



Optimize your HVAC system for heating season

As November settles in and temperatures begin to drop, your HVAC system may soon become the hardest-working appliance in your home. Before your system undergoes that extra work this winter, now is a great time to ensure it is optimized and ready to go.

One of the easiest and most effective measures you can take is ensuring you are using clean filters. A clogged or dirty filter makes it harder for air to move through your system, which can cause it to work longer and harder than necessary. Check filters regularly and replace them according to the manufacturer's recommendations, if not sooner, depending on its environment. Vents matter, too. Look around your home to make sure furniture, curtains, rugs and other household items aren't blocking any supply or return vents.

If you have a heat pump, your outdoor unit also deserves some

extra attention this time of year. Falling leaves, limbs and other debris can collect around the unit and restrict airflow, so keep the area around your outdoor unit clear. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instruction for cleaning recommendations. Even if you have a traditional central air conditioning system, your outdoor unit will likely remain idle during winter months, it's still good practice to keep it clear of debris.

Don't overlook what you can't see. With forced-air systems, ductwork plays an essential role in delivering heated air throughout your home. Leaks, gaps or disconnected sections can allow conditioned air to escape before it reaches the rooms where you need it. If you've noticed rooms that never seem to be comfortable or unusually high energy use, ask an HVAC professional to inspect your ductwork.

Christlyn Hastings

Fall is also an ideal time for a professional tune-up. A certified technician can inspect your heating system, identify potential problems and make sure it is operating safely and efficiently before the coldest weather arrives. Regular professional maintenance can also help extend the life of your equipment.

Finally, take more control of your energy use by proactively managing your thermostat. Adjusting the temperature when you're asleep or away can help reduce energy use. Better yet, a programmable or smart thermostat can make those adjustments automatically, taking one more thing off your to-do list.

Your home heating system has an important job this winter. Giving it a little extra attention this fall will help the system operate more efficiently, reduce unnecessary energy use and potentially prevent an inconvenient breakdown on a cold winter night.



Egyptian Electric
Cooperative Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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- Off-site kiosks located at 2301 N. Reed Station Parkway and 1815 W. Main in Carbondale



PEAK POWER REWARDS

Peak Power Rewards offers EECA members an opportunity to earn bill credits this winter

As colder temperatures arrive in southern Illinois, electricity use increases as we all turn up the heat and spend more time indoors. November is a great time to sign up for Peak Power Rewards before winter is in full swing. Peak Power Rewards (PPR) is a voluntary program for EECA residential members that offers bill credits for reducing electricity use during short periods of high energy demand. By shifting or reducing energy use for just a few hours when requested to do so, members can help ease the strain on the electric grid while earning credits on their monthly bill.

Here's how it works

- **You'll receive notice of an event:** When our power supplier predicts high electricity demand, a Peak Power Rewards event may be called. Events last between 2 and 4 hours. Enrolled consumer-members will typically receive 24 hours' notice by email and/or text so they have time to plan ahead.
- **You choose how to participate:** During an event, you decide *if* and *how* you want to reduce your energy use. Participation is always voluntary, and there are no penalties for not participating.
- **You can earn bill credits:** If you use less electricity than your personalized baseline during an event, you can earn \$1 for every kilowatt-hour (kWh) saved. Your baseline is calculated on your recent and like energy use.

Ways to Save During a PPR Event

- Lower your thermostat by 4 or more degrees in the winter.
- Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics.
- Shift clothes washing and drying, dishwashing, and cooking to outside the event time. **Emily E Hayden**
- Turn off your pool heater, hot tub, or spa, if applicable.
- Avoid using multiple appliances at the same time.
- Wait to use other significant sources of electricity until the event is over, or shift that use to another time.
- Turn off breakers or switch to a safely installed backup generator, if applicable.

If you haven't enrolled yet, now is a great time to join before the winter season gets into full swing! **Scan the QR code to learn more and enroll, or visit eeca.coop or call 800-606-1505. Online enrollment is required.**

Scan to learn more





Pictured L to R: Mike Smith, Andy Ahner, Tyler Atchison, and AIEC's Jamie Sharp

EECA Linemen Shine at 2026 Lineman's Safety Rodeo

Line personnel from Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA) recently participated in the annual Lineman's Safety Rodeo coordinated by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC).

Twenty-two (22) teams from 15 electric co-ops and two municipal electric utilities participated in the friendly competition, and 5 competed individually. The event was held at the Lincoln Land Community College Line School yard in Springfield.

EECA linemen Andy Ahner, Mike Smith and Tyler Atchison competed

against teams and individuals from across Illinois in events using skills that focus on agility, speed and accuracy. While these skills are part of the judging criteria, above all, participants are judged on safe work practices. Line personnel competed in an egg climb, a cutout change, an H-structure crossover, the hurt man rescue, and transition climbing challenge. **Ron Lively**

Scores for each event are based on completion time, proper execution of the task and safety. Deductions were made to a team or individual's overall

performance score due to mistakes such as slipping when climbing poles, dropping tools or executing inappropriate procedures or methods.

At the end of the day, Smith placed first and Atchison placed second in the individual hurt man rescue, and the team placed first in the hurt man rescue, second in the cutout change, and third in the H-structure crossover. Congratulations to our EECA line workers who continue to take top honors at this event for their skill and safety!



Mike Smith



Tyler Atchison



Mike Smith



Tyler Atchison

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Adjust your water heater settings to save energy. As cooler weather arrives, your water heater may be working harder to keep up with longer, hotter showers. Check its temperature setting and consider lowering it to 120°F, which the U.S. Department of Energy recommends for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use while also helping prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

Source: Dept. of Energy



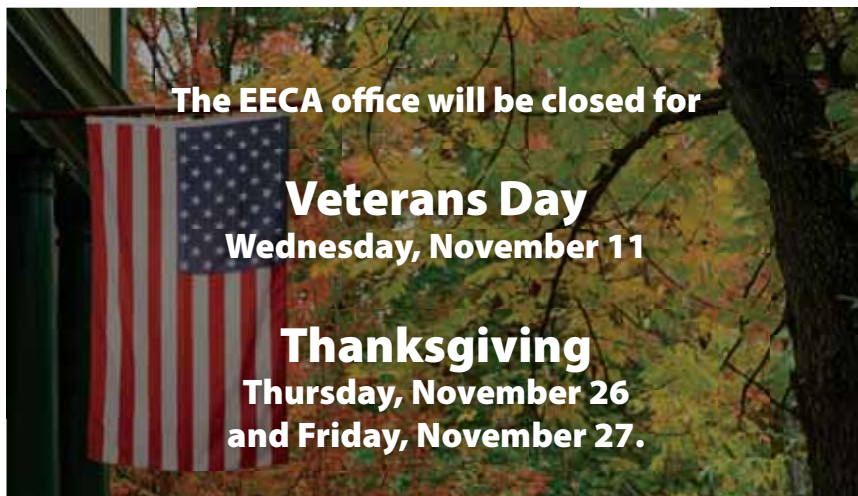
The EECA office will be closed for

Veterans Day

Wednesday, November 11

Thanksgiving

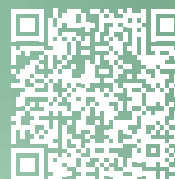
Thursday, November 26
and Friday, November 27.



APPLY NOW Classroom Empowerment Grants

EECA will once again award ten (10) Classroom Empowerment Grants to local teachers and administrators for the 2026-27 school year! These grants help enhance educational opportunities for students in our service territory by supporting innovative classroom projects and creative learning initiatives.

Grant applications will be available on our website beginning September 1, with a submission deadline of November 6. Grant recipients will be selected and announced in early December. To learn more or apply, visit eeca.coop or scan the QR code.



MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three member names hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your name, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.