

FEC. POWER

Source

Vol. 23 No. 1



7 Easy Ways to Lower Winter Energy Costs

1. Tame Drafts - The best way to keep the warm air in is to make sure it isn't flowing out. Take a tour around your home and examine windows and doors for any drafts. Our front door had a sizable gap at its base, so we installed weatherstripping and it took care of the cold air problem immediately. There are many ways to fill in voids, including stripping, insulator kits, foam, silicone, etc. If you're in an apartment or just want a temporary fix, you can also use one of those draft guards. Here's a DIY tutorial using an old pair of tights, polyfill, and only a few stitches.

2. Lower the Thermostat - How low can you go on your thermostat this winter? Start just one degree and you could save up to 5% (or around \$10 per day) on your overall heating bill according to an analysis released by EnergyHub in 2012. The EPA recommends settings on 70 degrees during the eight hours most people are home turning it down to 62 degrees for the 16 hours when people are away or sleeping. And if you can get away with keeping your thermostat on lower (we keep ours on 67 during the day), that's great, too. Using a programmable thermostat also helps you save by taking out the manual temperature changing.

3. Cover Yourself - Feeling nervous about taking the plunge? Keeping comfortable at lower thermostat levels isn't difficult. Wear more clothing! Long sleeves, pants, thick socks, and layers are the fashion statements in our house during the winter. We also keep a fleece blanket on the couch to ward off chills in the evening. Our beds are topped with flannel sheets and wool covers for the nights when our thermostat is at its lowest setting. You

don't want to be frigid all season long, but some common sense is employed here.

4. Zone It Out - My family lives in a 4-bedroom home, but we're currently only using two of those bedrooms on a daily basis. So, we've closed the hot air vents in



those rooms to redirect the heating to the spaces we're living in and keep the doors shut most hours of the day. If you have baseboard heating, see if there's a localized switch in your room so you can turn it off and shut the door. The savings here are hard to quantify because so many factors are involved (room size, etc.), however —

the less area to heat, the more money that stays in your pockets.

5. Use Curtains - During the day, take advantage of the sun's rays by opening your curtains to let the light in. Even on the coldest days you'll get a boost, especially with those south-facing windows in the afternoon rays. Then in the evening, close your curtains to help keep the heat indoors. If your windows are bare (or you only have sheers), consider purchasing some insulated curtains, which protect your home from heat loss through conduction, infiltration, convection, and radiation. They come in all colors and patterns, too!

6. Service Your Furnace - It's one of those annoying home maintenance tasks you don't think you should need to do, but getting your furnace cleaned and evaluated each year can help save you cash and unexpected

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Manager's Message...**Lance Adkins, GM****If its not broke, don't fix it**

In my December message I noted that we are aware of legislative initiatives focused on increasing the amount of electricity in a state regulated utility's resource mix, or portfolio, used to serve retail consumers. Readers may recall that Investor-owned utilities, like Southwestern Public Service Company (SPS) and Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) are required to include a minimum of twenty percent renewable energy in their resource mix by January 2020. Electric Cooperatives, including Farmers' Electric (FEC), are required to include a minimum of ten percent by January 2020. Utilities were able to provide more than the mandates and were able to suspend purchases if the cost of renewable energy would increase the cost to consumers above a set threshold.

Under proposed legislation, Cooperatives' renewable energy standard would increase to twenty-five percent by 2025, with additional increases required until reaching eighty percent by 2045. In addition, the reasonable cost threshold is revised to only consider the cost of additional resources, not the total cost to consumers.

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham clearly has increasing renewable energy resources in mind as she specifically included renewables in her inaugural address stating "A dramatic increase in our clean energy production insulates us from future oil busts and makes good on our promise to leave our great outdoors greater than we found them. That means we will produce fifty percent of our energy from renewable sources by 2030 and set the course for eighty percent ten years after that."

In fact, our wholesale power supplier, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC) just announced a new solar project they are developing with Invenergy, Tip Top Solar Energy Center, in southeast New Mexico. Tip Top Solar is scheduled for commercial operation in December 2022 and will be comprised of 220 megawatts (MW) of nameplate capacity. WFEC and Invenergy negotiated a long-term power purchase agreement (PPA) ensuring a low cost renewable resource for cooperative members of WFEC for many years into the future. Including this new project, WFEC's energy portfolio is currently comprised of 270 MW of solar, 955 MW of wind and 260 MW of hydroelectric generation.

As noted in my last message, FEC's portfolio is already substantially higher than required, containing approximately thirty percent renewable energy in 2018, roughly two percent hydroelectric and twenty-eight percent wind and solar. Important to the membership, FEC was able to accomplish this without increasing the overall cost of

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Scholarship App. Deadline Nearing!

Farmers' Electric Cooperative will be awarding scholarships again this year through the Farmers' Electric Education Foundation. Scholarship applications may be obtained from area high school guidance counselors or from cooperative office locations in Clovis, Ft. Sumner, and Santa Rosa. Scholarship applications can also be requested by calling the Clovis office at 575-762-4466 or 800-445-8541 or by going online to www.fecnm.org. All cooperative members and their dependents are eligible to apply for these scholarships.



Don't Delay! Deadline For Applications Is **February 1, 2019!**

This year there are two different scholarship forms. Be sure when requesting a form that you specify either the "Graduating High School Student Application" or the "Returning College Application." Both forms are available from any FEC office or are available to download from www.fecnm.org.

Attention

Protection from winter shut-off begins November 15, 2018. To avoid potential disconnection of services, please contact the Human Services Department for eligibility information for the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at 800-283-4465. Your service will not be disconnected from November 15, 2018 through March 15, 2019, if you qualify for LIHEAP and have no past due amount or are making the agreed upon payments.

Atención

Protección contra la interrupción de servicio de invierno comienza el 15 de Noviembre del 2018. Para evitar la posibilidad de desconexión. Favor de ponerse en contacto con el Departamento de Servicios Humanos para informarse acerca de los requisitos de elegibilidad para el Programa de Asistencia Energética de Bajos Ingresos (LIHEAP) al 1-800-283-4465, Su servicio no será desconectado 15 de Noviembre del 2018 a 15 de Marzo del 2019 si califica para el Programa de Asistencia Energética de Bajos Ingresos y no tiene saldo atrasado ni a fallado con su acuerdo de pagos fijos.

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electricity to the members.

Our message to legislators and Governor Grisham: do not impose more mandates, rather, allow Cooperatives to develop renewable energy resources that make sense for our members. Cooperatives have a proven track record; renewable energy can be supplied without sacrificing cost and reliability. Artificial timelines and mandates imposed by legislators and regulators, no matter how well intentioned, have the potential to increase costs to consumers.

FEC effectively participates in the legislative process individually and through our state association of electric cooperatives, the New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NMRECA). On behalf of cooperative members across the state NMRECA tracks legislation that has potential to impact the cost members pay for electricity through additional taxation and regulation.

Folks who desire to follow the legislative process can track and read bills, follow committee activities and keep abreast of the daily calendar at the legislature's web site, www.nmlegis.gov.

Until next month,

Ask the Energy Guys!

Q. Hey Energy Guys, I was wondering what kind of maintenance I should do on my wood-burning fireplace. Wood is expensive, so I want to get the most for my money. My wife and I really enjoy the fire, but we realize it's not the most energy efficient way to heat. Any suggestions?

A. Great question! Though winter is in full swing, its still not too late to check your fireplace for safety and efficiency.

Even if you're still using an energy-inefficient wood fireplace, you can minimize the heat loss it causes by taking a few precautions:

- Close the fireplace damper until you are ready to burn a fire. Open it only while the fire is burning, and close it again once you have put the fire out or it has burned out. An open damper in an unused

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breakdowns. (It's also a safety thing, as gas or propane furnaces can leak carbon monoxide into your home without your knowledge.) You'll also need to change out the filter at least once per season — or whenever it's dirty — to keep everything flowing as it should.

7. Add Insulation - If your house is still feeling quite cold, take a trip to your attic to assess the insulation situation. In our last home, we were surprised to find only a few inches of the stuff keeping our heat from flowing out the roof. (Insulation acts like a hat does on your body.) We added a thick fiberglass roll to the entire attic ourselves and could tell the difference in our second floor level almost immediately. How much insulation you add and where you add it is going to depend on your home. If you plan to stay there for quite a while, it certainly makes sense to evaluate and correct any issues that might cost you big dollars as the years go on.



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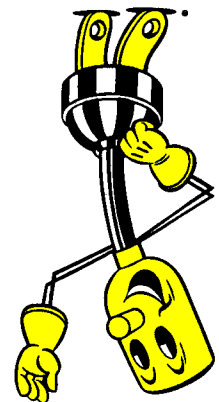
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fireplace sucks heated air right out of your house and sends it out through the chimney.

- Prevent air from your room from going up the chimney by installing tempered glass doors on the front of the fireplace. You can also direct the heat that the fire produces into your room by installing a heat-air exchange to blow the warm air into the house.
- Reinforce the seals around your fireplace flue damper. Tight seals prevent heated air from escaping through the fireplace and chimney.
- Insulate your chimney with liners to prevent creosote – a byproduct of exhaust from the fire – from building up in it. That buildup can make your fireplace less efficient and create a hazard for an unintended fire in the chimney.
- Call a chimney sweep certified by the Chimney Safety Institute of America to clean your fireplace and chimney every year before the heating season begins. The chimney sweep can advise you about safety issues and malfunctioning parts.
- If you don't use your fireplace, have a chimney expert plug and seal it so it won't rob your home of its comfortable, heated air.



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