



## Five ways to stay cozy this winter

Baby, it's cold outside! When you're feeling chilly at home, there are several budget-friendly ways you can keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat.

Here are five easy ways to stay cozy this winter.

1. Whether you're experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply "run cold," **an electric blanket can deliver quick warmth** like a regular throw or blanket cannot. Electric blankets can include a variety of features, like timers and dual temperature settings (if your cuddle buddy prefers less heat). This winter, consider an electric blanket instead of turning up the heat, and your energy bill will thank you.
2. One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to **keep your feet warm**. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body automatically feels warmer. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.
3. On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and **harness natural warmth from sunlight**. Open all curtains, drapes and blinds in your home to let the sunshine in – you'll be able to feel the difference.
4. Another way to make your home cozier is to **use a humidifier**. Cold air doesn't hold water vapor

like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer. A favorable level of humidity inside your home can also help clear sinuses, soften skin and improve sleep.

5. Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, **area rugs can also provide extra insulation and a warm surface for your feet** on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms where you spend the most time. You'll enjoy the new colors and textures of the rug, and the additional warmth will help keep your home comfortable.



These are just a few ways you can stay cozy this winter without turning up the thermostat. Don't forget the hot chocolate!

**UPDATE**

## 2021 Annual Meeting update

With all the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the details of the 2021 annual meeting, originally set to be held on March 18, 2021, are still undetermined. We are exploring several options for the meeting. Once the specifics are determined, we will publish them in the Illinois County Living center section and share the information on social media.



# 2021 Youth Day and Youth Tour

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Illinois cooperatives will not be participating in Youth Tour 2021. The safety of the students was top priority when making this decision. Youth Day will be a digital event in 2021. More details will be shared as soon as they are available.

### HELPFUL HINTS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

TO HELP WITH WORK-LIFE BALANCE



#### CREATE A DEDICATED SPACE

Not everyone can do this, but it helps if you can have a separate space to keep your work area (and your workday mindset) separate from other areas of the home.

#### SET A SCHEDULE

Try to set a workday schedule and stick to it as much as possible so that work and home do not constantly intertwine.



#### CREATE BOUNDARIES

Just as a workspace serves as a physical work boundary, try to set other at-work boundaries, discuss work hours, deadlines and interruption ground rules with others under your roof.

#### BE REALISTIC

Creating boundaries is more difficult with children and teens around. If you can, try to create a work schedule around their most demanding hours or juggle coverage with another adult.



#### TAKE A STAND

Researchers at Columbia University found that adults who sit for one to two hours at a time without moving have a higher risk of early death than those who get up more often. Aim to get up and move every 30 minutes.

#### TAKE BREAKS

Working nonstop might make you feel heroic, but it actually decreases productivity. Consider scheduling brief breaks and taking them – outdoors if possible.



Safe Electricity.org

## Feeling chilled? HEAT your SPACE safely



Before you dust off your space heater and plug it in, consider that most home heating fire deaths (86%) involve space heaters, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In fact, heating equipment is the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires (cooking is the leading cause).

More than half of the heating-related home fires start when flammable items are too close to the heat source, according to the NFPA. Those items include upholstered furniture, clothing, a mattress or bedding.

Nearly half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.



### Here are some space heater safety tips:

- Only use them as the manufacturer recommends
- Do not leave them unattended
- Give them space: remove any flammable items within 3 feet
- Plug them directly into outlets; don't use an extension cord
- Consider using a dedicated circuit to avoid overload
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters at all times
- Turn them off before you leave the room or go to sleep

Learn more at: 

# WINTER WEATHER

## CAN BRING POWER LINES DOWN



### DID YOU KNOW:

### STAY WHERE YOU ARE

You've just been in an accident involving a downed power line. Your first instinct might be to get out and run, but that could cost you your life. In most cases, the safest place to be is inside your car or truck. Wait there until electric utility workers deenergize the power. If your car is on fire or you see smoke, escape as safely as possible by making a clean, solid jump out and hop away with both feet together as far as you can. Warn others not to approach the scene.



- That downed power lines are extremely dangerous and even deadly?
- The current could spread throughout the ground and anything touching the ground?
- Stray voltage spreads like ripples on a pond?
- If you step from one "ripple" (voltage) to another you could be electrocuted?
- Downed lines could be hiding under standing water, ice or debris?

Learn more at:



# Considering Solar? Call us first!

As interest in “green” energy and ways to save money on utility bills continue to grow, some cooperative members may be considering the installation of a solar array.

Since these types of systems have the capability of returning electricity back to the electric grid, there are some major safety considerations to sort through before a system is installed.

Before deciding to buy a solar array, examine the economics to determine if such a system will lower your monthly electricity costs. If you do decide to install a solar array, contact our office as early as possible in the process.

A CCEC representative will provide information on our interconnection process and policies, as well as answer any questions you may have. That way, you and your installer will have the information needed as you progress with your system.

*For more information on CCEC policies and requirements, please contact our office Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 800-526-7282.*



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