



# Homepage

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

[www.enerstar.com](http://www.enerstar.com) | A monthly newsletter for co-op members of EnerStar Electric Cooperative

## EnerStar Sparks Learning

### Area 4th Graders Visit EnerStar

The safety of our members is very important to EnerStar Electric Cooperative. So throughout year, your locally-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative does its part to promote consumer education about how electricity works and how to prevent electrical accidents. We consider it part of our responsibility to the communities we serve to make sure people of all ages respect electricity and know how to be careful around it. A perfect place to spread the word is with the youth in the

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*Top: Featured speakers at the Safety Day were Delmar Bell, an EnerStar member and area farmer, with Kyle Finley, owner of Live Line Demo; below: Kyle talks to a smiling student about the electrical safety and how he uses a hot dog for illustration because it looks like a human finger.*



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communities we serve.

"Teaching electrical safety at a young age ensures those lessons and concepts will remain with the children as they mature into adults," said Angela Griffin, EnerStar's Manager of Member Services. According to Griffin, that is why for the past thirteen years, EnerStar has sponsored the 4th Grade Safety Day in late April. The event is a prelude to the cooperative's observance of Electric Safety Month in May.

"Events like these are an important part of EnerStar's mission," said Griffin. "It gives us a chance to showcase the cooperative's role in the community while educating our young on the proper way to handle an electrical emergency."

This year's event was attended by Paris Crestwood, Paris Wenz, Marshall, Martinsville, and Shiloh. The cooperative covers all transportation costs for the schools. "We realize school budgets are tight and feel because this event is so important, it is money well spent," added Griffin.

The main part of the program is a demonstration presented by Kyle Finley of Live Line Demo, Inc. A former journeyman lineman, Finley teaches the students how electricity travels through wires. His display contains 7,200 volts of electricity and is constructed with the same poles, transformers and line hardware used by EnerStar. But he takes his lesson further as he teaches the children what happens if someone were to get into a power line or if a car they are traveling in hits a utility pole, which is to stay in the car. With the use of props such as a fake squirrel, a hot dog and a balloon, Finley teaches



the children about the many dangers of electricity and how to be safe around it.

The Live Line Demo is followed with the personal testimony of EnerStar member Delmar Bell, a Paris farmer who was injured in a power line accident almost 30 years ago. The accident caused Bell the loss of his arms. Bell explains that he participates in the event because, "I want young children to learn from my mistake. I never knew the slogan 'Look up and live.'"

The impact of Bell's personal testimony is obvious and really gets the students' attention. "The first part of the day, while it is educational, is fun and entertaining. But when Delmar speaks, the message helps the children understand the serious nature of an electrical emergency," explained Griffin.

According to a thank you letter received last year by a student, "Delmar's telling us what happened to him made me sad but it shows that you can go on after a personal tragedy."

"We really appreciate Delmar



attending the EnerStar Safety Day each year," says Griffin. "I admire the fact that he took this tragedy and turned it into a positive experience. His message not only drives home the importance of being safe around electricity but also teaches the children a lesson on perseverance."

The best way to sum up the day was a comment from a teacher to Griffin, "Thank you for putting on a great electricity safety presentation. My students learned a lot and it helps to supplement our science curriculum. I appreciate all of your hard work and effort for the 4th graders of Edgar and Clark counties."

# Take a Vacation from High Power Bills

Soaring temperatures and sultry summer nights can cause electric bills to skyrocket. This summer, take a vacation from high electric bills by making your home—and your family's habits—more energy efficient. EnerStar's Energy Advisor Tim Haddix has some recommendations for cooperative members.

## Beat the Heat

Air conditioning helps most Americans beat the sweltering summer heat. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), air conditioning accounts for as much as 50 percent of the average household electric bill. Proper maintenance and smart use of your home's cooling system will help keep your electric bill in check.

"First, make sure your air conditioner's external unit is clean and free of debris," says Haddix. "Clear away dead leaves or overgrown plants and weeds to enable the unit to perform as it should."

Next Haddix recommends changing all of the air filters inside your home quarterly, or more often in homes with allergy sufferers or smokers. "Fresh filters not only reduce the strain on your cooling system, but improve the air quality in your home," Haddix added.

"The last thing you want to do is set your home's thermostat as high as possible," said Haddix. "Pick a temperature that maintains a comfortable environment for your family during the summer months."

According to Haddix, bumping the thermostat up at least two degrees can make a noticeable difference on your power bill. He advises cooperative members to



invest in a programmable thermostat which can lead to even greater savings by automatically adjusting it so that the cooling system runs more often when you are at home and less often when you are away.

## Made in the Shade

Windows are not only great sources of natural light in your home, but also great sources of heat during the summer.

"Curtains, blinds, and shades are some of the most cost-effective ways to make your windows and home more energy efficient," Haddix says. "They offer low cost solutions to shield the sun's rays and keep the interior of your home cool and comfortable."

But according to Haddix, proper weather stripping and caulking around window panes and casings will also improve the function of your windows by keeping the cool air in and the hot air out. Solar film applied to your home's existing windows will further repel the summer heat.

## Daily Grind

Today's appliances are more energy efficient than ever, performing better and using less electricity than they did in the past. But despite their functionality and efficiency, most major household appliances give off heat when in use.

"During peak daytime temperatures, the residual heat from appliances can put an unnecessary strain on your home's cooling system and send your power bill soaring," says Haddix. "Cooler temperatures in the early morning or late evening make these ideal times for running the dishwasher or washing and drying clothes."

When possible, turn off your dishwasher's dryer cycle. This prevents even more residual heat from warming your home and saves on your power bill. Washing your clothes in cold water and hanging them out to dry are also great strides in reducing your household energy consumption.

As your summer heats up, call on your friends at EnerStar for more ways to lower your power bill, or visit [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com) to find out how little changes around the house can add up to big energy savings.

## SUMMER ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Myth vs. Fact

**Myth #1:** When I'm not home, keeping my air conditioner at a lower temperature throughout the day means it doesn't have to run harder to cool my home when I return.

**FACT:** To save energy, set your thermostat to a higher temperature during the day, and lower it when you return home.

**Myth #2:** Closing vents on my central air conditioning system will boost efficiency.

**FACT:** Closing vents can cause the compressor to cycle too frequently and the heat pump to overload. You'll also use more energy.

**Myth #3:** Time of day doesn't matter when it comes to running my appliances.

**FACT:** Time of day does matter when running electrical loads. For example, take advantage of the delay setting and run your dishwasher at night to avoid peak times of use and save energy.

**Myth #4:** Bigger is always better when it comes to cooling equipment.

**FACT:** Too often, cooling equipment isn't sized properly and leads to higher electric bills. A unit that's too large for your home will not cool evenly and might produce higher humidity indoors.

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## Rules drafted in Washington have local impact

Cooperatives, like most local businesses, work through the highs and lows of a cyclical economy. So when a potential economic hazard arises and we have an opportunity to affect the outcome, you better believe we do whatever we can to prevent or mitigate it. That's why EnerStar is concerned about new rules coming out of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to limit greenhouse gases blamed for climate change.

Not-for-profit electric cooperatives work every day to provide affordable, reliable electricity to the more than 42 million Americans we serve. At EnerStar, we steadfastly focus on ways to slow the rising cost of electricity and find ways to help you save on your electricity bill.

Environmental regulations share part of the blame for rising electricity costs. Electric co-ops have invested billions of dollars in

equipment to reduce air pollution already, but greenhouse gases pose a far more difficult challenge to capture, and the new technology just isn't ready for prime time.

Equally troubling to comprehend, the EPA readily admits that cutting these emissions would not have much global impact on overall greenhouse gas levels.

The bottom line is that these regulations unfairly and disproportionately affect members of electric cooperatives. They target regions of the U.S. most dependent on coal for electricity. And increasing electricity prices could endanger efforts to attract new businesses let alone retain current employers.

By harnessing America's ingenuity, we can do better. To help our communities thrive, we need Washington to recognize the potential harm of these regulations and find a different path to a better



energy future. Let your voice be heard by visiting [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop).

If you do not have internet access, call EnerStar at 800-635-4145. We will send you a postcard that you can send in to have your voice heard.

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