

President's Report



Josh DeWees
President/CEO

Optimize your HVAC system

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

Start with something simple. One of the easiest and most effective measures you can take is checking 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. 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 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 instructions for cleaning recommendations. If you have a traditional central air conditioning system, your outdoor unit will likely remain idle during winter months, but 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.

Fall is also an ideal time for a professional tune-up. A 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. There's no reason to heat an empty house. Lowering 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.

Four Ways to Optimize Your HVAC System

- 1** Check air filters regularly Replace every 2 to 3 months or as needed.
- 2** Keep leaves, limbs and other debris at least 2 feet away from the outdoor unit.
- 3** Schedule system tune-ups with an HVAC pro in fall for heating and spring for cooling.
- 4** Adjust the thermostat a few degrees closer to the outside temperature. A smart or programmable thermostat can maximize energy savings.



Spoon River Electric Cooperative

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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



\$10,500 donated through Spoon River Electric's Operation Round Up program

The Spoon River Electric Operation Round Up Committee donated \$10,500 to seven local organizations within our service territory. Those organizations include: Browning Senior Center, Browning Volunteer Fire Department (for fire equipment and supplies), The HELP Center food pantry, The Place Daycare & Community Life Center, The Red Brick School museum, Spoon River Pregnancy Center's Bright Options Program and VIT Vocational Program (for welding equipment).

These donations are made possible by the generous members of Spoon River Electric who voluntarily make the decision each month to "Round Up" their electric bill to the next dollar and donate this "extra change" directly to the Operation Round Up Program. All the funds collected are donated back into our communities as charitable grants. The average donation a member makes annually ranges from \$6-\$12.

For more information about the Operation Round Up Program, visit our website at srecoop.org under the Operation Round Up tab or call Taryn at 309-647-2700.

Applications are being taken now through Jan. 4, 2027.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Stay alert for fraudulent utility calls. Scammers can spoof caller ID to make a phone call appear to come from your electric utility—even when it doesn't. They may threaten disconnection, demand immediate payment or ask for personal information. Don't rely on caller ID alone to verify a caller's identity. If you receive a suspicious call, hang up and contact your utility using the phone number printed on your bill or listed on the official website.

Source: FTC





Bright ideas for lowering your electric bill

Save energy at home with efficient lighting

Changing a light bulb may seem small, but the right bulb can make a noticeable difference on your electric bill. Lighting accounts for 15% of an average home's electricity use, so switching to energy-efficient bulbs can be one of the fastest and easiest ways to save energy.

Today's most common lighting options are LED bulbs, compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) bulbs, and halogen incandescent bulbs. According to Energy.gov, halogen incandescent bulbs meet federal minimum energy efficiency standards but are not the most efficient choice.

For the biggest energy savings, LEDs and CFLs offer the greatest return. ENERGY STAR-certified LED bulbs use up to 90% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs and last 15 to 25 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. With the average U.S. household using about 70 light bulbs, switching to energy-efficient lighting can add up to significant long-term savings.

LED bulbs typically cost more upfront than CFL bulbs, but since they last longer and use less energy, the cost can be offset over time.

Here's a breakdown of how the most common lighting options compare:

LED bulbs: LED bulbs are the most energy-efficient lighting option

available. They are designed to turn more electricity into light and waste less energy as heat. Because they direct light where it's needed, they're ideal for recessed downlights, task lighting and accent lighting. LEDs can last up to 34 years — three to five times longer than CFLs. They also produce very little heat, which helps reduce energy waste and the risk of overheating.

CFL bulbs: CFLs are compact versions of fluorescent tube lights commonly found in older kitchens, garages and workplaces. They use about 70 to 75% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer, with an average lifespan of 14 years. While they're much more efficient than incandescent bulbs, about 80% of the energy they use is still lost as heat.

Halogen incandescent bulbs: These are an improved version of the traditional incandescent bulbs. A small capsule of halogen gas allows the filament to operate more efficiently, using about 20 to 30% less energy than standard incandescent bulbs. They are fully dimmable and come in a wide variety of shapes and colors. However, they have the shortest lifespan of the three options, lasting 4.2 years on average.

For more information on energy efficiency, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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





FALL ENERGY SAVINGS WORD SEARCH

Fall is a great time to put energy efficiency into action! Read the following energy-saving tips, then find the bolded words in the puzzle below.

- Turn off the lights when you **leave** a room.
- **Unplug** chargers when you're finished using them.
- On chilly days, open **curtains** to let sunlight help warm your home.
- Wear a sweater instead of turning up the **heat**.
- Turn off the TV and other **electronics** when you're done using them.
- Tell an adult if you see a dripping faucet or a drafty **window**.

Word Bank:

Leave Heat
Unplug Electronics
Curtains Window



E	S	P	A	E	G	W	A	U	H	R	W	A	L	D
V	L	W	D	K	V	U	U	E	U	K	I	Q	Y	N
L	Q	E	G	D	H	A	H	E	A	T	N	N	U	W
C	U	U	C	B	S	L	E	D	N	Q	D	O	Y	A
A	D	I	E	T	R	B	J	L	C	W	O	Z	J	F
V	Y	G	I	R	R	P	M	J	B	U	W	S	P	L
Q	Q	U	T	D	F	O	W	L	A	D	N	T	Y	B
N	Q	L	M	O	A	Q	N	V	F	I	X	L	Y	W
Z	G	P	C	Y	I	M	M	I	A	I	L	O	X	B
C	N	N	W	E	Q	X	P	T	C	I	H	G	T	X
C	Y	U	V	Q	Q	V	R	D	P	S	B	G	G	A
B	K	R	O	R	X	U	M	T	O	M	C	V	W	S
J	E	Y	L	S	C	M	V	G	T	N	S	M	F	T
D	X	Y	D	M	U	R	J	G	Q	N	S	E	P	B
Y	A	K	T	J	H	H	G	J	L	Q	K	S	T	F

