

SAVE MONEY NOW!

Energy Wise Home Savings Events are back!

Here at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, we're working hard to hold down energy prices. You, too, can play an important role in controlling your energy costs by evaluating your home and taking simple steps to trim unnecessary energy use.

And we can help!

That's where the 2010 Energy Wise Home Savings Events come in. Each month this spring and fall, we will travel to Onarga, Paxton or Pesotum to show you simple ways you can save money now. Not only are these Savings Events free to attend for Eastern Illini members, but you will also receive some free tools to start you on the savings path, just for attending!

The first Savings Event will be held at the EIEC facility in Pesotum (just east of I-57 at the Pesotum exit) at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18. Plan to attend!

Energy Wise Home Savings Tips

Most air leaks are hidden in your attic and basement and can significantly raise your energy bill. Here's a list of common hiding places. Seal them with caulk, weatherstripping or other appropriate materials. Thirty percent of your expenses, up to \$1,500, may qualify for an energy efficiency tax credit!

Windows and Doors

Attic Hatch

Wiring Holes

Plumbing Vent

Recessed Lights and Open Soffit
(the box that hides recessed lights)

Furnace Flue or Duct Chaseways
(the hollow box or wall feature that hides ducts)

Basement Rim Joists
(where the foundation meets the wood framing)



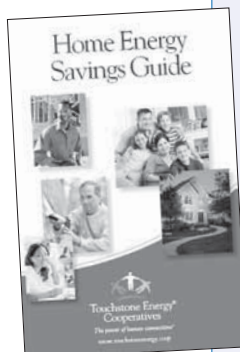
Source: Alliance to Save Energy's Guide to Home Sealing

In this issue ...

Message from the President 16b

Fact or Fiction 16c

Together We Save..... 16d

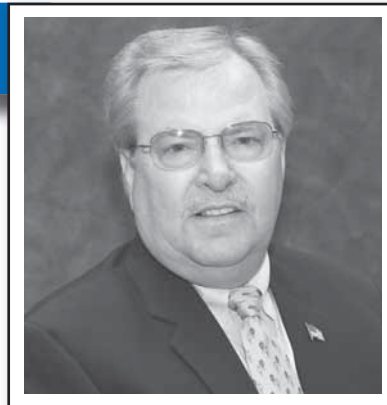


Attend the Energy Wise Home Savings Event at EIEC's Pesotum facility (just east of I-57 at the Pesotum exit) and receive a FREE copy of the Home Energy Savings Guide! The meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18.

Message From The President

Regulation on Horizon for Carbon, With or Without Congressional Action

Likely increases in electric bills will result



Federal curbs on emissions of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas blamed as a principal cause of climate change, are quickly becoming a reality. It's just a matter of which government branch gets there first: legislative, executive – or both.

In December, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), part of the executive branch, declared that six key greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are endangering public health and welfare. Emissions from motor vehicles of four of those greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are also said to contribute to dangerous air pollution under this “endangerment finding.”

“This action puts a ‘foot in the door’ for EPA to promulgate sweeping new regulations that could impose strict limits on carbon emissions from power plants, driving up electric bills,” warns Glenn English, CEO of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), which represents the interests of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned and governed electric cooperatives.

The concern is that with carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles falling under federal Clean Air Act regulation, other emitters of carbon dioxide – fossil fuel-fired power plants included – may also soon be subject to EPA oversight.

“The Clean Air Act as written was never designed to deal with carbon, and it would be awkward at best and probably a disaster at worst,” English adds.

Electric co-ops believe that any controls on carbon dioxide should be



established by Congress, where the impact of these proposals can have a full public debate. Unfortunately, a climate change bill passed by the U.S. House last summer (H.R. 2454) and another reported by the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in November (S. 1733) include unachievable goals and timelines for reducing carbon dioxide emissions, inadequate technology development incentives and no guarantee that electric bills will remain affordable. Current proposals will unfairly penalize consumers in fossil fuel-dependant states by saddling them with higher bills to essentially subsidize and lower electric bills for those in other regions.

What’s more, Senate leaders have admitted that climate change legislation has stalled and will likely be picked up sometime in the spring. This legislative logjam makes it all the more important for co-ops and consumers to pay careful attention to EPA’s current efforts.

English insists that any climate change legislation should protect consumers and preempt use of the federal Clean Air Act and any other existing laws. Otherwise, utilities and businesses could be burdened with the task of trying to comply with more than one set of regulations.

“Regulation of carbon dioxide as a pollutant will occur with or without congressional input,” English explains. “But Congress must not simply add new legislation on top of old regulations. Any climate change bill should become the roadmap – the single strategy – for reducing carbon dioxide emissions at federal, state, and local levels.”

He continues: “By staying engaged in the process, electric co-ops can have a measureable impact on the outcome.”

Electric co-ops are fighting to ensure that any climate change policy goals adopted are fair, affordable and achievable. To make your voice heard in this debate, join NRECA’s Our Energy, Our Future™ grassroots awareness campaign at www.ourenergy.coop. To date, more than 600,000 of your fellow co-op consumers across the country have already done so.

*Sincerely,
Dave Champion*

Fire Extinguishers: A Little Preparation Can Go a Long Way

House fires can happen in seconds: In one instant, you could go from whipping up dinner to watching flames spring up from the stovetop.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 410,500 fires – or 78 percent of all reported structure fires – occur in homes. In the right hands, a household fire extinguisher can save lives and protect property should a small fire start.

“Every home should have at least one fire extinguisher, and you need the right type and you must know how and when to use it,” says John Drenenberg, consumer affairs manager at Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the Chicago, Ill.-based not-for-profit firm that tests and sets minimum standards for electric-consuming items.

Fire extinguishers should be placed in easily-accessible areas of the home, close to where they might be needed (such as in a kitchen, garage or bedroom). Some basic rules to keep in mind when using household fire extinguishers:

If the fire is not spreading and remains confined to a small area, use the appropriate type of extinguisher. Select a multi-purpose extinguisher (rated A, B, or C) with the UL mark that can be used on all types fires such as wood, cloth, paper, flammable liquids (gasoline, oil, grease, oil-based paint), and energized electrical equipment including wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers and appliances.

Know both your limits and that of the fire extinguisher.

Periodically inspect your extinguishers to determine if they need to be recharged or replaced. Extinguishers



need to be recharged or replaced after each use – even if you haven’t used the entire extinguishing agent. Check the gauge on the fire extinguisher for this information.

When operating a fire extinguisher, stand at least 6 feet away from the fire and keep your back to a door so you can escape easily, if necessary. Remember the word PASS:

- Pull the pin, hold the extinguisher away from you and release the locking mechanism.
- Aim low, pointing the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
- Sweep the nozzle from side to side.

“Fire extinguishers for home use are not designed to fight large or spreading fires,” stresses Drenenberg. “Rather than fighting the fire, your number one priority should be getting out safely.”

Source: Underwriters Laboratories

Be sure to have a fire extinguisher rated for the type of fire at hand: Class A fires are ordinary materials like burning paper, lumber, cardboard, and plastics; Class B fires involve flammable or combustible liquids like gasoline and kerosene; Class C fires involve energized electrical equipment, such as appliances, switches, panel boxes, and power tools.

Source: Fire Safety Council

Fact or Fiction?

Using a Dishwasher Is More Expensive Than Hand Washing

This is fiction. It is a commonly-held belief that dishwashers are convenient, but use more water and energy than hand washing. In fact, dishwashers can help you to conserve water and save on energy bills.

An average load of dishes cleaned in a dishwasher uses 37 percent less water than washing dishes by hand. This can save the typical household nearly 5,000 gallons of water per year.

Although operating a dishwasher increases electricity consumption, the energy reduction from lower hot water temperatures on your hot water tank ultimately lowers energy use and your utility bills. According to ENERGY STAR®, the average household with an electric water heater saves \$40 per year by using a dishwasher and households with a gas water heater save \$32 per year.



Dishwasher Savings Tips

Additional energy savings can be obtained by properly preparing your dishes for the dishwasher. Rinsing dishes before loading them into the dishwasher can use up to 20 gallons of water. Most dishwashers and detergents are designed to clean without rinsing, just scrape the dishes and load. If dishes will be sitting overnight, the residue may become difficult to clean. Use your dishwasher’s pre-rinse feature. It uses only a fraction of the water that is needed for hand rinsing. Be sure that your dishwasher is full before beginning a cycle and use short wash cycles when less cleaning is needed. In addition, using a rinse agent and air-drying, rather than using the heat dry cycle, will save energy use during the wash cycle.

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ONE SMALL CHANGE X 11,235.

Imagine if everyone in our co-op made one small change. Now, stop imagining. Flip a switch. Seal some cracks. Screw in a CFL. Install a programmable thermostat and actually program it. It doesn't take a lot of energy to save energy. But it sure pays off for all 11,235 of us. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

Need Help Paying Your Bill?

You may be eligible for low income energy assistance and Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative's Neighbor to Neighbor program. Contact your local LIHEAP Agency for available programs at www.liheapillinois.com.

