

Keep Your Cool



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER LEROY T. SKLOSS

When the Texas heat bears down, there's one appliance that rides to the rescue: your air conditioner. The widespread residential use of air conditioning is a relatively modern development. But today, I can't imagine life without it.

Cooling in the summer—and heating in the winter—accounts for a major portion of U.S. energy use. Close to 50 percent of all energy use is devoted to adjusting temperature levels, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

In Texas in August, I imagine that this percentage is considerably higher.

In light of these numbers, I'd like to share with you some ways you can reduce air conditioning's effect on your power bill.

CHANGE OR CLEAN THE AIR FILTER REGULARLY. This is probably the most important step you can take to increase efficiency and reduce the wear and tear on your central AC system. Your AC unit has to work harder to force air through a clogged filter. A filthy filter also allows dust and dirt to build up in your system. Changing your air filter regularly can reduce the need for costly maintenance, prevent damage to your system and lower your energy bill.

This advice applies to those who rely on window AC units as well. In addition, ensure that those units are properly weatherstripped to prevent air leakage around the unit.

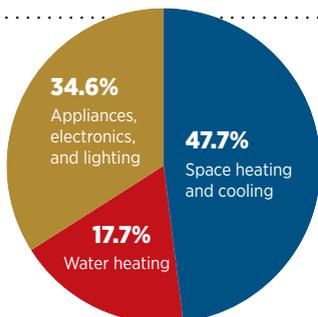
USE A PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTAT. A programmable thermostat will turn your temperature up automatically during times of the day you specify, such as when nobody's home. In fact, if properly set, they can take a significant chunk out of your cooling bill. But if you purchase one, it's important to program it—a step many people fail to take.

Luckily, programmable thermostats have become easier to use in the past few years. Newer ones can learn your usage patterns and automatically adjust temperatures without needing your intervention. Some can even be adjusted remotely with a smartphone or Internet connection. And with reduced power bills, the thermostats can pay for themselves in a matter of months.

USE FANS WISELY. An easy way to feel comfortable while setting the temperature up a couple of degrees is to use a fan. The air moving against your skin creates evaporation, which makes you feel cooler. Be sure to turn fans off when nobody is present. They are only effective when blowing directly on someone.

DRAW BLINDS OR SHADES DURING THE DAY. Keeping the sun's heat out of a room will help it stay cooler. Open shades after sunset to allow heat to escape.

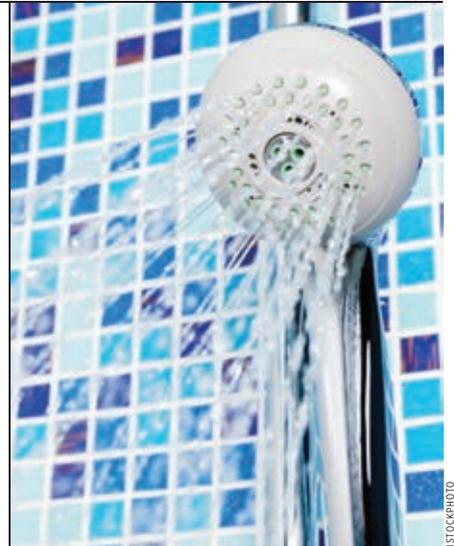
With a little effort, beating the August heat doesn't have to be painful. For more energy-saving tips, visit Karnes EC's website, karnesec.org.



How Americans Use Energy

New data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows that heating and cooling still accounts for the largest amount of electricity consumption in American homes. But as we use more and more electronic gadgets, that segment is closing the gap.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration



Don't Like Cold Showers?

Clean your water heater

If your hot showers quickly turn cold, the culprit could be dirt and debris.

A showerhead can get clogged over time, especially if you have hard water, so it's a good idea to give it a good scrubbing on a regular basis. Likewise, the house's plumbing and your water heater can collect rust, sediment and debris, so having a plumber flush them out every now and then could make your hot water supply more reliable.

If your older water heater is rusted or eroding, sediment can settle in it and clog pipes. A clogged pipe can reduce water flow, so not enough hot water gets to you while you're showering.

You can flush out your water heater yourself by connecting a garden hose to the discharge valve found at the bottom of most units. Open the valve and let the water run for about five minutes to discharge sediments that collect at the bottom of a water heater's tank.

Like any machine with operating parts, your plumbing system and water heater need regular maintenance. Sometimes, a plumber can clean out your system and solve the problem; but for older systems, often the best bet is to replace the water heater with a newer, cleaner, more energy-efficient model.

KARNES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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

The Karnes Electric Cooperative Board of Directors approved by resolution on June 25, 2013, the proposed changes to modify Section II, 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 primarily may affect current and future applicants for service but may also affect some current members. 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 202.3 PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SERVICE FOR OIL AND GAS FIELD OPERATIONS Provides that the Cooperative can provide secondary service, under contract, to oil and gas field operations utilizing a private electric distribution system.

SECTION 203.10 PRIMARY OR SECONDARY OIL AND GAS FIELD SERVICE - RATE 10 Establishes Rate 10 as the applicable rate for members receiving secondary service to oil and gas field operations utilizing a private electric distribution system.

SECTION 203.16 INDUSTRIAL SERVICE TO OIL AND GAS FACILITY - RATE 16 Clarifies that members receiving secondary service to oil and gas field operations utilizing a private electric distribution system are not eligible for service under this rate.

SECTION 203.9 TEMPORARY SERVICE Corrects the reference to Section 313 Line Extension Policy.

SECTION 313 LINE EXTENSION POLICY Establishes procedures for potential partial reimbursement of contributions in aid of construction; modifies applicant classifications; clarifies capacity rights.

SECTION 410 STANDARD SERVICE VOLTAGES AND CONDUCTOR SIZES Specifies standard conductor sizes.

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, Texas 78118, and at its district office at 1824 W. Goodwin, Pleasanton, Texas 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 or 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, Texas, or at (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.

Passive Cooling Reaps Rewards

There is a way to help yourself feel cooler and more comfortable without using energy at all. It's called passive cooling, and it's an old practice that can still work today. Passive cooling really involves keeping your home from getting hot to begin with, thus reducing the workload on your energy-powered cooling devices and systems.

One of the best ways to provide passive cooling is to plant trees. Tall, mature shade trees block the sunlight from beating down on your roof and windows, especially on the western side of your house, and can reduce indoor temperatures by 10 to 20 degrees.

Keeping shades and curtains drawn on windows that take a lot of direct sunlight,



Window awnings help keep indoor temperatures cooler.

especially from the south and west, can reduce the heat gain in your home. Exterior window awnings, porches and overhangs do an even better job of blocking heat than interior window coverings.

The hottest place in your home is the attic. If it isn't properly ventilated, the attic will heat up as high as 130 degrees, and some of that heat transfers to the interior of your home. Check your attic temperature on a hot day; if it's higher than 100 degrees, you need more ventilation.

Controlling humidity will help keep you more comfortable, too. If your air-conditioning system doesn't dehumidify the air as well as it should, consider adding a new unit to replace or supplement it. Wait until cooler hours to do chores—such as washing and drying clothes, washing dishes and cooking—that add humidity to the air, and use ventilation fans in bathrooms and kitchens to help vent that extra moisture.



MEDIA IMAGES/PHOTODISC

Knowing where power lines are is critical to a safe harvest season.

Be Safe at Harvest Time

Farmers focus on the ground when sowing and harvesting, but looking up is just as important, especially when driving farm machinery near power lines. Every year, an average of 62 people working on farms are electrocuted when farm machines touch overhead power lines.

Here are some things to think about when bringing in a crop:

▶ Portable grain augers, oversized wagons, combines and other tall or cumbersome equipment could come in contact with overhead power lines, creating an electrocution threat to those on the ground nearby—as well as the operator if proper steps aren't taken.

Use a spotter who can tell you if you are getting too close to overhead lines. And always lower a portable grain auger or elevator before you move it, even if only a few feet. As a general rule of thumb, keep all objects at least 10 feet away from overhead lines.

▶ If equipment gets hung up on a power line, don't get off of the machine unless there's fire or other immediate danger. If you touch the ground and the equipment at the same time, you can become a deadly channel for electricity.

If you must get off the equipment, jump clear of the vehicle and, keeping your feet close together, hop away.

Call Karnes Electric Cooperative at (830) 780-3952 to report the problem. Don't touch any machine connected to a power line and keep others away until Karnes Electric Cooperative disconnects the line.

▶ Watch the roads as you're moving farm equipment this fall. Plan your route to bins and elevators between fields, and on public roads to avoid low-hanging power lines.

Overhead power lines crossing roads on the farm should be at least 18½ feet from the ground to make sure equipment and tractors don't touch the lines and put your life in danger. If a line seems low, contact Karnes EC.

If someone else transports large equipment for you, always provide a safe route and explain why it must be taken.

This year, plan to harvest safely. For more ways to stay safe on and off the farm, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Karnes Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 7, Karnes City, TX 78118

GENERAL MANAGER

Leroy T. Skloss

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COOPERATIVE OFFICES

Main Office

1007 N. Highway 123, Karnes City

District Office

1824 W. Goodwin, Pleasanton

Pay your bill, submit meter readings and view your account summary at karnesec.org.



Contact Us

For information and outages during office hours

(830) 780-3952 Karnes City
(830) 569-5538 Pleasanton
1-888-807-3952 Toll-free

To report a power outage after 5 p.m. and on weekends and holidays

(830) 780-3952

Coy City, Ecleto, Floresville, Gillette, Goliad, Karnes City, Kenedy, Runge, Three Rivers, Tilden and surrounding areas

(830) 569-5538

Charlotte, Christine, Pleasanton, Poteet, Verdi and surrounding areas

FIND US ON THE WEB

karnesec.org

Cooperative Members Fare Well in Legislature

BY ERIC CRAVEN

Members of electric cooperatives likely won't notice the effects of laws passed during the regular session of the Texas Legislature, which ended May 27, on their costs or service. Bills had been introduced that could have caused rate increases and other problems, but those did not survive the scrutiny of the legislative process.

Cooperative members will benefit from the passage of legislation that keeps the Public Utility Commission running for another 10 years without increasing costs for cooperatives. Although cooperatives are regulated locally and state regulation is limited,



decisions by the agency still affect the cost and supply of electricity for cooperative members. The bill includes a provision to protect consumer information collected by utilities from being given to third parties—a step cooperatives already had taken.

Additionally, the Legislature addressed a 2012 Texas Supreme Court decision affecting the height of electric lines above roadways with a law that returns the standards to those found in the National Electric Safety Code. The decision would have cost co-op members tens of millions of dollars to increase the height of distribution lines above roadways.

Legislation also passed that describes the rules for attaching cable company equipment to cooperative-owned utility poles. The new law could protect cooperative members from subsidizing cable company

operations while providing an efficient process for accessing cooperative facilities.

Other new laws include one targeting unscrupulous metal recyclers who continue to be a problem in efforts to curb copper theft. Cooperatives are experiencing an epidemic of such thefts, and they are costly for members because the stolen copper must be replaced.

Another measure passed in the regular session allows for the establishment of an electric bill payment assistance program for military veterans severely burned in combat.

Eric Craven is vice president, government relations and legal affairs, at Texas Electric Cooperatives.

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Roadside Mechanic.
Traffic Director.
Tourism Promoter.

Oh, and Electric
Co-op Lineworker.



You'd think our line crews would have enough to do. With storms and lightning strikes. Downed power lines. Equipment repair. And delivering service to new customers.

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You see, our line crews are committed to bringing you the best electric service possible. But they're also committed to this community. And doing whatever it takes to make life here just a little better.

Thank a lineman today.



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A real danger for children riding a school bus comes from drivers who don't observe traffic laws.

Back to School Safety Tips for Motorists

School buses are one of the safest forms of transportation on the road today. Riding a bus to school is 13 times safer than riding in a passenger vehicle and 10 times safer than walking to school, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The reality of school bus safety is that more children are hurt outside the bus than inside as passengers. Most of the children who die in bus-related crashes are pedestrians, 4 to 7 years old, who are hit by the bus or by motorists illegally passing a stopped school bus. For this reason, it is necessary to know the proper laws and procedures for sharing the road safely with school buses.

- ▶ It is illegal to pass a school bus that is stopped to pick up or unload children.
- ▶ School buses use yellow flashing lights to alert motorists that they are preparing to stop and load or unload children. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign arm signal to motorists that the bus is stopped and children are getting on or off the bus.
- ▶ Traffic in both directions must stop on undivided roadways when students are entering or exiting a bus.
- ▶ The area 10 feet around a school bus is where children are in the most danger of being hit. Stop your car far enough away from the bus to allow children the necessary space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- ▶ Be alert. Children are unpredictable. Children walking to or from their bus are usually very comfortable with their surroundings. This makes them more likely to take risks, ignore hazards or fail to look both ways when crossing the street.
- ▶ Never pass a school bus on the right. It is illegal and could have tragic consequences.

Tips for Seniors To Beat the Heat

The older we get, the more careful we need to be during the heat of summer.

Even when kids and younger adults seem unfazed by a sweltering August afternoon, the heat can knock older folks right off their feet. Common health problems among seniors—poor circulation, inefficient sweat glands, heart, lung or kidney disease, and high blood pressure—can affect how their bodies deal with the heat.

In addition, people on multiple medicines, or who take diuretics or sedatives, may not be able to sweat.

If you are a senior or caring for one, keep in mind these tips for keeping cool:

- ▶ Ask a doctor if any medications interfere with the body's ability to regulate its temperature.
- ▶ Dress in light cotton clothes instead of synthetics.
- ▶ Drink plenty of water, and not just when thirsty. Avoid alcohol, which can be dehydrating.
- ▶ Spend the day at a shopping mall, a library or a nearby senior center,



STOCKPHOTO

When temperatures climb, cool off and expand your mind at the local library.

where it is air conditioned if the house doesn't have an air conditioner.

- ▶ Have a relative or a neighbor check in on seniors every day during the summer, just in case.

Small Measures, Real Savings

Simple steps for do-it-yourself energy auditing

BY MAGEN HOWARD

No matter the age of your home, it could benefit from an energy audit. An audit conducted by a certified professional can be helpful, but you can get started on your own in finding low-cost solutions that could save money on your monthly electric bill.

First, ask yourself a simple question: Does my home feel drafty and cold in the winter, or stuffy and hot in the summer? If yes, then it probably experiences air leakage.

To track down where those spots are, start with the usual suspects—like damaged seals around doors and windows. If you see daylight or feel air, then apply caulk and weatherstripping to keep outdoor air where it's supposed to be.

But don't forget spots you might not immediately identify, such as recessed canister lights and electrical outlets. Outlet insulation kits can be purchased for as little as \$2, and you can fix up your canister lights with some caulk around the edges.

Also look where walls meet the ceiling. Cobwebs mean you've got drafts.

Next, peek into the attic and inspect the crawl space or basement for sufficient insulation. Keep in mind that insulation won't do its job well if you don't have a proper air barrier working in tandem. That means all joints and cracks must be

sealed between your living space and insulation.

Finally, look to your light fixtures. Compact fluorescent lightbulbs are up to 75 percent more efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs, and they've come a long way in light quality, design and affordability. You can purchase CFLs in a variety of shapes and hues. They cost more up front, but you could make your money back in less than nine months. After that, they start saving money. Make sure to purchase a CFL that's rated by Energy Star, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's program that denotes products meeting specific energy-efficiency criteria.

Energy Star-rated CFLs will typically last 10 times longer



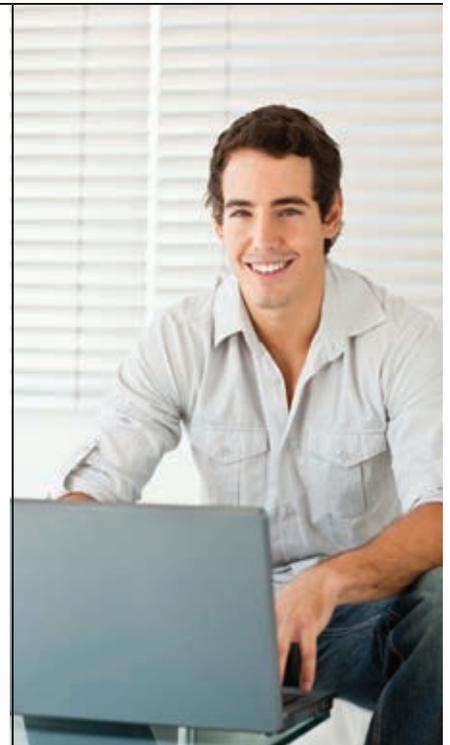
Swapping out old-school incandescent bulbs for high-efficiency compact fluorescents will lower energy use for lighting and reduce heat gain in your home.

than a traditional incandescent bulb producing the same amount of light.

LEDs—light-emitting diodes—are the next wave of residential lighting. An Energy Star-rated model is estimated to use only a quarter of the electricity consumed by traditional bulbs and can last for 25 years. As with many new technologies, the upfront cost for an LED bulb is still much more than even a CFL, but prices are expected to drop as new products are developed.

To learn more about ways to reduce your electric bill, call Karnes Electric Cooperative at (830) 780-3952 or visit EnergySavers.gov.

Magen Howard writes for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



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