

## We Need an All-of-the-Above Energy Strategy



### MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER LEROY T. SKLOSS

**Electric cooperatives are disappointed—but not surprised—that in September the Obama administration officially abandoned an all-of-the-above energy strategy for a new approach that effectively removes coal from the nation's fuel mix in the future.**

The policy, proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency, sets stringent limits on carbon dioxide emissions from future coal and natural gas plants. The trouble is that the new standards are impossible to meet with existing technology.

For several years, cooperatives have tested carbon capture and storage as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, the technology doesn't make financial sense. It has never been used on a commercial scale at a power plant over a prolonged period to demonstrate its viability or cost. In a 2012 Congressional Budget

## COOPERATIVE ACTION NETWORK

Electric cooperative consumers are banding together through the Cooperative Action Network to send the message that America needs a diverse fuel mix for electricity. Find out how your voice can be heard at [action.coop](http://action.coop).

Office report, engineers estimated it would increase the cost of producing electricity from coal-based plants by 75 percent.

The administration's revised energy approach would limit Americans' access to a plentiful and affordable energy resource. I don't think we should gamble with the economic well-being of future generations and our nation's economy.

Already worried about making ends meet, many of Karnes Electric Cooperative's members cannot afford the significant increases in electric bills that this policy would trigger.

Historically, the price of coal has remained affordable. The U.S. Energy Information Agency reports that the United States has more than 200 years worth of recoverable coal reserves, and coal generates 37 percent of the nation's electricity—our biggest energy source by far.

It seems that the administration is ready to let history repeat itself. We saw this all-but-one game in 1978 when Congress passed the ill-conceived Power Plant and Industrial Fuel Use Act. Never heard of it? Few have, but for several years the government banned natural gas for power generation. Yes, natural gas—the fuel source being sold to the nation today as a cleaner fuel option. With gas off the table, electric co-ops were forced to choose between building coal or nuclear plants.

Back then, co-ops were in the midst of a major power plant building cycle. With few financially sound options in the late 1970s and early 1980s, co-ops invested heavily in coal-based generation. Congress repealed its mistake, but not for nine years.

Let's not repeat past mistakes. Stand with us as we fight to keep electric bills affordable. Raise your voice through the Cooperative Action Network at [action.coop](http://action.coop). Tell the EPA we need an all-of-the-above energy strategy.



**Install carbon monoxide detectors away from fans and other air sources to prevent a misleadingly low CO reading.**

## Carbon Monoxide Dangers

**When it's cold outside, keeping your home closed up is the natural thing to do. That can make wintertime a prime time for carbon monoxide danger.**

If you have a fireplace, wood stove, attached garage, gas appliances or an electrical generator, you should have a carbon monoxide detector.

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that is emitted through combustion, especially if an indoor appliance is not vented properly or is poorly maintained. It inhibits oxygen intake in the bloodstream and can cause injury or even death in high concentrations.

At low exposure, CO can cause fatigue in healthy people or chest pain in those with heart conditions, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. At higher concentrations, it can cause impaired vision, headaches, confusion and nausea. It may also cause flu-like symptoms that fade when a person is no longer exposed to CO.

To reduce dangers from CO, make sure fireplaces and gas appliances are in good repair, never idle a vehicle in an attached garage and always operate generators outside in a well-ventilated place away from the home's windows and doors.

A carbon monoxide detector can alert you and your family when concentrations of the gas become too high. But, like smoke detectors, if it has weak batteries—or worse, no batteries—it won't do you much good.

ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK



ISTOCK | THINKSTOCK

## Youth Tour 2014 Is Coming

Look for details on how you can win a trip to Washington, D.C., on the 2014 Government-in-Action Youth Tour in the January edition of Texas Co-op Power.

### STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Karnes Electric Cooperative, Inc., is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Leroy T. Skloss, general manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 1-800-795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.



## Karnes Electric Cooperative

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

### GENERAL MANAGER

Leroy T. Skloss

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arlon Retzloff, President, *Whitsett*  
Martin R. Harris Jr., Vice President, *Tilden*  
Larry R. Schendel, Secretary-Treasurer, *Runge*  
Frank A. Geyer Jr., Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, *Charlotte*  
Paul T. Brysch Jr., *Karnes City*  
David C. Davidson, *Poteet*  
Shirley Hofmann, *Runge*

### 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](http://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](http://karnesec.org)

# Keep Your Christmas Tree Fresh

The best way to make sure your Christmas tree stays green for a long time is to buy a really fresh one.

If you buy one with needles already falling off, it's dry and won't last long. Plus, hanging electric lights on a dry tree is a fire hazard.

Here are some tips for buying a fresh tree and for keeping it healthy until you're ready to take it down:

- ▶ Shop for your tree at a lot that stores trees under a canopy and out of the sun. If the trees are lying on the ground, notice whether there's wet burlap between them and



ISTOCK.COM | MARIA PAVLOVA

Whether you find your tree in a snow-covered field or at a local Christmas tree lot, making sure it's fresh from the start will go a long way toward keeping it green and safe through the holidays.

if the vendor has been hosing them down frequently during the day. If the trees are displayed upright, choose one that's standing in water or has wet burlap wrapped around the bottom of its trunk.

- ▶ The fresher the tree is when you buy it, the longer it will last. Especially if the tree you buy has been imported from out of state, it was probably cut before Thanksgiving. If it's already drying out, it will sag, discolor and drop its needles quickly once you get it into your warm house.

- ▶ Put it up as soon as you get it home. If you can't do that until later, prop the tree up in a bucket of water and keep the bucket full.

- ▶ Add water to the tree stand several times on the first day. After that, keep the reservoir full. Check it every day.

- ▶ Find a place for your tree that's far away from heating vents and the fireplace. The closer it is to a heat source, the quicker it will dry out.

- ▶ Take the tree down as soon as the needles start to fall.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Green Chile Corn Casserole

- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup onion, finely chopped
- 1 poblano pepper, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 can (11 ounces) white shoepeg corn, drained
- 1 can (11 ounces) Mexi-corn
- 1 can (16 ounces) creamed corn
- 3 cans (4 ounces each) diced green chiles
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 cup shredded pepper jack cheese, divided
- 1 package (9 ounces) corn muffin mix
- Salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in saucepan over medium-low heat. Add onion, poblano and a pinch of salt and sweat until onion is soft and translucent, but not browned. Add garlic and cook for another 2-3 minutes. Set aside and let cool to room temperature.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the onion mixture, sour cream, egg, corn, green chiles and ½ cup of each cheese. Add the corn muffin mix and stir until moistened. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour mixture into greased 2 ½-quart round casserole dish. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove from oven, top with remaining cheese, then return to oven for another 15 minutes, or until top is browned.

RICK PATRICK



FOR MORE GREAT RECIPES, VISIT [TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM](http://TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM)



## Bundle Up Your Home with Insulation

**One of simplest ways to reduce your home's heating costs—and improve comfort—involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides resistance to heat flow. The more heat-flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.**

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls and floors—wherever there is a temperature difference.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. The longer your heater has to run to maintain a comfortable temperature, the higher your electric bill will be. Proper insulation, though, decreases heat flow.

Heat-flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of multilayered installation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

Insulation effectiveness also depends on how and where it's installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it's important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.

Here are some tips on insulating your home from the U.S. Department of Energy:

- ▶ Consider factors such as your climate, home design and budget when selecting insulation for your home.
- ▶ Use higher R-value insulation, such as spray foam, on exterior walls and in cathedral ceilings to get more insulation with less thickness.
- ▶ Install attic air barriers such as wind baffles along the entire attic eave to help ensure proper airflow from the soffit to the attic. Ventilation helps with moisture control and reducing summer cooling bills, but don't ventilate your attic if you have insulation on the underside of the roof. Ask a qualified contractor for recommendations.
- ▶ Be careful how close you place insulation next to a recessed light fixture—unless it is insulation contact (IC) rated—to avoid a fire hazard.
- ▶ Follow the manufacturer's installation instructions and wear the proper protective gear when installing insulation.

## How Dirty Is Your Refrigerator?

**Did Thanksgiving do a number on your refrigerator? If the food left over from the big feast is getting a little too old for comfort, the period before the end-of-the-year holidays could be a great time to clean your whole fridge—all the way to the backs of shelves.**

- ▶ Empty the whole refrigerator so you can see every spill, drip and container of expired food.
- ▶ Unplug the appliance and pull it away from the wall. Use soap, white vinegar and water to scrub the shelves and soak the bins. Dry them thoroughly before replacing them.
- ▶ To sanitize, wipe down—inside and out—with a mixture of water, chlorine bleach, baking soda and borax.
- ▶ Do it often. A clean refrigerator will run more efficiently than one full of spills, grime and mildew.



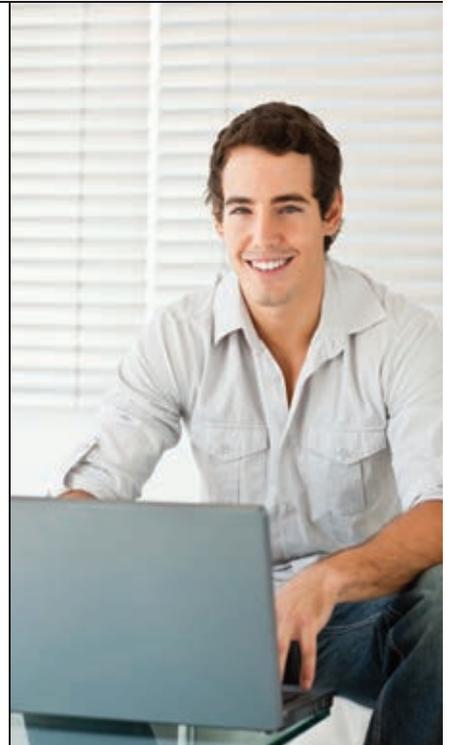
**No matter the season, your refrigerator will benefit from a good cleaning.**

- ▶ Use a vacuum cleaner or soft brush to clean the coils located on the back of the refrigerator once a year.
- ▶ Slip your vacuum cleaner hose attachment under the refrigerator to clean the condenser coils. If it won't fit, stretch a rubber band around an old sock and attach it to the end of a yardstick. Slide the stick under the refrigerator to clean the coils.
- ▶ When you're finished with the chore, plug the refrigerator back in. Leave space between the coils and the wall to allow airflow.



Be creative this holiday season and fill your basket with energy-saving gifts.

BLEND IMAGES | THINKSTOCK



## Give the Gift of **Energy Efficiency**

Is there someone on your holiday gift-giving list who could use help with their energy bills? Consider giving the gift of energy savings this year.

Here are some ideas for practical gift solutions that can help plug some common energy leaks:

**VAMPIRE ELECTRONICS KILLER KIT:** Pair a watt meter with a couple of higher-quality power strips in a gift basket. The recipient can use the meter to find the most energy-draining “always-on” electronics, then plug them into the power strips. That way, when the electronics are not in use, they can be turned off with one flick of a switch.

**EFFICIENT COOKING PACKAGE:** If someone you know loves to cook, help that chef prepare their meals more efficiently with a new slow cooker. Using that appliance instead of a stovetop could help decrease energy use in the kitchen. Pair the cooker with a selection of spices or a slow-cooker cookbook to make mealtimes more special.

**A COZY NIGHT:** Combine a pair of slippers, a sweater and a lap blanket to give the gift of warmth for the winter. Warm clothing may allow the gift recipient to lower the thermostat. For every degree a thermostat is lowered in the winter, heating costs drop 1 to 5 percent, experts estimate.

**THE GIFT OF LIGHT:** Energy-efficient lights are a proven way to trim the costs of lighting, which consume about 12 percent of a typical home’s electricity, according to Energy Star. Light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, are the most efficient and long-lasting of the bulb options available today. Choose Energy Star-rated bulbs, and perhaps throw in a strand of LED holiday lights, which can be used for years.

With a little creative thought, you can come up with your own combination of energy-efficient gifts that will be appreciated year-round.

Shop online,  
pay bills,  
download  
music, watch  
movies—  
faster!

**HIGH-SPEED INTERNET  
FOR THE KARNES  
COMMUNITY**

Call **800.699.4832** or  
visit **www.karnesec.net**  
to get connected today.

**karnesec.net**



# Merry Christmas

*from Karnes Electric Cooperative*

**Karnes Electric Cooperative will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday, December 24 and 25, for Christmas and Wednesday, January 1, for New Year's Day.**

**We wish you and yours the most joyous of holiday seasons and a peaceful and prosperous 2014.**