

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

*Happy
holidays!*



*Our office will be
closed December
24 & 25, 31 &
January 1.*

Think "smart" this holiday season and save money year-round

This holiday season, think "smart" and consider giving a loved one (or yourself) a gift that keeps giving. Many smart devices reduce home energy use, which can put a more jingle in your pocket.

Smart thermostats learn users' schedules and the temperatures they prefer to keep their home. It remembers these temperatures while a home is occupied and adjusts to an energy-saving setting when the home is empty. Smart thermostats also feature apps that let family members change the temperature from anywhere in the world using a phone or other mobile device. Owners may use the app to see how much energy is used and why, and then use that information to make appropriate adjustments to their home energy usage.

Smart lighting saves energy in multiple ways. Smart lightbulbs last longer and use less power. Smart lighting systems also have scheduled timers and allow you to remotely turn the lights off, which is a great feature if you have loved ones who constantly leave the lights on.

Virtual assistants, like Siri or Alexa, can connect to smart thermostats, smart lights, entertainment center devices and others. With a few spoken words, virtual assistants can turn lights, appliances and other devices off and on, activate

and deactivate security systems, shut or open a garage door, and more. These home automation devices allow homeowners to control their appliances and create daily smart-home routines through smartphone apps, creating many new ways to save energy. For example, owners can schedule kitchen appliances, such as dishwashers and coffee makers, to run while they are out of the house or to operate at a specific time every day.

Thermal leak detectors use infrared sensors to detect energy draining drafts so they can be repaired (filled) to make your home more energy efficient. Thermal imaging accessories now exist for smartphones as well, converting them into lightweight, portable thermal leak detectors. Repairing thermal leaks in a home can save up to 20 percent in heating and cooling costs.

Smart power strips and surge protectors are a less expensive option to gain some smart technology without upgrading all appliances and devices to smart models. Smarter devices that can be used independent of an all-smart home, the strips can detect when a device is in standby mode and cut its power supply. Using smart power strips can reduce a home's overall energy usage, which equates to savings on your energy bill.

Holiday Efficiency Tips



Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340,
Canton, IL 61520
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
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Editor of Spoon River News

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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,272
Number of members served: 5,022
Number of power poles
in territory: 29,361

Be a Smart Cookie Holiday Baking Tips

If you're planning to cook feasts or create treats this holiday season, follow these basic safety tips:

Test Smoke Detectors

Make sure they're working properly



Watch Your Sleeves

This is not a good time for loose sleeves

Put a Lid on it

Have lids handy in case of a grease fire



Old Things Don't Become New

Don't use appliances in disrepair

How the Cookie Crumbles

Consider having a fire extinguisher on hand



Where There's Heat There Could Be Fire

Keep flammables such as pot holders away from the stove

Not Child's Play

Keep children and pets away from cooking areas



Keeping Time

Use a timer when the oven or stove is on

Stay With it

Don't leave the room if you are broiling, frying or simmering food



Pay Attention

Take a nap **after** the feast

Safe
Electricity.org®

Four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop

The holiday season is finally upon us, and Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It's no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop – how else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.

Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop:

1. Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.

2. Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR rating. According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR-rated battery chargers, 2 billion kWh hours of electricity could be saved – that's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!

3. Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure



fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire isn't burning.

4. Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game

rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.

This holiday season, let's take a page from Santa's book and remember to save energy when possible. With these four tips, you'll be well on your way to savings and Santa's "nice" list!

Holiday Safety Tips



Inspect all holiday lighting and electrical decorations for frayed or damaged cords.



Place your tree at least three feet away from any heat source, like an air duct or fireplace.



Water your tree daily. Shedding or dry needles increases fire risks.

Stay safe going over the river and through the woods

The holiday season is a busy time of year for many of us. Along with putting out decorations and baking cookies, we often spend more time in our cars than usual – shopping for presents, traveling to family gatherings or attending holiday events. However, all that time in the car can also mean facing extreme weather conditions that can make safe driving difficult.



According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, winter weather conditions such as snow, sleet and slush cause more than 550,000 traffic accidents each year, leading to approximately 138,000 injuries and 1,700 fatalities.

Along with risk of injury, possible damage to your vehicle, and plain inconvenience, collisions may also involve downed power lines or other electrical hazards. Unfortunately, when this happens, it adds another significant danger to the mix that can cause severe shock, burns or electrocution. Knowing what to do in this situation can save lives.

If you are in an accident involving a downed power line:

- Call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher a downed power line or other electrical equipment is involved in a collision. Co-op personnel will be dispatched to the scene to deenergize the power.
- Put your window down and alert others not to approach the scene. They could be shocked or electrocuted if they walk or run over the energized area or touch anything that is energized.
- Never attempt to drive over a power line or through water, snow or other debris that could be hiding one. There is no way to tell if a power line is energized, even if it is not sparking or buzzing.
- Do not exit the vehicle UNLESS the vehicle is on fire or you see smoke. The vehicle acts as an insulator that keeps you safe from stray electricity.
- If you MUST exit the vehicle, cross your arms across your chest, put your feet together, and make a clean jump from the vehicle. Then hop with feet together as far as you can — at least 50 feet away. Once a power line is in contact with a car or truck, the ground or other objects, it energizes the area. The

electrical current spreads to the vehicle and ground, and it ripples out. Each “ring” of the ripple represents a different voltage. Stepping from one voltage to the next can cause your body to become a path for electricity and electrocute you.


- If a power line is inside the vehicle due to damage or an open window, stay in the vehicle. DO NOT touch or try to move the wire. DO NOT attempt to use other objects to move it.
- If your vehicle collides with a pad-mounted transformer, which houses electrical equipment connected to underground power lines, the same safety precautions apply.

Keep your family safe while on the road this holiday season! For more information about safety around electricity, go to SafeElectricity.org.

HOLIDAY


GIFT GUIDE

Give the gift of safety!




Portable Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI)

Designed for locations where there is not a permanent GFCI installed, these devices detect an abnormal flow of electricity and shut off the power, preventing shock or electrocution.




Outdoor Remote Control Outlet Switch

Leaving outdoor lighting on overnight can be costly and pose a potential hazard. An alternative to smart lights, this remote control switch allows you to turn outdoor lights or other gadgets on or off remotely.



Tamper Resistant Outlets (TROs)

Great for families with small children, TROs are wall receptacles that have shutters that stay closed unless a plug with two prongs is inserted into the outlet. Because they help keep children safe, the National Electrical Code requires TROs in new homes and apartments.



Heavy Duty Extension Cord

Power devices safely. Too often the tools or equipment necessary for larger projects are powered by extension cords that are inadequate for the environment or heavier electrical load.

Learn more at SafeElectricity.org