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February 2008

APPLIANCES

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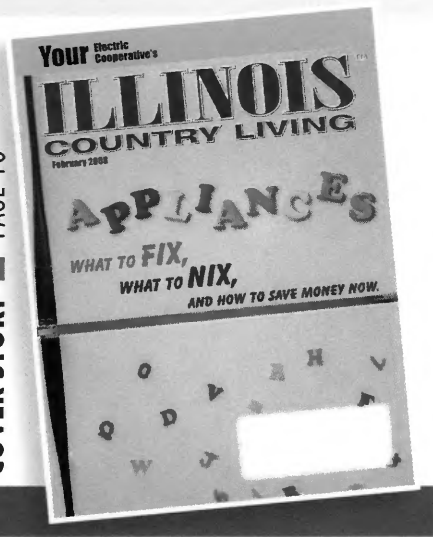
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APPLIANCES – WHAT TO FIX AND WHAT TO NIX

Does that old appliance need replaced? Find out what you need to know to help you make the best energy decisions for your pocketbook.

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ILLINOISTM COUNTRY LIVING

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Your Shelter From the Perfect Storm

Co-ops are involved in the solutions for our energy future

Your electric cooperative is facing many challenges as it strives to meet your energy needs. The members you elected to the board of directors, the CEO and employees who work for you are planning for the future while facing an incredible number of issues and uncertainties. Those involved in this process often talk about a “perfect storm” that is forming.

The elements of this storm include the need for more power, rising costs for fuel to generate electricity, escalating prices for the materials needed to build power plants, expensive emissions control equipment and new federal regulations, all set against a background of debate on climate change.

The good news is the growth in energy demand we are experiencing means a boost for our state’s economy. But the downside is that these challenges mean it’s getting harder to meet your energy needs in an economical fashion.

Electric cooperatives are investing in a diverse portfolio of generation resources. Our portfolio of generation resources includes renewable energy, clean-coal technology and natural gas, along with energy-efficiency programs that have postponed the need for additional power in the short term.

Co-ops are also being very proactive and innovative in exploring new energy options. One Illinois co-op was the first distribution co-op in the nation to install a wind turbine. Two more are also exploring the possibility of installing wind turbines. Another Illinois co-op has plans to build the first biomass generating plant in the state.

It will take all of these options plus your support by using energy efficiently to make sure we have enough energy to fuel a growing rural economy. For example, consider just one new factor in the rural Illinois energy landscape - ethanol. Although some ethanol plants are struggling to get started, it is obvious to me that we need to build more ethanol plants here in rural Illinois. We need to lower our dependence on foreign oil to the

extent we can, and ethanol is one answer. Ethanol plants will, however, require more electricity.

Look around your own home or business and I’ll bet you’ll find dozens of new items you’ve added in the last few years that use electricity. Computers, DVD players, cell phone and iPod chargers. Oh, and how about that new high definition TV you got for Christmas. Did you know that a 42-inch plasma TV uses as much energy as a full-size refrigerator? Some estimate that 5 percent of our electricity is used to power all of these new gadgets when they’re just sitting there in standby mode.

Not only is the increased demand for energy and the increased cost of producing energy going to impact your co-op and your electric bill, so will energy legislation. Legislation addressing climate change and other energy issues will have a price tag. We will be actively involved on your behalf with the climate change and energy debate.

The climate change issue is critical. We must get it right. Part of the discussion must involve our energy security and the impact on our economy all the way down to your meter and your monthly bill. On one side of the debate there are those who don’t want any more power plants built that use coal for fuel. We believe this is a shortsighted view.

Coal is by far the most affordable way to generate electricity. Technology is in place and being used today to reduce emissions. We believe a mix of resources that includes coal offers the best option to help electric cooperative members weather this perfect storm. We are very excited that Illinois was chosen as the site for the new FutureGen project. It will be the model for future coal-fired generating plants throughout the world.

New clean coal generating technology has to be a part of our energy future and the majority of the Illinois electric cooperatives are participating in the Prairie State Energy Campus. This generating

(Continued on page 6)

“Not only is the increased demand for energy and the increased cost of producing energy going to impact your co-op and your electric bill, so will energy legislation.”

N. Duane Noland is the President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, Springfield. He is a former state senator, active on his family farm near Blue Mound and a member of Shelby Electric Cooperative.

The opinions and views of guest commentators are their own and may not represent those of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives or the electric co-ops of Illinois.



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FutureGen Alliance Selects Mattoon for Near-Zero Emissions Coal-fueled Power Plant

FutureGen, a coal gasification facility that will convert coal into hydrogen and electricity while capturing and safely storing the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide deep underground, will be built in Mattoon. It will lay the groundwork for developing similar plants around the country and the world, pioneering the capture and storage of greenhouse gases. By sequestering the CO₂ in deep geological reservoirs more than one-mile underground in the Mt. Simon Sandstone reservoir, emissions are eliminated.

The site evaluation process was rigorous, transparent and held to the highest level of scrutiny. The U.S. Department of Energy's environmental review was thorough and resulted in finding all four candidate sites worthy of being selected. The Alliance used more than 120 different factors in the general areas of cost, risks to cost and schedule, and benefits in making the final selection.

Other states including Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio,

Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Wyoming supported Illinois' campaign for the facility. These states represent almost two-thirds of coal produced in the United States each year and 51 percent of our country's coal reserves.

The Alliance and Illinois will now work together to move FutureGen forward at a continued fast pace to develop this much-needed, first-of-a-kind research and development program. With the issue of climate change at the top of Congress' agenda and on the minds of many policy-makers around the globe, FutureGen and its continued progress toward advancing new technologies such as carbon capture and storage is more important than ever.

In addition to placing Illinois at the center of clean coal energy innovation and furthering the revitalization of the Illinois coal industry, FutureGen

will have a significant economic impact on the region and state. A recent study by Southern Illinois University in Carbondale showed that during the four-year construction period, there would be more

than \$1 billion in economic impact statewide and 1,225 indirect and induced spin-off jobs created as a result of the economic ripple effect generated by FutureGen. Once the facility is operational, the study noted that FutureGen would generate \$135 million annually in total statewide economic output, with an \$85 million annual increase in Coles County alone.

The FutureGen Alliance is a non-profit organization that represents some of the world's largest coal companies and electric utilities. The Alliance is partnering with the U.S. Department of Energy to design and build the facility. Learn more about FutureGen and the Alliance at www.FutureGenAlliance.org or visit www.FutureGenForIllinois.com. ■



COMMENTARY (Continued from page 4)

plant will use 21st century technologies, making it among the cleanest U.S. coal-fueled plants with emission rates that are approximately 80 percent lower than existing U.S. power plants.

Illinois co-op leaders are also committed to innovative use of renewable energy sources. Co-ops have also been leaders in energy efficiency technology such as geothermal heat pumps. We are committed to continuing to explore innovative new energy resource options and energy efficiency technology.

The bottom line is we need to include all the

options, all our technology, all our efforts to use energy efficiently in order to solve this perfect energy storm.

Electric co-ops represent a unique viewpoint in this energy debate because co-ops are owned by the members. I hope you will let your co-op leaders know how you feel about this issue. We promise to continue to print articles that will help you understand this complex issue. There are no easy answers. But we must all be engaged in the debate and the solutions. ■

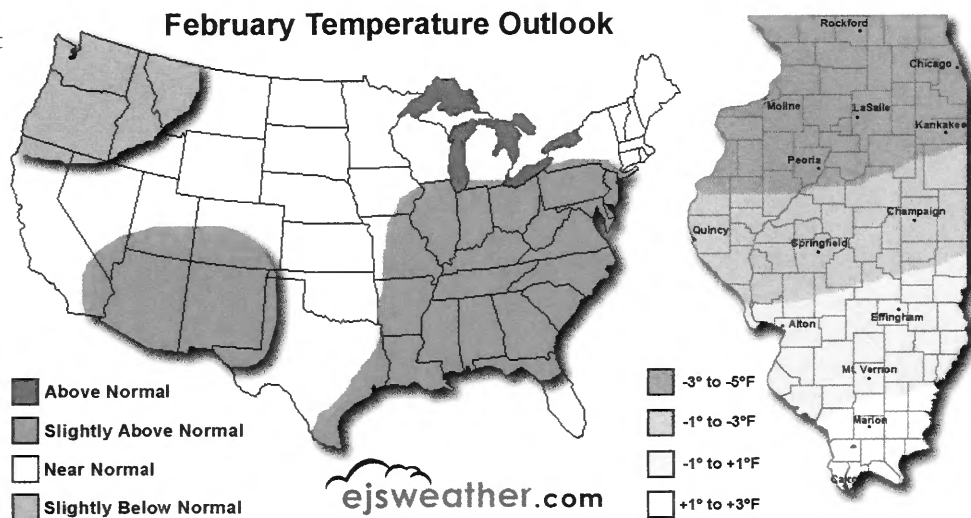
Moderate La Nina Persisting, Warmer February Expected

The latest sea-surface temperature analysis across the equatorial Pacific Ocean reveals that cooler than normal ocean temperatures have continued over the last month. As a result, the La Nina that developed this past fall is persisting and has actually strengthened somewhat.

Taking a look at other climate years that have had a similar La Nina in place during the winter (specifically 1989, 1996, 2006) reveal that typically the second half of winter tends to be warmer than average.

Other climate indices such as the NAO (North Atlantic Oscillation) index also favor a milder February across Illinois by hinting at an upper level ridge pattern for at least part of the month. Current thinking is that much of the state will see mean temperatures that average two to three degrees above normal during the month of February. As a result, energy usage and costs with respect to heating should also be lower than normal.

The Illinois map this month illustrates the tem-



perature departure from normal across the state for this past December. As can be seen, the northern half of the state saw the forecasted cooler than normal start to winter mainly because of more snow cover. However, the southern half of the state saw temperatures average a little closer to normal than was originally predicated.

Source: EJS Weather, Newton, Ill., www.ejsweather.com or call 618-783-3040. ■

Good Samaritan Initiative is for Those Without Utility Service

As part of his Keep Warm Illinois campaign, Governor Rod R. Blagojevich announced the start of the Good Samaritan Initiative for the 2007-2008 winter season. The initiative provides more affordable reconnection terms to Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) recipients who have had their utility services disconnected.

The Good Samaritan Initiative will help disconnected low-income customers by reducing the amount that the utility companies require to restore service. LIHEAP beneficiaries, whose outstanding balances are too high to be covered by a grant alone but less than \$3,000, will need to pay only \$250 or 20 percent of the remaining balance, whichever is less, to have their service restored. Customers must also set up payment plans with their utilities for the remainder of their balance.

You can contribute to the Good Samaritan Trust Fund. The fund, which was established by law in 2003, allows Illinois residents and businesses to voluntarily contribute money toward the heating bills of low-income families. Contributions will benefit low-income residents of the county from which funds were donated. Donations are tax-deductible.

To contribute to the Good Samaritan Energy Trust Fund, send donations to: Good Samaritan Trust Fund, P.O. Box 19154, Springfield, IL 62794.

Source: Illinois Energy Forum ■

Department of Defense to Use Biofuels for Jets

The Syntroleum Corporation recently announced that it has signed a contract to provide synthetic jet fuel made from renewable feedstock to the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).

Syntroleum will provide 500 gallons of ultra-clean renewable synthetic jet fuel produced entirely from fats supplied by Tyson Foods, Inc., using the company's recently-announced Biofining™ technology. The fuel will be used for research development and performance testing in military turbine applications as part of the DOD's Assured Fuels Program. The U.S. Air Force has expressed its desire to source 50 percent of its fuel needs from domestic alternative sources by 2016, and plans to certify its entire fleet of aircraft for alternative fuel use by 2010.

Source: www.syntroleum.com ■

The World Must Help China and India Handle Energy Growth

Energy developments in China and India are transforming the global energy system as a result of their sheer size, according to a new report from the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The IEA's "World Energy Outlook 2007" warns that global energy consumption could increase well over 50 percent by 2030. Energy use in China and India could double by 2030, providing nearly half the world's growth in energy consumption.

If that happened, global carbon dioxide emissions from energy use

would increase by 57 percent. The world's oil production would also be increasingly concentrated in the Middle East, and the IEA notes that "it is very uncertain" whether supplies would keep up with demand.

Fortunately, the IEA also sees the possibility for a brighter energy future. Measures to improve energy efficiency could cause global carbon dioxide emissions to level off in the 2020s.

If the world decides to stabilize atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide at around 450 parts

per million (a goal often cited by climate scientists), global emissions would have to peak in 2012 and fall sharply below 2005 levels by 2030, according to the IEA. That could be achieved through a combination of aggressive energy efficiency measures, greater use of renewable and nuclear energy sources and widespread deployment of carbon capture and storage technologies, says the report.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy ■

Center Will Focus on Training for Coal Industry

Rend Lake College (RLC) could become the first community college in the history of Illinois to install a \$1 million facility dedicated to training a workforce for the coal mining industry.

State Representative Kurt Granberg (D-107th) announced in December during the Rend Lake College Foundation Annual Dinner his intentions to secure \$1 million in state funding for a new coal mining technology center for the college. While he could not make a formal

announcement, he said he is "very optimistic" that funding can be secured for such an endeavor.

Granberg's announcement is another step in a successful history of supporting RLC and Southern Illinois. Sadly, the Assistant Majority Leader's 22-year tenure will come to a close after this term. Granberg recently announced that he will step down as representative of the 107th District to pursue other professional opportunities.

Granberg explained that an

international group of companies are currently conducting coal investment feasibility studies in the U.S. Right now, their choice of where to operate is between Illinois and Texas. If the choice is Illinois, it could mean a great opportunity for Southern Illinois.

"If that happens, you are going to see international focus on Southern Illinois," Granberg said. He added that a coal mining technology center at RLC would be an important part in a successful boom of the Illinois coal industry. ■

Energy Act Creates New Energy Efficiency Standards

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, signed into law on Dec. 19, phases out the use of inefficient incandescent lights and imposes improved energy efficiency standards on a wide variety of products.

According to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), the new standards for light bulbs require them to use about 20-30 percent less energy by 2014, while requiring DOE to set standards for light bulbs to cut their energy use at least 35 percent by 2020. The initial targets could be met with compact fluorescent lamps and advanced incandescent lamps that combine halogen capsules with infrared-reflective coatings. The 2020 standards will encourage the use of LEDs (light-emitting diodes) and other advanced lighting technologies.



The Alliance to Save Energy (ASE) calls the act "the most significant energy-efficiency legislation in three decades" and notes that the lighting standards alone will cut electric bills by \$13 billion per year, eliminating the need for 60 mid-sized power plants.

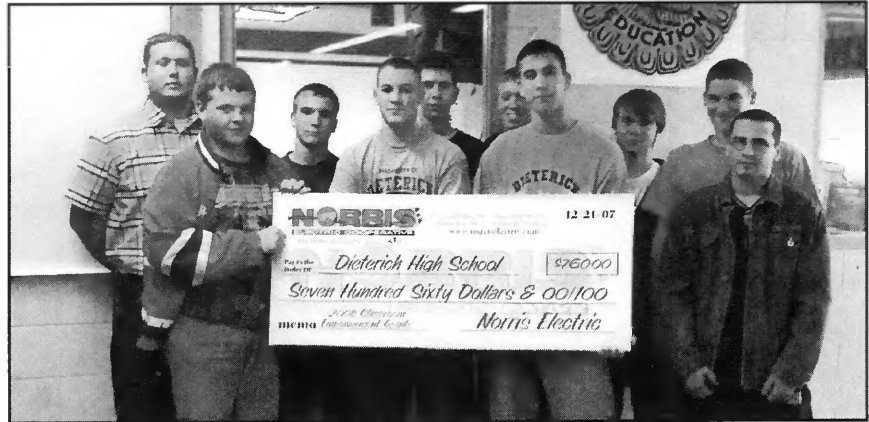
The energy act also sets new minimum efficiency standards for external power supplies, dishwashers, dehumidifiers, residential boilers, electric motors and walk-in coolers and freezers. It directs DOE to conduct new rulemakings on residential refrigerators and clothes washers. It also allows DOE to establish a regional standard for heating products and two regional standards for cooling products, in addition to the national standard. Such regional standards will allow DOE to account for significant climate differences throughout the United States. ■

\$20,000 in Classroom Grants Awarded to local co-op schools

Touchstone Energy electric cooperatives across Illinois distributed a total of \$20,000 in Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants to fund innovative, unfunded school projects or materials. Twenty-one projects were awarded money from a total of the 130 projects submitted to the grant program.

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives Marketing Administrator Nancy Nixon said, "These grants will provide a real boost for smaller projects that would not otherwise be funded. Your local Touchstone Energy cooperative is committed to the community and improving conditions for local students is a priority."

Eligibility was limited to schools located in Touchstone Energy cooperative service territory, but they did not have to be served electrically by



A group of students at Dieterich High School received the giant check presentation from Norris Electric Cooperative for the \$750 grant their teacher was awarded for household wiring wall simulators.

a cooperative. Projects could not be funded by any other source. Although electric-oriented projects were not required, extra consideration was given to projects that are electric oriented.

For more information about Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants, please contact your local electric cooperative.

The following schools received grants:

Scales Mound H.S.	Greenhouse electric controls
Dieterich H.S.	Wall simulators for household wiring
Fulton Community H.S.	Computerized embroidery machine
Fulton Grade School	Science library/learning centers
Martinsville Grade School	Solar powered power car
Coulterville School District	Science education beyond the classroom
Lincoln Intermediate in Monmout	4-Rs recycling program
Bushnell Prairie City H.S. in Avon	Physics in action, water as fuel
Bushnell Prairie Elem. in Avon	Listen to Learn program
New Simpson Hill School in Tunnel Hill	Generating future co-ops
Main Street School in Shelbyville	Smart Boards
Mendon Schools	Shoebox tasks program
Central A & M H.S. in Moweaqua	Graphing data loggers
Red Bud Grade School	Energized through learning program
St. John the Baptist School in Red Bud	Electric curriculum
Ana Jr. High School	Energy conservation program
Irvington Grade School	Special Education program
Immaculate Conception in Columbia	Tankless water heaters for school
Eldorado H.S.	Smart Boards for teaching rural history
Field Community School in Texico	Electronic library books
Dewey School in Quincy	Technology needed for seven habits program

APPLIANCES

WHAT TO FIX, WHAT TO NIX,

AND HOW TO SAVE MONEY NOW.

BY MICHELLE MCNEAL

At one time or another, it's likely that we've all walked through a store and gazed wistfully at the rows of new appliances, gleaming in the fluorescent lights and promising to improve our lives. "Is it time I upgraded?" "Would stainless steel look great in my kitchen?" "Would that large capacity washer save me time?" "Will my clothes last longer?" "Is it cheaper to buy a new stove than fix my old one?" "Will it make me a better cook?"

And one question we should all ask, "Will that Energy Star® appliance really save me money each month?"

While we can't help you answer every question that goes through your head as you marvel at the new gadgets available, we can help you decide when it's time to consider getting rid of the old and bringing in the new to save you money.

TO FIX OR NOT TO FIX

The cost of repairing appliances has remained about the same since 2000, but the costs of new appliances have fallen, causing more and more homeowners to buy new rather than fix the old. Plus, with 37 percent less repair shops around, it's getting harder to find someone willing to fix things.

Consumer Reports, in a 2005 survey, found that its readers were repairing 16 percent fewer appliances than they were in 1997. Their expert

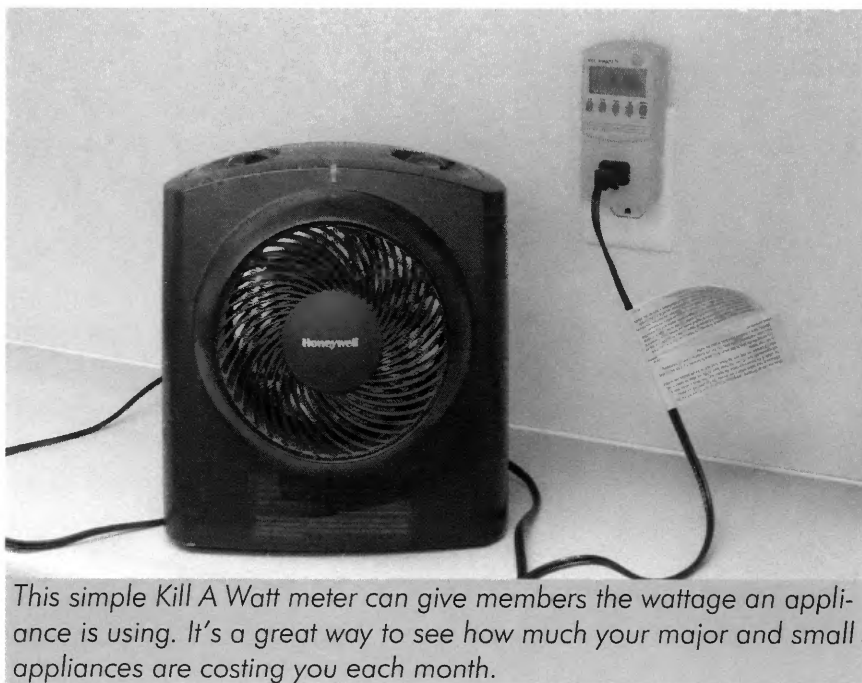
advice—toss anything that costs under \$150. And don't bother repairing a large appliance if the repair costs are more than 50 percent of the price of a new one.

So if you're looking at the finances of fixing that old toaster or blender, you're most likely better off to just buy new. Of course, *Consumer Reports* reminds you to check for warranties and call the manufacturer for all appliances, small and large, before deciding to nix something. Sometimes the manufacturer will repair or replace something free of charge.

And then, there is the green angle to consider. *The Green Guide* recommends that you weigh the manufacturing and waste costs to the environment against the possible lower energy and water usage of a new appliance, which benefits the environment.

The guide recommends the same cost comparison as *Consumer Reports*: if it's more than 50 percent of the new cost to fix it, buy new.

If you do choose to buy new, keep in mind that there are two prices on every appliance you purchase—the



This simple Kill A Watt meter can give members the wattage an appliance is using. It's a great way to see how much your major and small appliances are costing you each month.

price you pay to take it home and the price you pay to run it in your home.

Dana Smith, Director of Member and Public Relations at Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative in Auburn, tells his members they can purchase a small amp/watt meter for under \$25 to check any 120-volt appliance's energy usage. That way, you'll know how much energy your old appliance is using each month. Then you can check that cost against the EnergyGuide located on new appliances and see how much buying a more efficient model could save you.

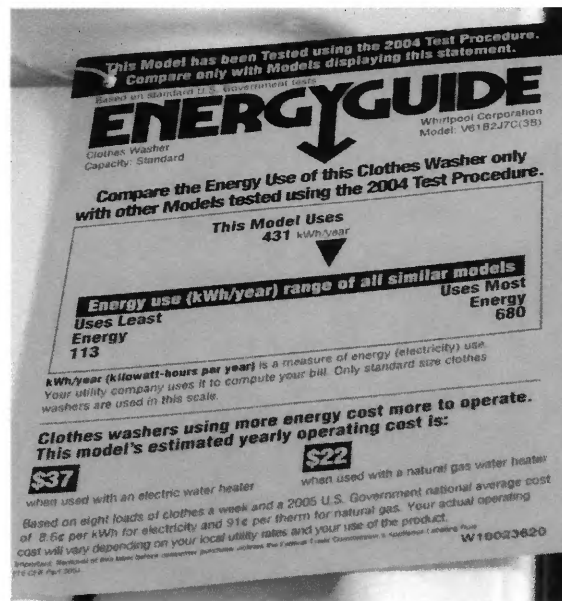
The EnergyGuide is the bright yellow label prominently displayed on new appliances. It contains a comparison scale that shows the least and most energy used by comparable models, plus an arrow pointing to where this particular model falls on the scale. The yearly operational cost of the model is also displayed. It is based on the national average energy cost. You'll need to take your current energy rate per kWh and multiply it by the number of kWhs the appliance will use in a year to get a more precise amount.

To ensure you're getting an energy efficient model, also look for the Energy Star logo. Energy Star is a joint program of the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The program identifies high-efficiency appliances such as clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, televisions, VCRs, home audio equipment, DVDs, computer monitors and printers. Smith says, "The Energy Star label gives you a simple assurance that a product is reputable and that it's one of the more energy-efficient models available." If one in 10 homes used all Energy Star appliances, it would be equivalent in environmental benefit to planting 1.7 million acres of trees.

Let's take a specific look at the three biggest appliances in your home: your clothes washer, dishwasher and refrigerator.

CLOTHES WASHERS

Washers continue to improve each year. *The Green Guide* says that replacing even a 2005 model washer



could save you energy costs and water. And if your washer was made before 1994, it could be costing you \$110 a year more on your utility bills, not to mention using more water.

New washers are also larger capacity, saving time by allowing you to have fewer loads if the dryer is the same capacity. And many new washers do not have agitators so they're easier on fabrics, allowing your clothes to better survive years of washing.

If you're fortunate enough to be part of a municipal or co-op water system, or you have a well that never runs dry, you may not be overly concerned about water usage. However, if you've had to postpone showers, flushing toilets, that first pot of coffee in the morning, or had to take your clothes to the Laundromat, you've surely learned to appreciate every drop of this precious resource.

If you are one of the unfortunates who haul water yourself or pay to have your well filled, a new washer could help save you big on water usage depending on your current model. Front loading washers use about one third of the water of a conventional top loading washer. Energy Star models use 10-50 percent less water and energy. They could also save you \$550 in operating costs over the life of the washer.

But what about dryers? The average lifespan of a good dryer is 13 years and as long as it has a moisture sensor, a new one won't save you much on

energy costs. Energy Star doesn't label dryers because of the small differences in energy usage. Of course, many people want a matched set and always buy a washer and dryer together.

When shopping for new appliances, always look for the EnergyGuide label. It displays a comparison scale that shows the least and most energy used by comparable models, as well as the yearly operational cost based on the national average energy cost.

Save Money Now: Run your washer only when it's full. Always use the cold water rinse cycle and use cold water wash whenever possible. Heating the hot water used each cycle is 90 percent of your washer's operating cost.

DISHWASHERS

Did you know that using a dishwasher on average saves more water than washing dishes by hand? Newer models use even less hot water. They have sensors that determine the length of the wash cycle needed and many have a light wash or energy saving cycle that can save even more. You can expect a new one to last about nine years. An Energy Star model, in addition to saving water, could save \$90 in operating costs over another model.

Save Money Now: Run only full loads and don't use the dry feature – let them air dry. Don't use pre-rinse or high-temperature settings unless absolutely necessary.

REFRIGERATOR

Now let's talk about the biggest energy-using appliance in your home, your refrigerator. The newest

federal standards were put in place in 2001. Models older than that cost about \$100 more a year to run. If you bought your fridge in 1990 and replaced it with an Energy Star model, you could save enough on energy costs to light your home for four months. Why? Because newer models have high-efficiency compressors, improved insulation and more precise temperature and defrost mechanisms. Consider also that top-freezer models use 10 to 24 percent less energy than side by side models, and automatic defrost chest freezers can cost 40 percent more to operate than manual defrost models.

The Energy Star Web site has a refrigerator retirement savings calculator to help you figure out what you're paying now.

Bob Dickey, Manager of Marketing and Economic Development at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, investigates high bill complaints and performs energy audits for members. He says, "One of the biggest issues we see is that the old appliance is moved to the basement, or

worse, to an unconditioned garage or back porch.

"We have seen appliances in breezeways or placed in front of windows where the sun is beating through onto the back of a freezer or refrigerator." A refrigerator kept in such an area will use more energy to keep its contents cool.

Also, Dickey warns that the seals around the door of a refrigerator or freezer can become very hard when placed in an unconditioned space. This will hurt the sealing capabilities and allow for air leakage. "All of these situations will increase energy usage enough to be noticeable on a member's electric bill," he says.

Many times, when consumers purchase a new refrigerator, they put the old one in the garage or shed for overflow or sodas and the like. Is this bad? It depends. How much is it worth to you? If having that convenience outweighs the energy usage then it's worth it to you. Just be aware that depending on its age, that fridge could be costing you \$10-\$40 a month, or more, to run.

If you're really curious as to how much that old fridge in the garage is costing you, we recommend buying the small meter mentioned earlier. You might be surprised at how much you pay each year to keep those sodas cool. Keep in mind too that many new refrigerator models are designed to be used indoors, not in garages or sheds, and can have condensation issues if used in those spaces.

Save Money Now: Keep your refrigerator and freezer full. The freezer should be kept defrosted and the temperature set at 0 degrees F. Keep the fridge temperature between 35 and 38 degrees F. Make sure the door seals are tight and always give the door an extra nudge when you close it. Clean the condenser coils carefully every six to 12 months and make sure air can circulate between the appliance and the wall and cabinets. Don't place your fridge beside your oven, dishwasher or in direct sunlight.

New Retro Appliances

After restoring an old home or vintage kitchen, some homeowners feel that placing a new stainless steel stove in it would just be wrong. With a quick Internet search we found several companies selling reproduction vintage-look appliances. They meet today's safety standards but have the retro look. These appliances are not, however, Energy Star certified. Check out www.appliances411.com for a listing of several companies selling these appliances. It's just one more thing to think about when shopping. You have a lot of choices!

For More Information

The Green Guide: www.thegreenguide.com

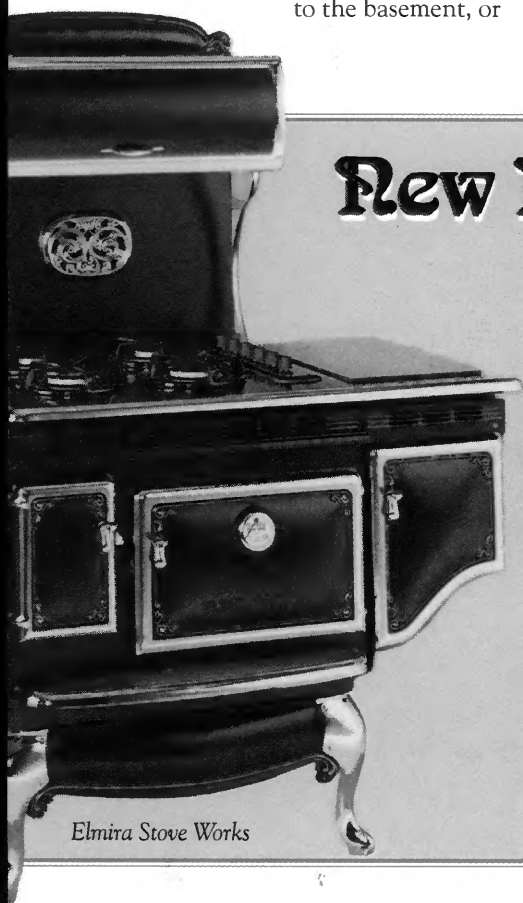
Energy Star: www.energystar.gov

Consumer Reports: www.consumerreports.org

Appliance 411 Information: www.appliance411.com

U.S. Department of Energy:

www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/



Elmira Stove Works



When an Appliance is More Than it Seems

Sometimes a blender is more than just a blender, and a refrigerator is a symbol of a dream. That's what we discovered when Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative in Auburn ran an oldest appliance contest to coincide with its 70th anniversary celebration last year. They received information about toasters, vacuums, fans, washers and more ranging from the early 1920s on.

Bill Hunt of Taylorville submitted the story of his 1948 Hamilton Beach Milkshake Machine, a tradition that continues to bring his family together. Hunt's mother bought the machine the year he was sick with rheumatic fever. "My mother and I had a milkshake everyday," he remembers.

In early 1950, the machine passed to his grandmother to make shakes for her customers at their filling station in Langleyville. In the 1960s, the milkshake maker made its way back to Hunt. "My wife made milkshakes for our family. Our girls loved the thick shakes and the stories of my youth," he says.

Since the early '80s, Hunt and his wife have been entertaining their grandchildren the same way. "Today my wife and I can't wait for our great grandson to know that when the big green Hamilton Beach milkshake maker with the big silver cup is pulled off the shelf it's time for the family to gather to tell stories of the past and enjoy those wonderful, wonderful shakes," he says.

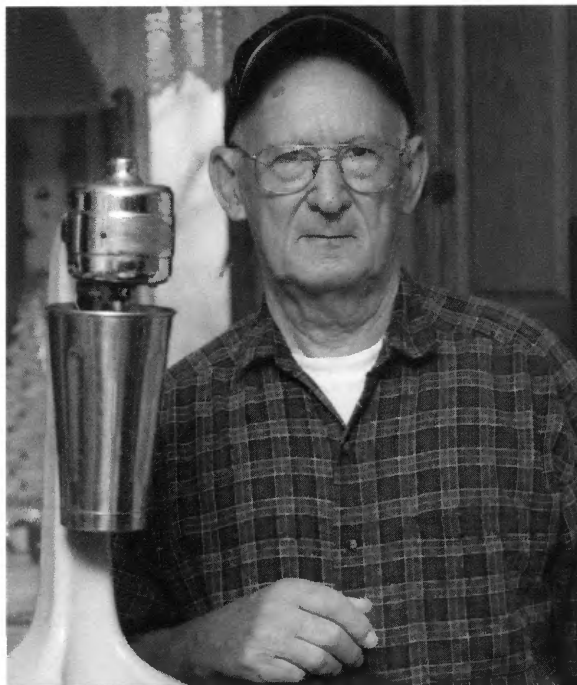
The co-op received photos and information about six working refrigerators and a freezer from its members. Kevin Smith of Divernon submitted a story with his 1925 G.E. refrigerator that marked his move from city to country life and the realization of a goal.

Every summer throughout high school and college, Smith worked for a neighbor, Jim, in his painting business. "While toiling under the hot summer sun we talked away the time discussing the past, mostly his since I didn't have much behind me yet, the present and of course some of our hopes for the future," says Smith.

"One of my hopes was to be able to move out to the country and buy an old farmhouse that had a barn or small workshop. Jim knew I always liked his old refrigerator and one day when we were talking about the future he told me, 'When you get that place in the country you can have that old thing.'"

When Smith graduated college he and his wife got married at their new home, an old farmhouse in rural Divernon. Jim attended the wedding and with a hug and a clap on the back said to Smith, "You did it...hot dang you did it. You got that place in the country we always talked about. I'm so proud of you." Smith had forgotten all about their "agreement" until Jim asked when he was stopping by to pick up his new fridge.

Smith says, "Jim passed away in June 2005, but the refrigerator is still in that shop out in the country we dreamed of, keeping beverages frosty on those long summer days of working out in the sun."



Bill Hunt's Milkshake Machine is more than just that, it's a symbol of memories he and his family will share for a lifetime.



Every ice cold soda in this 1925 G.E. refrigerator reminds Kevin Smith of his late friend, Jim.

The Personal Side of Safety

Putting a face on safety makes the subject more important

Not long ago, I was at a conference and the keynote speaker was sharing a personal experience of a dear friend who was seriously injured in an electrical accident. I sat there in silence and began to think about safety and what it meant to me and how it affected other people. And after some thought, I realized that this presenter spoke with such passion because safety had become very personal for him. In a sense, safety had taken on a face...the face of his friend who had been seriously injured while working with electricity.

I share my thoughts on this because I realized that each one of us has a choice concerning safety, whether at our jobs or at home. I believe we can read articles in this publication or any other magazine, hear talks on safety and even go to conferences, but until safety becomes personal to us we will not fully become engaged in the deepest sense of what safety is all about.

For example, what if you found out one of your family members had been diagnosed with a serious heart condition? That personal experience may then prompt you to want to learn CPR. And if you were driving home from work one evening and saw someone stranded on the side of the road in the middle of a winter storm, you may think about how awful that would be if that were someone in your family, and you may take extra care to better prepare your, and your loved ones', cars for winter storms. Why are these experiences different than simply reading about safety? It's because safety became personal!

Have you ever allowed yourself to put a face to safety? Can you see how vital it is to protect those you love, including yourself, by taking safety very serious? If we all make the commitment to making safety personal, I believe that we can become a very safety-conscious state and we will all benefit.

Safe Electricity Puts a Face on Safety

The 2008 Safe Electricity public service campaign that was launched in January puts the face of Caitlyn MacKenzie on the importance of safety around electricity. Caitlyn was a 12-year-old, happy-go-lucky pre-teen from Edwardsville, Ill. who was tragically killed in 2007 when, damp from swimming, she touched an ungrounded out-



**Caitlyn MacKenzie
1995 - 2007**

door lamp. This experience has compelled her family to use Caitlyn's story to help others avoid tragedy.

Scott and Jamie MacKenzie, Caitlyn's father and stepmother, along with Teresa and Bob Orasco, her mother and stepfather, have graciously agreed to share Caitlyn's story for the campaign centered on teaching children electrical safety. "I never knew that something like this could happen from

an ordinary household electric current," says Scott Mackenzie. "You just don't think something like this can happen to you, but it can."

The emotional and compelling public service announcements were produced with the families' own words. They eloquently underscore the sense of loss when a loved one is taken from them suddenly. In the ads, Teresa Orasco, Caitlyn's mother, says, "If you are not educated about electrical safety, become educated. It's important; you don't realize how important

until tragedy strikes." ■

Ken Macken is the Manager of Safety and Loss Control for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. 217-241-7933, kmacken@aiec.coop.



"Safety had taken on a face...the face of a friend that had been seriously injured while working with electricity."

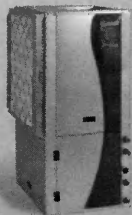


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How to Lift Someone's Spirits

Brighten your relationships during the dreary drabness of winter

February can be one of those dreary winter months, especially if there's no snow and you're left with the drabness of grays and browns in the landscape.

On the other hand, smack in the middle of non-Leap Year February, you have Valentine's Day, when we have the opportunity to brighten our homes.

Second only to Mother's Day weekend, Valentine's is one of those flower-giving days. Nothing lifts the spirits like a dozen roses, carnations or a bouquet of mixed flowers.

If you give someone chrysanthemums or other daisy-like flowers, you can argue that you are giving the person thousands of flowers, for every petal on a chrysanthemum or daisy is, in reality, a flower just like a solitary rose. If the daisy has an eye, then the middle is composed of hundreds of petal-less flowers as well.

So, giving someone just one mum flower, you can look them in the eye and say, "Honey, I'm giving you hundreds, if not thousands, of flowers instead of a dozen roses."

Of course, it helps to stay about 10 feet away from the reach or throw of the person getting the flowers as you say this. Science and logic sometimes don't cut it when emotions are involved.

Fresh flowers are one of those things that haven't risen drastically in price over the years.

The main reason is that most of the florist flowers aren't grown in the United States any more. It's cheaper to grow them in South America, Europe or the Middle East where labor and

production costs are markedly lower and ship them to the states.

Years ago, flowers were the domain of the florist. These days, you can find them just about anywhere from supermarkets to home improvement stores to discount stores to gas stations.

Most flowers, if treated properly, should last at least a week. Finicky flowers such as roses can last two weeks or more if you know what to do. As long as the flowers look good think of all the good will,

not to mention other perks, you can get as the giver.

Do remember that, unlike a diamond, flowers don't last forever. They just are cheaper than a diamond.

If you want to make sure the flowers die a quick death, stick them in a vase of water and do nothing else. In less than five days, they'll not only look awful, but will smell just as bad.

With a little extra care, you can be sure these flowers will last as long as possible.

Start with a clean vase or container. I usually wash mine again before putting in the flowers, and swish some bleach around in the container before giving it a final rinse.

Next, strip off any leaf that will be underwater. Leaves are a source of bacteria that multiplies quickly in water, and clogs the water vessels of the flowers.

Remove an inch of the stems from each flower. The quicker you can cut, chop or saw through the stems, the best. There's the perpetual argument about cutting stems on an angle. Do it if it makes you feel good.

Use warm water to help the flowers start sucking up the water. Distilled water is the best; giving a jug of water with a bouquet of flowers doesn't seem appropriate, but it's possible you could be on the cutting edge of a new trend. Avoid softened water.

The packets of floral preservative with the flowers are worthwhile and not just a gimmick. They prevent bacteria from growing.

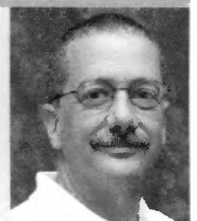
But, the best thing you can do is empty the vase every other day and put in fresh water. After a week, it doesn't hurt to cut another inch off the stems. Set the alarms on your computer or PDA to remind you. You'll be amazed at how long the flowers last if you do that one simple task.

Of course, if you want flowers to last forever, go the artificial route. Remember, though, fake flowers may convey a message you don't want to say. ■



"Do remember that, unlike a diamond, flowers don't last forever. They just are cheaper than a diamond."

David Robson is an Extension Educator, Horticulture, at the Springfield Extension Center, University of Illinois Extension, P.O. Box 8199, Springfield, IL 62791. Telephone: 217-782-6515. E-mail: drobson@uiuc.edu.



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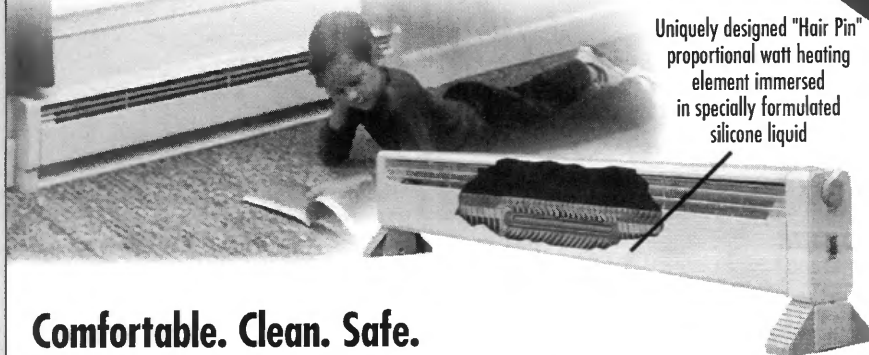
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Energy Efficiency or Conservation?

We can be energy efficient and comfortable

Is it energy efficiency or conservation, and which should I do? Well, I can tell you that both are important as they relate to the comfort of your home and that monthly utility bill.

In the mid 1970s, our country experienced what we called an oil embargo. I was a young architect working for a government agency that helped provide homes for low- and moderate-income families. I remember watching television and seeing long lines at service stations as drivers waited to get their allotment of gasoline. I remember seeing the president of the United States on prime time television wearing a heavy sweater with a presidential seal telling Americans that energy resources could no longer be taken for granted. In fact, his exact quote was: "The energy crisis has not yet overwhelmed us, but it will if we do not act quickly. We simply must balance our demand for energy with our rapidly shrinking resources."

After President Carter's address, most folks I knew were quite nervous and concerned about energy availability. Families started purchasing automobiles that had good fuel economy. People added insulation to their attics and some even weather-stripped their exterior doors.

This was, in fact, the time when I started trying to help find a way to help families have lower utility bills. And, you know what? Americans were totally serious about this matter for

almost a year. Yes, almost a whole year! It was over just about as fast as it started. As soon as the price of gasoline dropped and there were no longer shortages, Americans, for the most part, went back to their old wasteful ways.

Some of us realized, however, that even if there were no shortages of energy supplies, energy efficiency and conservation still made good sense. As our parents often said, "Waste not, want not."

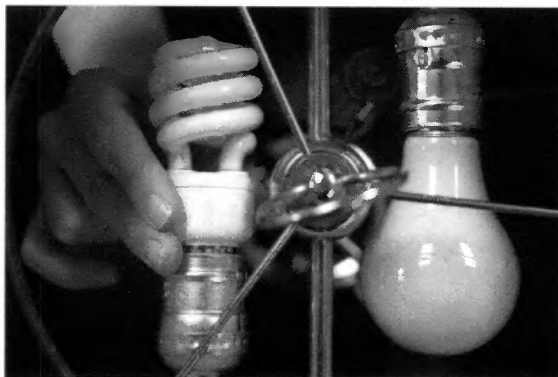
While our nation seems to be split on just about every decision, I'll bet you that 100 percent of the people would say they would like more comfortable

homes and lower utility bills. And, of course, that is the reason you read this column. What do you remember about the president's energy speech? Most of you would answer that he said turn your thermostat down to 68 degrees and wear warmer clothes. When he said that, I knew I didn't like the idea of not being

comfortable. But, at the same time, I realized that for many families, this might be their only solution. In short, being energy efficient and conserving was the real answer.

What is the difference between energy efficiency and conservation? Putting on a sweater would be considered being energy efficient while lowering the thermostat setting in the winter or raising it in the summer would be considered conservation. Purchasing an automobile with better gas mileage is an example of energy efficiency, while traveling less would be conservation. Changing the thermostat setting would be conservation while adding insulation, etc., would be energy efficiency. Installing a more efficient water heater would be an example of energy efficiency while using less hot water would be conservation. Buying compact fluorescent light bulbs would be energy efficient while turning the lights off when not in use would be conservation. There are many other examples of these two principles.

I have always thought that practicing both energy efficiency and conservation is how to make a really big difference. So why not take action and do both – be energy efficient and conserve. It'll pay off for you and our country. ■



"Purchasing an automobile with better gas mileage is an example of energy efficiency, while traveling less would be conservation."

Doug Rye, the "Doctor of Energy Efficiency-the King of Caulk and Talk" can be heard on several different Illinois radio stations. Or you can go to his Web site at www.dougyrie.com, e-mail him at info@philliprye.com, or call 888-Doug-Rye or 501-653-7931. You can also sign up for a free newsletter and order his "how to" videotapes.



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Running Out of Power

More electricity needed to meet growing demand

By: Nancy S. Grant and Jennifer Taylor

Will our nation's electric system continue to provide a reliable, safe and affordable supply of power in coming years? This question was asked most recently by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), a Princeton, N.J.-based non-profit organization charged with monitoring America's power system reliability.

In October 2007, NERC published its annual Long-Term Reliability Assessment, which provides a forecast on how much electric generating capacity will be available during the next decade. The report also estimates how much electricity people will use over that time.

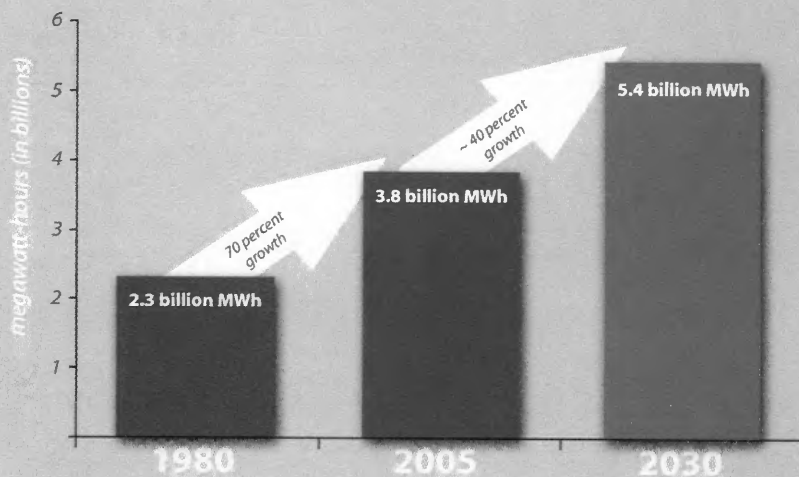
The organization's findings revealed that current plans to build power plants and high-voltage transmission lines lag behind the expected growth in power consumption. They also match a U.S. Department of Energy forecast that demand for electricity nationally will increase by 40 percent during the next 22 years. Even if the country can dramatically increase efficiency and conservation programs – electricity demand over time will continue to grow as our economy and population grows.

The organization's findings revealed that current plans to build power plants and high-voltage transmission lines lag behind the expected growth in power consumption.

NERC warned, "Demand for electricity is expected to increase over the next 10 years by approximately 18 percent in the United States, but

Increasing U.S. Demand for Electricity

Between 1980 and 2005, electricity consumption increased at an average annual rate of 2.3 percent. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) now projects an average annual rate of 1.5 percent from 2005 to 2030.



Source: EIA Annual Energy 2007 Outlook Assumptions, Reference Case Table A8, Total Net Generation

confirmed generation capacity will increase by only 8.5 percent; expansion and strengthening of the transmission system [also] continues to lag demand growth and expansion of generating resources in most areas."

To fully grasp the impact of that statement, consider these facts about generation, transmission and the demand for electricity:

- Electricity can't be stored—it must be used immediately and flow continuously. Electric energy generated at a power plant flows through high-voltage transmission lines to substations, where it is reduced to a lower voltage for safe distribution to homes and businesses. Reliability refers to the availability of electricity when and where consumers need it, without interruption.
- Not every power plant generates electricity all of the time. Across the country on any given day, it's normal for numerous plants

to be shut down due to a broad range of issues, such as scheduled maintenance, fuel availability or price, or low water levels at a dam where a hydroelectric power plant operates.

- High-voltage transmission lines carrying electricity from generating plants to distribution substations need regular and emergency maintenance. Vegetation management to clear rights-of-way, or weather events such as ice storms or tornadoes, can interrupt the flow of electricity on these "power highways."

For consumers to receive reliable electric service, a certain amount of extra capacity must always be available. NERC has stated that generation capacity margins should average 15 percent or more. In other words, generation plants should be able to produce approximately 15 percent more electricity than consumers are expected to use during times of

peak demand—the electric utility industry’s equivalent of rush-hour traffic. This helps ensure sufficient power in an emergency or if a specific power plant needs to be shut down for service.

The NERC report also found that even if all power plants under construction now are completed on time and begin generating electricity in the amounts slated, and new construction ramps up according to plans now underway, generation capacity margins will drop below minimum reliability margin levels in certain areas of the United States within the next two to three years.

Regions affected include California, Rocky Mountain states, New England, Texas, the Southwest and Midwest. Other parts of our country could face a reliability gap a few years later. In western Canada, the problem could become apparent to consumers within two years.

In addition to the needed power supply, transmission line capacity (what’s needed to deliver the power) is projected to increase by a bit less than 9 percent in the United States—and by just 4.8 percent in Canada over the next 10 years.

All of this means that a sudden surge in weather-caused disruptions or a batch of construction delays could leave consumers facing immediate and recurring disruptions in their supply of electricity.

Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association based in Arlington, Va., believes the NERC study shows that the nation’s lawmakers and regulators must quickly come to grips with the difficult challenges of meeting future energy demand.

“The generation and transmission needed to supply everyone with electricity will get built,” says English. “Electric co-ops, as not-for-profit, consumer-owned utilities, have an obligation to serve. The issue is how we manage rising costs associated not only with the fuels needed to produce electricity

and construction materials like steel, copper and concrete, but climate change as well. Policymakers must seek out solutions that are feasible technologically and can be sustained economically—remedies that will allow electric co-ops to continue providing reliable, affordable power in an environmentally responsible fashion.”

In its report, NERC examines other significant problems that could affect reliability. These include the

need to attract well-trained younger workers to replace the aging workforce of electric utility professionals, and how to deal with renewable energy concerns such as intermittency—the fact that wind only

blows about 40 percent of the time and generally not on hot, humid weekdays in the summer when power consumption skyrockets, and the sun doesn’t shine during nighttime hours.

“Beginning now, start doing everything you can to use electricity wisely,” NERC encourages consumers—such as turning off lights when not in use, replacing old appliances and equipment with more energy-efficient models, and managing electricity use carefully.

Source: North American Electric Reliability Corporation, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

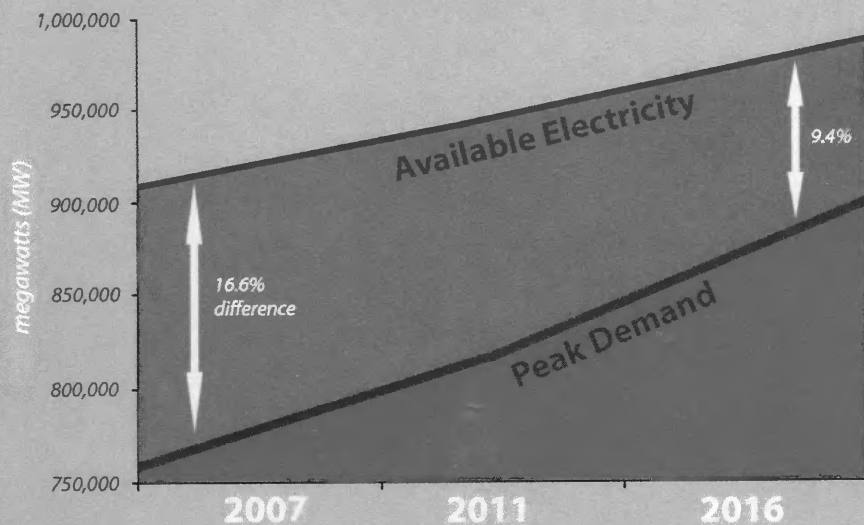
Nancy S. Grant is a freelance writer based near Louisville, KY, and is a member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors.

Jennifer Taylor is writer of consumer and cooperative affairs at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

All of this means that a sudden surge in weather-caused disruptions or a batch of construction delays could leave consumers facing immediate and recurring disruptions in their supply of electricity.

Running Out of Power: Electricity supply isn't keeping up with demand

Peak demand for electricity will increase by 17.7 percent in the U.S. over the next 10 years, while resources needed to meet that demand will grow only 8.4 percent. If this “power gap” continues to shrink, brownouts and rolling blackouts could result.



Source: North American Electric Reliability Corporation 10-year forecast, October 2007, pp 10-11

Mexican Chicken (right)

- 3-4 chicken breasts, boiled, cooled, boned and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 sm. pkg. tortilla chips
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 1 pint sour cream
- 1 can whole green chilies, cut into strips
- 1-1/2 lb. Cheddar Jack cheese, grated

In a baking pan, layer tortillas (broken into small pieces), then layer the chicken and then the chilies. Mix soups, sour cream, onions and garlic. Pour over mixture in pan, then sprinkle grated cheese on top. Bake in a 325° oven for 40-50 minutes. Serves 6.

Dr. Pepper Salad

- 2 (3oz.) pkgs. cherry Jell-O
- 32-oz. Dr. Pepper
- 1 C. crushed pineapple, drained
- 1/2 C. pecans, chopped

Heat 16-oz. of Dr. Pepper on the stovetop. Dissolve the Jell-O into the Dr. Pepper. Then beat with a fork and add the other 16-oz. of Dr. Pepper. Add pineapple and pecans and refrigerate until set.

Potato Chip Cookies

- 1/2 C. salted butter
- 1/2 C. granulated sugar
- 1/2 C. light brown sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 C. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 C. finely crushed potato chips

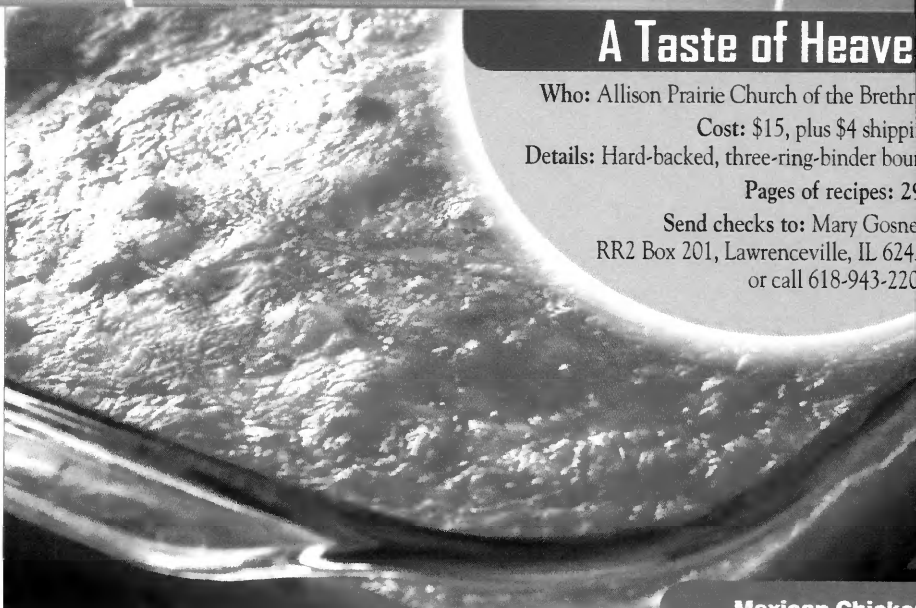
Preheat oven to 350°. Cream butter and sugars together until smooth. Add the egg. Slowly mix in the flour and baking soda, making sure no lumps form. Stir in the vanilla and crushed potato chips. Drop by teaspoons onto ungreased baking sheets, 2 inches apart and bake 9-12 minutes. Makes about 2 dozen.

Visit www.icl.coop to see an archive of past Illinois Country Living recipes.

Photos by Catrina McCulley Wagner

A Taste of Heaven

Who: Allison Prairie Church of the Brethren
 Cost: \$15, plus \$4 shipping
 Details: Hard-backed, three-ring-binder bound
 Pages of recipes: 29
 Send checks to: Mary Gosne
 RR2 Box 201, Lawrenceville, IL 62446
 or call 618-943-2200

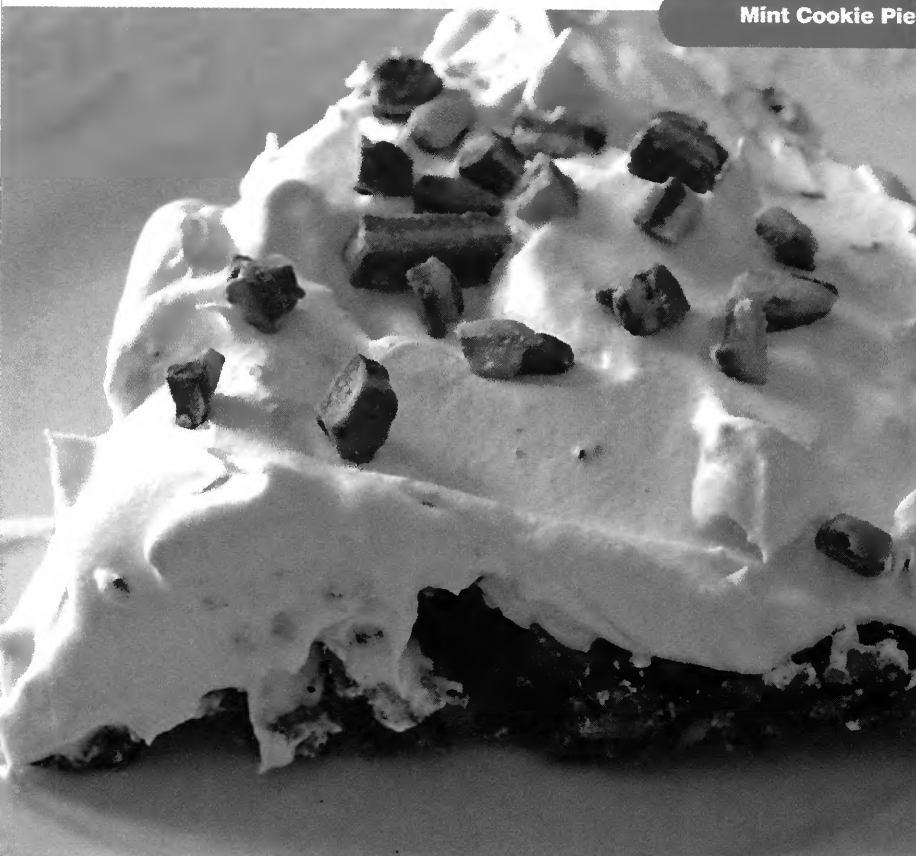


Mexican Chicken

Mint Cookie Pie (below)

- 14 chocolate mint cookies, chilled
- 3 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 3/4 C. sugar
- 1/2 C. pecans, chopped
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 (8-oz.) ctn. Cool Whip

Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 9-inch pie plate with nonstick spray. Crush chilled cookies in a food processor and set aside. Beat egg whites and salt until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar until stiff peaks form. Fold in cookie crumbs, pecans and vanilla. Spread into a pie plate. Bake for 35 minutes. Chill for 2 hours. Serve with Cool Whip.



Mint Cookie Pie

Chunky Guacamole (below)

- 4 ripe avocados
- 3 limes, juiced
- 1/2 red onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Serrano chilies, thinly sliced
- 1 lg. handful fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground pepper

Halve and pit avocados. Scoop out the flesh with a tablespoon into a mixing bowl. Mash them with a fork, leaving them somewhat chunky. Add the remaining ingredients and fold everything together to gently mix. Lay plastic wrap right on the surface of the guacamole so it does not brown. Refrigerate 1 hour before serving.

Quick Veg-All Casserole

- 2 cans Veg-All, drained
- 1 stick margarine
- 1/2 lb. Velveeta cheese
- 1 T. milk
- 12 Ritz crackers, crushed

Put drained vegetables in a greased casserole dish. Melt cheese, margarine and milk well. Pour over vegetables. Sprinkle with Ritz crumbs. Bake at 375° until bubbly.

Chicken Casserole

- 1 C. cooked rice
- 1 C. diced cheese
- 1 C. diced celery
- 1 C. diced, cooked chicken
- 1 C. cracker crumbs or bread crumbs
- 2 T. butter
- 1 sm. chopped onion
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 C. milk

Mix all ingredients together. Bake for 1 hour in a covered casserole dish at 325°.

Print Your Favorite Recipes!

You don't have to tear up your copy of Illinois Country Living magazine to save your favorite recipes. Find these recipes, as well as your old favorites from past issues, on our Web page, www.icl.coop.

A Taste of Heaven

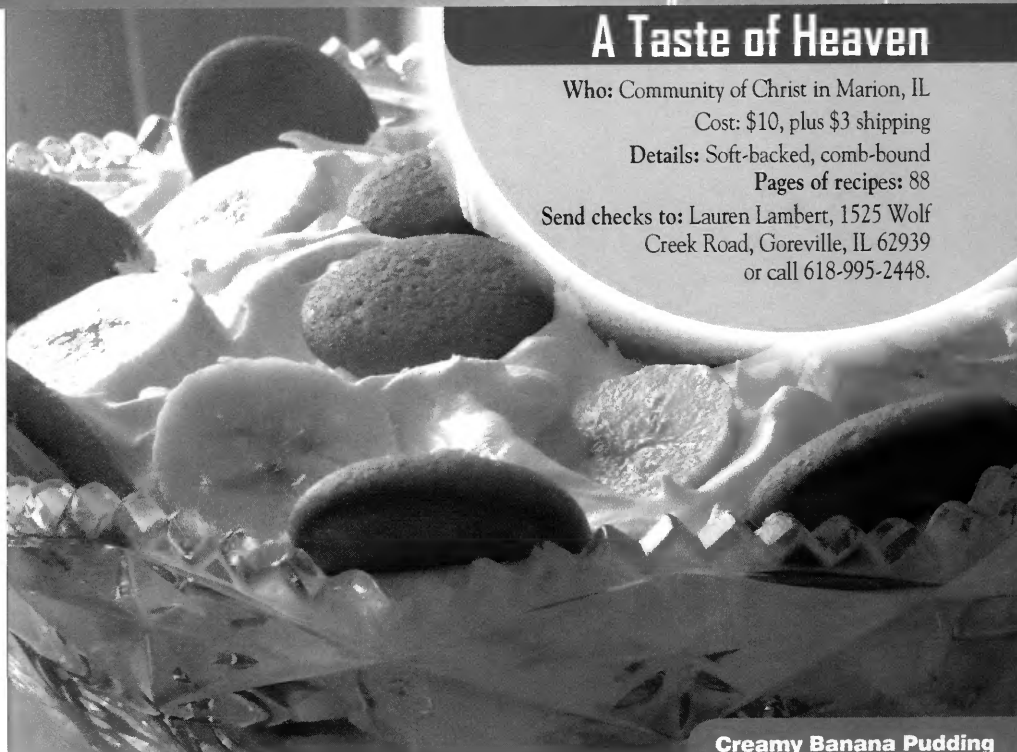
Who: Community of Christ in Marion, IL

Cost: \$10, plus \$3 shipping

Details: Soft-backed, comb-bound

Pages of recipes: 88

Send checks to: Lauren Lambert, 1525 Wolf Creek Road, Goreville, IL 62939 or call 618-995-2448.



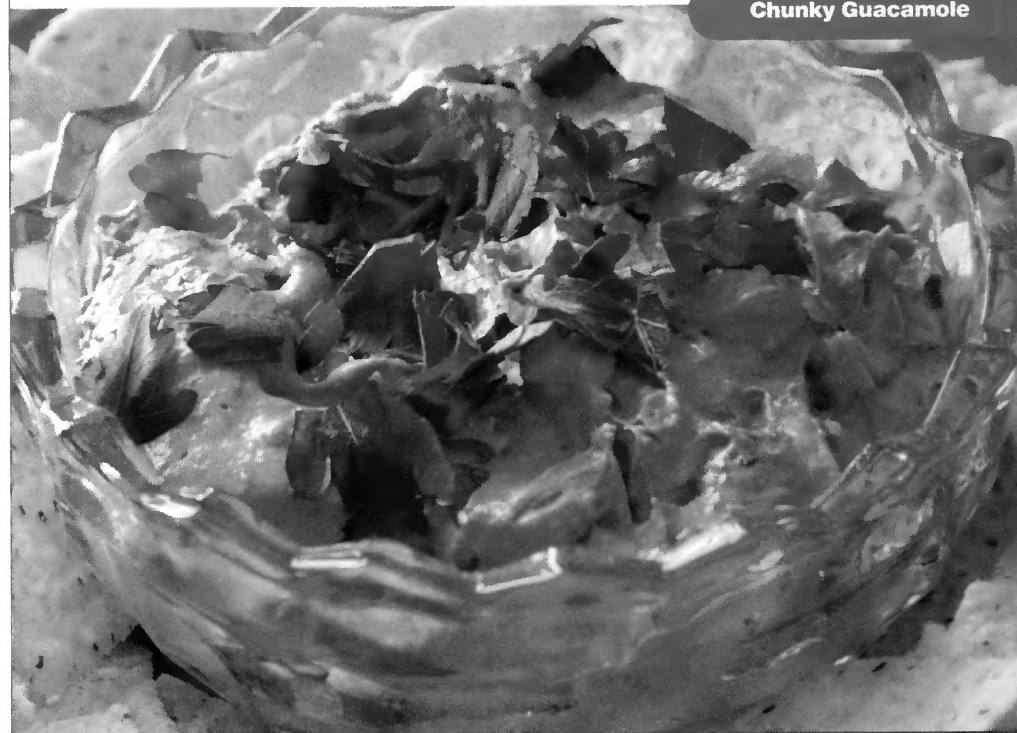
Creamy Banana Pudding

Creamy Banana Pudding (above)

- 1 can Eagle Brand Milk
- 1-1/2 C. cold water
- 1 lg. pkg. vanilla instant pudding
- 1 sm. ctn. light Cool Whip

- Vanilla wafers
- 3-4 bananas, sliced
- 1 sm. can crushed pineapple, drained

Combine the Eagle Brand Milk and water. Add the pudding and beat well. Add the pineapple and chill for 5 minutes. Fold in 1/2 of the container of Cool Whip. Spoon mixture into bowl, alternating pudding, bananas and wafers. Cover with remaining Cool Whip and chill.



Chunky Guacamole

Happy Birthday, Mr. Lincoln

It's time to re-acquaint yourself with the man, myth and legend

by Jen Danzinger

Cities across the U.S. are planning ways to participate in the upcoming bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth. Kentucky, where Lincoln was born, Indiana, where the Lincoln family lived before heading further west, and Illinois have already formed a tri-state bicentennial to coordinate celebratory events. Here in the "Land of Lincoln," many communities will be dusting off their connection to the Lincoln legacy and seeking ways to encourage tourism while re-invigorating pride in their local heritage.

Many towns will be offering celebrations a year in advance of the actual bicentennial. Lincoln, Ill. will be celebrating Lincoln's birthday this Feb. 9, with music, crafts, a Lincoln interpreter, the reading of the Gettysburg Address and, of course, birthday cake and punch at the Postville Courthouse State Historic Site. Additional events across the state will periodically be listed in the Datebook section of this magazine.

You don't have to wait until Feb. 12, 2009, to begin your investigation of Lincoln lore. Consider taking your family on a day trip to a historic site near you. Some destinations you may not have experienced yet are:

Charleston, Ill.

- The Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site offers a re-creation of the farm where Lincoln's parents lived, a museum and gift shop.

Lincoln, Ill.

- For an offbeat destination, visit the only town named for Abraham Lincoln while he was still alive. Lincoln himself christened the town with a ripe melon on Aug. 27, 1853. To celebrate this legacy, the Lincoln/Logan County Chamber of Commerce owns the "Mobile Melon," a car painted to look like a watermelon. Here you can also find the Lincoln Watermelon Monument and a statue of Abraham Lincoln perched upon the world's largest covered wagon.

Springfield, Ill.

- The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum is more than a collection of artifacts. The museum has something to engage visitors both young and old, including interactive displays, high-tech multi-media presentations and more.

Vandalia, Ill.

- The Vandalia State House State Historic Site is the renovated location of the previous state Capitol building. Visitors can see where Lincoln spent his early years in state politics.



The 12-foot-tall fiberglass statue of Lincoln is perched upon the world's largest covered wagon. Hand crafted from oak by David Bentley, the wagon stands 24 feet tall, is 40 feet long, and weighs five tons. Recently relocated from Divernon, Ill., it now resides at 1006 Woodlawn Rd. in Lincoln, Ill. (Photo courtesy of the Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County.)

Did you know?

- Abraham Lincoln had no middle name and hated the nickname "Abe."
- He only completed one year of formal education.
- The outhouse behind the Lincoln Home in Springfield, Ill. is a three-seater.
- He is the only president to hold a patent (for an invention to lift boats over shoals.)
- When elected president, more than half of the U.S. labor force were farmers. Lincoln made it a priority to offer a means of education and a voice in government for farmers. Both land grant colleges and the U.S. Department of Agriculture were created during his presidency.
- His presidential salary in 1860 was \$25,000, which, when adjusted for time and inflation, is comparable to George Bush's salary today.
- Because he was shot on Good Friday and died the day before Easter, preachers nationwide included Lincoln in their Sunday sermons in 1864, quickly making him a martyr, myth and legend.

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- 4) Mail to: Illinois Marketplace, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708, by deadline.

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Feb. 28 - March 1, Lake Sara Boat Show at the Keller Convention Center in Effingham. See what's new in boat selections. 217-347-5115 or <http://lsmboats.com>.

Feb. 29 - March 2, Illinois Horse Fair at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield. The 20th annual all-breed fair and industry trade show, which attracts 10,000 eager horse-owning buyers, features RFD-TV's Craig Cameron and Richard Shrake, "The ultimate coach," as well as nationally-known trainers hosting riding clinics in reining, Western, barrel racing, saddle seat equitation and smooth-gaited horses. Horse Fair includes breed and sport demonstrations, educational seminars, stallion row and parade, horse for sale aisles, 140 commercial vendors and 100 trailers for sale on site. Produced by the Horsemen's Council of Illinois. www.HorsemensCouncil.org.

Feb. 29 - March 2, Fishing and Outdoor Expo in Loves Park. Lure demonstrations and fishing clinics with the biggest names in the fishing world, plus representatives from Canadian camps and resorts, tackle-tackle-tackle and more. 815-877-8043 or www.showtimeproduction.net.

1, The 10th Annual Galena Area Business Showcase at the Galena Convention Center. Local merchants and business people display products and information. Food, door prizes and drawings. 815-777-9050 or www.galenachamber.com.

1-2, Paleofest in Rockford. An annual celebration of fossils and dinosaurs with world-famous dinosaur experts: lectures, workshops, children's workshops, fossil identification and much more. 815-965-3433 or www.burpee.org.

4-5, The 2008 Illinois Small Fruit and Strawberry Schools at the Holiday Inn in Mt. Vernon. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$30 per farm family for pre-registration and \$35 at the door. The registration fee includes a copy of the 2008 Proceedings and a 2008 Midwest Commercial Small Fruit and Grape Spray Guide. 618-695-2441 or baly@uiuc.edu.

7-8, Dinner and a Murder! at the DeSoto House Hotel in Galena. "The Last Voyage." A celebration cruise with soaring tempers, flying fists and unexpected surprises. Friday night reception, with dinner and murder on Saturday night. 888-459-1847 or www.bestofgalena.com.

8, McLean County Home, Lawn and Garden Day at Central Catholic High School in Bloomington. \$40 per person. A one-day conference offering a variety of horticulture-related workshops. Admission includes classes, exhibits, speakers, lunch, refreshments and door prizes. 309-663-8306.

8, ARC Taste of Galena at Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa in Galena. Sample specialty cuisine from more than 25 area businesses. Live jazz music. Advance and at the door ticket sales are subject to availability. 815-777-2248 or www.galenaarc.org.

8, Jacksonville Symphony Society - Choral Gems at Illinois College in Jacksonville. The splendor of voices and orchestra await you as the Orchestra, the Chorale, and the Illinois College Concert Choir combine to bring you a program of Choral Gems. 217-245-3000 or www.ic.edu.

8-9, Sock Monkey Madness in Rockford. Rockford is where the famous sock monkeys got their start. Midway Village is planning a day of monkey-shines to celebrate, including demonstrations, sock monkey collections from around the country and more. 815-397-9112 or www.midwayvillage.com.

13-16, The 14th Annual John Deere Two-Cylinder Tractor Show at the Village Square Mall in Effingham. Display of two-cylinder tractors sponsored by the Old National Trail Two-Cylinder Club and East Central Illinois Two-Cylinder Club. 217-347-0623.

22, The 17th Annual Hunting Heritage Banquet Dinner and Auction at the Holiday Inn in Mount Vernon.

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25, Baroque Band, an Illinois College Fine Arts Series Performance at Illinois College in Jacksonville. This young and energetic baroque ensemble from Chicago has made a quick and impressive impact upon the period-instrument orchestra scene. Its director is Garry Clark, a violinist who has been recognized as one of the United Kingdom's finest interpreters of baroque music. The group has dedicated itself to becoming Chicago's answer to the Philharmonic Baroque Orchestra of Berkeley, Calif. and is already living up to those lofty standards. 217-245-3000 or www.ic.edu.



28-30, Galena Wine Lovers Weekend throughout the Galena territory. Grand tastings and wine auctions. Dinners and wine, spirit and beer tastings, cooking demonstrations, and brunches and activities at various locations throughout the Galena territory, including Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa in Galena and Massbach Ridge Winery in Elizabeth. 815-777-9050 or www.galenadowntown.com.

29-30, Egg Artistry Show and Sale in Rockford. Egg shells, from finch to ostrich, are hand-painted, beaded and carved. Enjoy the show and sale and visit the many vendors selling supplies for creating beautiful eggs. 815-397-9112 or www.midwayvillage.com.

To be considered for inclusion, please submit events in the format used above. Preference is given to events sponsored by non-profit entities. Submitting an event is not a guarantee of publication. Photos are welcome, but will not be returned unless a self-addressed and stamped envelope is provided. Events are subject to change, so please contact the event sponsor for confirmation.

Deadlines: February 15 for May Events, March 15 for June Events **Mail to:** Illinois Datebook, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708 **E-mail to:** cwagner@aieccoop



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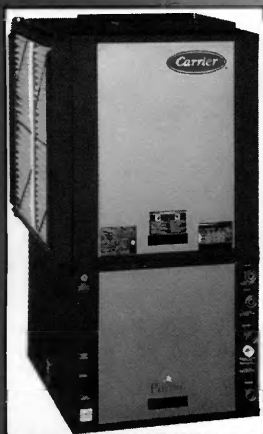
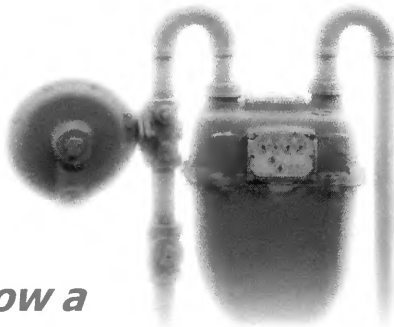
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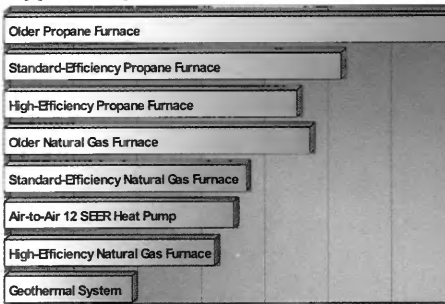
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