

Increased Efficiency Is a Green Choice



**MESSAGE
FROM
MANAGER
LEROY T.
SKLOSS**

With concern about the future of energy prices, some green-thinking co-op members are planning to generate their own power with solar panels or a wind turbine, hoping to take some of the sting out of their electric bills and use less electricity generated by power plants. That's certainly one option, and one that could pay for itself in the long run, but is it the best way that you can save money?

The purchase and installation of these distributed generation systems cost thousands of dollars, and, since the wind doesn't always blow and the sun doesn't always shine, getting your money's worth from such technology can take years.

Before making such a big investment, I'd like to encourage owners of homes and businesses who are interested in reducing their impact on the environment and cutting their electric bills to start small. With easily managed and less expensive energy-efficiency measures, they'll see both energy use and expenses fall.

It can start as simply as buying a tube or two of caulk. By spending a few dollars and a couple of hours sealing air leaks, an air conditioning or heating system won't have to work as hard. Since it's one of a building's biggest electricity users, the impact on energy use can be immediate.

Another relatively inexpensive investment that could improve comfort levels and reduce bills is to install solar screens or window films. Those products limit the amount of heat that the sun beams inside, reducing

air conditioner run times in the summer. Solar screens are removable, which allows homeowners to take advantage of the sun's heat in the winter, reducing heater run times.

For just a few dollars, replacing incandescent lightbulbs with their more energy-efficient compact fluorescent or light-emitting diode counterparts will shave more electricity usage.

Reducing the amount of water used by installing efficient showerheads and faucet aerators and stopping leaks will help save money and energy by reducing the amount of time water heaters run. Those heaters, which are another big energy user, also can be made more efficient by insulating them with thermal blankets and installing insulation on exposed hot water pipes.

Recouping your investment with these steps could come in a matter of months.

You can see a concrete example of how efficiency upgrades reduce electricity use by viewing the results of the Texas Co-op Power Home Energy Makeover contest at TexasCoopPower.com. Winners of efficiency upgrades in the annual contest saw both their electricity usage and bills drop significantly.

Those upgrades included some more expensive options such as new heat-pump systems, increased attic insulation and energy-efficient water heaters. The payoff time for those options may stretch into years. But federal tax credits can help reduce costs, thus reducing that timeframe.

If you have the money to invest in distributed generation equipment, and that's your desire, then check with Karnes Electric Cooperative for guidelines that will ensure that such equipment will not interfere with our distribution network. But before taking on that big investment, I hope you will consider starting with the smaller ones first.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

5 p.m. March 30, 2012

For more information, contact Janet Scheffler or Karen Brysch at (830) 780-3952 or go online at www.karnesec.org.

ATTENTION, STUDENTS!

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

CO-OP TEENS POWER TEXAS

**One 30-second
TV ad can win you
\$1500!**



**Deadline:
April 1**

STUDENTS, GRADES 6-12: Make your own TV ad for your co-op and post it on YouTube. You could win a cash prize!

TEACHERS: You could win \$1000 for your school by sponsoring the grand prizewinner.

For full details, go to
TexasCoopPower.com

Karnes Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Notice of Changes and Amendments to the Cooperative's Tariffs for Electric Service

The Board of Directors of Karnes Electric Cooperative by resolution on January 24, 2012, approved the proposed changes to modify Section III and Section IV of the Tariffs for Electric Service, as summarized below.

The following tariff language amendments and additions are technically rate changes, but they are not changes in the basic rates for electric service. These amendments and additions affect only current and future members classified as receiving service through primary metering equipment or current and future members who are engaged in lawful submetering. As a result, the cooperative does not anticipate that these changes will significantly increase the cooperative's revenue. All members in all territory served by the cooperative will be affected by the changes to the extent the amended or new provisions apply to the member's situation. In summary, these specific approved changes are:

Section 313.B.5 Line Extension Policy—Indeterminate Classification. Provides that trailer parks, mobile home parks and other similar facilities are classified as Indeterminate.

Section 407.7 Exclusive Service. Amends this provision to allow sales for resale for lawful submetering.

Section 410.2 Three-Phase Service. Adds a provision defining Primary Service, and allows members who are receiving service through primary metering equipment as of December 31, 2011, to continue to receive service without compliance with this tariff amendment.

The cooperative's Tariff for Electric Service, including the amendments and new provisions, is available at the cooperative's main office at 1007 N. Highway 123, Karnes City, TX 78118, and at its district office at 1824 W. Goodwin St., Pleasanton, TX 78064. Again, the basic rates for electric service, which were effective April 1, 2009, have not been changed, and the changes approved herein primarily affect only new applicants and existing members in the oil and gas industries. Any inquires concerning this notice should be directed to Leroy Skloss at the cooperative's office in Karnes City or by calling (830) 780-3952.

These tariff changes shall be effective on and after the thirty-first (31st) day after the date this notice of the proposed and approved changes has been mailed to the cooperative's members.



KARNES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 7

Karnes City, TX 78118

LEROY T. SKLOSS

General Manager

OFFICE PHONE NUMBERS

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Karnes City Headquarters Office

(830) 569-5538

Pleasanton District Office

1-888-807-3952

Toll-Free (Karnes City)

TO REPORT A POWER OUTAGE AFTER 5 P.M. AND ON WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS:

Coy City, Ecleto, Floresville,
Gillette, Goliad, Karnes City,
Kenedy, Runge, Three Rivers,
Tilden and surrounding areas
(830) 780-3952

Charlotte, Christine,
Pleasanton, Poteet, Verdi
and surrounding areas
(830) 569-5538



Don't keep your refrigerator or freezer too cold. Recommended temperatures are 37 to 40 degrees for the main refrigerator compartment and 5 degrees for the freezer. If you have a stand-alone freezer, it should be kept at zero degrees. Appliance settings may vary, so an easy way to check the temperature is to use a meat thermometer.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



Before climbing a ladder, be sure to check the area for overhead power lines.

Plan Yard Work Around Safety

The lure of spring weather means planting, pool cleaning and tree trimming. You'll stay safer if you make it a habit to look up before you begin any kind of work anywhere in your yard. Accidentally touching an overhead power line with a ladder, a long-handled pool-cleaning tool or a tall load in the back of your pickup can result in shocks, electrocution or a power outage.

So be aware of where the power lines on and near your property are located—and stay far away from them. Here are five tips to help you work safely around power lines:

1. Stay at least 15 feet away from overhead power lines. Don't try to cut tree limbs that are closer than that; call a professional for help instead. Don't try to sneak a tall load or a ladder under a line if it will come within 15 feet of the line. Find a detour.
2. Same goes if you're working on your roof. You might be up there blowing off a winter's worth of debris, repairing gutters or repositioning your satellite dish. If any of those chores brings you within 15 feet of a power line, call a pro to do the job. It's worth paying someone who is trained and familiar with power line safety.
3. Before you trim limbs or bushes, inspect them on all sides. Power lines are easily hidden by foliage. Know if that's the case before you start climbing or cutting so that falling branches don't send a live electrical wire flying in your direction.
4. Before you dig in your yard, make a phone call. Call 811, the national Call Before You Dig number, to learn where underground utility lines—from electrical to cable to natural gas—are buried. Make the call before you plant trees or shrubs, break ground for a new deck or even install a mailbox. If you hit an underground utility line while digging, you could harm yourself, disrupt utility service in your neighborhood or damage buried equipment that you might have to pay for later.
5. If work turns to play and you're tossing a ball around with your kids, or flying a kite or a model airplane, choose a play area free of overhead power lines. And teach your children the dangers of playing too close to electrical wires.

SPRING CLEANING?

Add energy efficiency to the 'to do' list and save money.

'Tis the season for the chore called spring cleaning. While it might be hard for you to get motivated to go through with the annual ritual, perhaps the thought of saving a little dough will get you moving.

By adding a few extra chores to your cleaning list, you not only will enjoy a spic-and-span household, but you'll also save energy and money leading into air conditioning season.

1. DUST THE LAMPS AND LIGHTBULBS.

The dust and grime on the bulb make it dirty, reducing the amount of light it gives off. Replace burned out incandescents with energy-efficient CFLs.

2. CLEAN YOUR AIR FILTER.

If it's over a month old, replace it. Replacing the air filters allows your HVAC system to run more efficiently.

3. CLEAN THE AIR-RETURN VENTS.

Make sure drapes and furniture aren't blocking them.

4. DUST YOUR BLINDS.

House too cool for comfort? Leave blinds open to let the sun's rays heat your home. Home too warm? Keep them closed to block the sunlight, keeping your home insulated.

5. VACUUM THE REFRIGERATOR COILS.

The dust buildup causes the fridge to run less efficiently.

6. THOROUGHLY DUST YOUR ELECTRONICS, and if they're not in use, unplug them.

7. SCRUB YOUR TUB, and then install a low-flow showerhead.



ISTOCKPHOTO | THINKSTOCK

Before you head out for a little break this spring, take the time to prepare your home so that your electric meter gets a break, too.

SPRING BREAK

It's Not Just for Students

Breaking away this spring? Give your electric bill a break, too!

If you're planning an excursion with the coming of warmer weather, heed this advice to help use your electricity efficiently and safely while you are away. These tips will not only lower your energy bill, but will also help keep your house safe in your absence.

1. Unplug some of your household appliances. Your house has many items that always use electricity when they're plugged in, even when turned off. Unplugging these items not only saves energy, but in some cases, also can prevent possible fire hazards. Some of the more common items include television sets, DVD players, microwave ovens and toasters.

2. Adjust the refrigerator control to a warmer setting. The fridge can be as high as 40 degrees without spoiling food; the freezer can reach 5 degrees. On these settings, you can save up to 40 percent of the refrigerator's electric usage. If you are going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off (remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew).

3. Set the thermostat higher or lower than the typical comfort level. In cold weather consider lowering your thermostat, but to no lower than 55 degrees. Typically, by doing this, you can save 10 to 30 percent on your heating costs. If the weather's warm, you can shut the air conditioner off during your absence, or at least use a higher-than-normal temperature setting. A programmable thermostat can make these adjustments automatically.

4. Turn down the water heater. A large percentage of the cost of running a water heater comes from just keeping the water at the selected temperature. If you are going on a lengthy trip, turn the water heater's temperature to the lowest setting. This can save you up to \$10 a month.

Fifth-grade teacher,
baseball mom and
**owner of a
highly successful
energy business**



The customers of Karnes EC are also members, which means they actually own the business. Every local co-op is run by the people it serves. When you speak, your co-op listens.

Co-ops are local businesses run by local people.

It's a little something we call
The Home Team Advantage.

KARNES
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



TICK TOCK

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 11. Set clocks forward one hour and remember to check the batteries in your smoke detectors.



DON'T GO OUT ON A LIMB

Your safety is a top priority at your electric co-op. And it's even more important when it comes to our kids. They don't always know—or remember—what can be dangerous, so it's up to all of us to watch out for their safety.

Safety Rules for Power Lines:

- Don't plant trees or install tall playground equipment under or near power lines.
- Don't build tree houses in trees near electric lines.
- Don't allow children to climb trees growing near electric lines.
- Teach your children to always look up to check for power lines before climbing trees or any tall objects.
- Keep children away from ladders, poles or work equipment that may be near power lines.
- Set a good example by following these rules yourself.

And the No. 1 safety rule for everyone to remember is this: Don't touch a power line or anything that's touching a power line. No one can tell simply by looking at a line whether it is energized or not, and contact with a power line can be deadly. Remember, electricity always seeks the easiest path to reach the ground, and, unfortunately, human beings are good conductors of electricity. Look up and live!

Keep Electricity from Going Down the Drain

Water use and electricity go hand in hand. Heating water can account for 14 to 25 percent of the total energy consumed in a typical home. What's more, systems used to clean public water supplies and deliver water to homes require large amounts of electricity. If your home receives water from a well or spring, the pump also draws power. So when we use water, hot or cold, we're also using energy.

Techniques for trimming water use in your home are surprisingly simple. For one, you can significantly reduce hot water consumption by simply repairing leaks in fixtures—faucets and showerheads—or pipes. A leak of one drip per second can cost \$1 or more per month.

You can also reduce water heating costs in a matter of seconds by lowering the thermostat setting on your water heater. For each 10-degree reduction in temperature, you can save between 3 and 5 percent in energy costs. Reducing

the setting also slows mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.

Although some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, most households usually only require them set at 120 degrees. The lower setting may also prevent burns. However, if you have a dishwasher without a booster heater, you may require water temperature within a range of 130 to 140 degrees for optimal cleaning.

Adding insulation to your water heater can save around 4 to 9 percent in costs. To determine if you need to

insulate your water heater, carefully touch it. A heater that's warm to the touch needs additional insulation.

Insulating your water heater tank is fairly simple and inexpensive and will pay for itself in about a year. You can find precut jackets or blankets available from around \$10 to \$20. Choose one with an insulating value of at least R-8. In addition, don't set the thermostat above 130 degrees on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket—the wiring may overheat.

Installing insulation on gas- and oil-fired water heaters is more difficult. For these appliances, it's best to have a qualified plumbing and heating contractor perform the work.

For more tips on trimming water use in your home, including pipe and water heater insulation techniques, visit www.energysavers.gov.



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- + High-Speed Wireless Internet
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