay cool. In the struggling economy, the Energy Education Council wants everyone to get the most for their energy dollars. Be sure your house is ready to beat the heat this year by following a few guidelines.

Most of these suggestions require little effort or cost. The investment is well worth it with added comfort and savings.

- **Check the insulation.** According to EnergyStar insulation is usually measured using the R-Value. R-Value is a measure of insulation's ability to resist heat traveling through it. The higher the R-Value the more effective it will be to beat the heat. The level of insulation recommended for your area can be found at [www.EnergyStar.gov](http://www.EnergyStar.gov). If you are lacking the recommended insulation, you can add more right on top of the old insulation. However, don't put a vapor barrier between the layers. Be sure the insulation doesn't block vents or cover exhaust fans.
- **Ventilate the attic.** When the outside temperature is in the 90s, your attic can easily reach 140 degrees. Adequately sized vents and/or an attic fan can help keep hot air from building up.
- **Get the air conditioner ready.** Shut off power to the unit before cleaning it. On the inside, wash or vacuum cleanable filters; replace disposable ones. Outside, clear leaves and other debris away from the condensing unit. Hose off any accumulated dirt.
- **Put a timer or programmable thermostat on your air conditioner.** Leave it on a higher temperature while you're away, and set it to cool the house half an hour before you return home.
- **Install awnings over windows exposed to direct sunlight.**
- **Consider installing ceiling fans.**

On moderately warm days, fans can circulate enough air to keep you comfortable without air conditioning. Even on hotter days when you use the air conditioner, you can set your thermostat higher and save.

Even in summer, you don't have to sacrifice comfort to stay within your budget. Here are a few easily achieved cost-saving tips:

- **Open windows and doors** and let outside air cool your house on moderate days, and be sure to keep them closed when you're operating the air conditioner.
- **Avoid unnecessary trips** in and out of the house, especially on the most sultry days. Heat and humidity come in each time you open the door.
- **Keep the sun out of your house.** Close blinds, shades or draperies during the hottest part of the day. Consider planting fast-growing trees and shrubs near your home but away from power line, to provide shade.
- **Set lamps, TV sets, and other heat-producing devices away from the air conditioner thermostat.** Heat from the lamp could cause the thermostat to read higher temperature and keep the air conditioner running more than necessary.

One secret to getting the best efficiency from your air conditioner is to be sure the maximum amount of air moves across the coils. Make sure air can flow freely over the inside and outside coils.

Shut off power to the unit before cleaning it. Outside, clear away leaves and debris. Inside, clean or replace filters. If you can reach the fan blades, be sure the power is



turned off and then dust them - if they're filled with lint they can't push as much air. If your air conditioner doesn't give you as much cooling as it has in the past, call a cooling professional to inspect and tune it up.

If you're shopping for a new unit, check the efficiency rating, or SEER. The higher the SEER number, the more efficient the air conditioner. Consider buying an Energy Star approved unit, which uses around 14 percent less energy than traditional air conditioning units for central air and at least 10 percent less for room units. Energy Star and local utilities are offering many incentives to upgrade appliances and insulation this year. Be sure to visit [www.EnergyStar.gov/taxcredits](http://www.EnergyStar.gov/taxcredits) and contact your local utility for more information.

Like a car that gives you more miles per gallon, an air conditioner with a higher SEER gives you more cooling comfort for each energy dollar.