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Invest a little to save energy

Saving energy at home can be simple and free: Turn off the lights and TV when you're not using them; lower the thermostat at night. But for a bigger impact on your electric bill, make a little bit more of an effort and invest a few bucks in energy-saving equipment.

Here's what to buy:

LEDs. Next time a light bulb burns out, replace it with an LED. They last for years and use their energy to produce light, not heat. LED bulbs can screw right into the lamps and fixtures you have. But when it's time to replace those, consider buying LED fixtures for even greater savings.

Good-quality power strips. Plug your electronic equipment into them. Before you go to bed at night, unplug those strips. If energy-intensive appliances like computers, printers and video game consoles are left plugged in after you turn them off, they still use energy—constantly. The only way to



stop wasting that energy is to unplug.

New windows. If your old ones are single-pane versions, you might as well leave them open all winter. They're no match for the cold air, which can seep through them. And they don't do a good job of keeping your heated air inside. If that's too much for now, at least plug the leaks around your windows and doors with weather stripping or caulk.

Window shades. Uncovered windows are great for views, but terrible for your energy bill. Your heating bill will be lower in the winter and your air conditioning costs will drop in the summer if you use blinds, curtains or awnings on windows. Uncover them on sunny winter days to let the natural warmth come into your home, but close them up after dark when the temperature dips.

Programmable thermostat. Everyone forgets to lower the heat once in a while. A programmable thermostat will do that for you. Program yours to lower at bedtime, and then automatically warm the house up just before everyone wakes up. It can lower the heat again once everyone leaves for school and work in the morning and crank it back up before the family gets home in the afternoon.

The services of qualified technicians. Keeping your heating and cooling system clean and well-maintained will help it run smoother and more efficiently. Likewise, keeping vents clear—including the one for your clothes dryer—will keep your family safer and your appliances running as they should.

REC donates pencils to each school in its service territory



This year REC purchased pencils for each school in its service territory. During REC's youth program presentations, representatives delivered the pencils to all the schools. Steven Beck, Member Services Representative (right) is pictured with Alex High School counselor Charissa Byrne and a few of Alex's juniors.

Home automation provides more control



Home automation systems are placing the powers of control in the hands of co-op members, but many questions remain about the best ways to use them to save money and energy.

Security system notifications and thermostat controls that adapt to home automation are among the most popular options available. But not every product using artificial intelligence is designed to save energy. In many instances, energy use is secondary to convenience or connectivity features.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), interest in connected or smart appliances is trending upward among consumers, and manufacturers are responding with a growing list of products.

Besides smart thermostats, the products available now include, room air conditioners, refrigerators and freezers, laundry equipment, light bulbs and fixtures, and power strips. Which means making the investment payoff could take a few lifestyle changes, but dashboards, accessible from computers or tablets, and apps available for smartphones can help.

Consumers are looking for simplicity, which is feeding the popularity of virtual assistant technologies, like Amazon's Alexa and Echo, Google Assistant and Apple HomeKit. Other companies, including

Samsung, Logitech and Wink are also offering home-management hubs and platforms designed to help manage connected technology. 1437402

Convenience and programming simplicity are among the most important factors fueling consumer acceptance as "home ecosystem" products. Home security controls, including locks, alarm systems and lighting are also popular features.

Energy advisors agree controlling devices from various manufacturers that perform different functions with a single system enhances the value of home automation systems.

The challenges for consumers are deciding which features meet their expectations and justify the added investment in automation, and how well various products work together under management of a particular hub device or app.

With more than 900 manufacturers marketing about 4,100 connected devices, voice command technology is seen as one way to avoid collections of various remotes that typically wind up cast aside in favor of multifunction control devices.

In fact, smart speaker technology is primarily used to answer questions, check the weather, get news updates or play music. According to a survey conducted in five major industrialized nations, including the United States, 65 percent of those asked cited those functions, while only six percent reported using the technology to control lighting, televisions or other connected devices.

"No one wants a hodge-podge of technologies that can't communicate with each other," said Spencer Sator, President and CEO of Crimson Consulting, adding that the necessary hubs and powered interfaces to connect the devices could actually boost overall energy use. "The technology isn't very smart if devices can't work together."



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Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
13942 Highway 76 • P.O. Box 609
Lindsay, OK 73052
405-756-3104 • 800-259-3504
Outage Number: 855-399-2683
www.recok.coop



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New employee hired

Recently, REC hired Carli Millsap as a Customer Service Representative. Millsap



Carli Millsap

grew up in Lindsay, Oklahoma and graduated from Lindsay High School in 2014.

She has been married to her husband Ryan and they have a six-and-a-half-month-old daughter Blakely.

Millsap enjoys spending time with her daughter and watching Blakely grow and develop. She also enjoys going to car shows with her husband and spending time with her family.

Before Millsap worked at REC, she worked at Advantage Oil Field Service, and the First National Bank in Alex.

“Working at REC is an opportunity for a stable, long-term career and I am excited to learn more about the co-op and meet all the members,” Millsap said.

Electrical Safety Checklist

Nearly half of all home fires occur during winter months. Take a few minutes to identify and correct any potential electrical hazards to ensure the safety of your home.

SWITCHES AND OUTLETS

- **Are any switches or outlets warm to the touch?** YES NO
Warm switches or outlets indicate an unsafe wiring condition.
- **Are any outlets or switches discolored?** YES NO
Discoloration indicates dangerous heat buildup at these connections.
- **Do plugs fit snugly into outlets?** YES NO
Loose-fitting plugs can cause overheating and fires.

CORDS

- **Are any cords cracked, frayed, or damaged?** YES NO
Damaged cords can expose wires, causing shock or fire hazard.
- **Are any cords pinched by furniture or windows, or attached to anything with staples or nails?** YES NO
Pinching and/or stapling cords can damage the insulation, causing shock or fire hazard.
- **Do you use extension cords on a permanent basis?** YES NO
Extension cords should only be used temporarily.

ELECTRIC PANEL

- **Do you have recurring tripping circuit breakers or blown fuses?** YES NO
If yes, this could indicate you're exceeding a safe level of electrical current.
- **Do you have arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs)?** YES NO
AFCIs provide greater fire protection. Check your circuit breaker for the AFCI label.

Please note this is not a comprehensive safety checklist. Visit ESFI.org for more information. Source: ESFI

Frequently Asked Questions of REC

Q: What youth programs does REC have available?

REC sponsors eight eighth graders to win a free trip to Energy Camp in Hinton, Okla., three high school juniors to win a free trip to Youth Tour in Washington D.C.,

A: three high school juniors to win a free trip to Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs Colorado and offers 10 scholarships to high school seniors.

Q: Where can I find more information about REC's youth programs?

REC representatives have dropped off materials to all the schools in our service territory about our youth programs. For more

A: information about Energy Camp, Youth Tour and REC's Scholarships can be found at www.recok.coop under the "Programs & Services" tab or call our office at 800-259-3504 ext. 238.

Q: What are Capital Credits and why am I receiving them?

Capital Credits are margins allocated back to REC members each year based on their kWh usage. Capital Credits are used by REC as working capital for a period of time, then paid back to our members. In years of profit, REC retires Capital Credits. This year REC is retiring Capital Credits for the years of 1986, 1987 and a partial of 1988.

Classified Advertisement

MISCELLANEOUS-

FOR SALE: New 'John Boos', butcher block kitchen island, 42x30 inches. \$300 PH: 405-473-0925.

FOR SALE: 2 plots, side by side, in Sunny

Classified Ads

are **FREE** to REC members to post noncommercial items. Deadline for ads is the 8th of every month.

Call the Member Services Dept. at 405-756-3104 ext. 238.

Look for your

Capital Credits

on your next bill

If you were a member in 1986, 1987 and 1988 your Capital Credits will be applied to your bill.

Account number worth **\$10** bill credit

Locate your account number in an article of this issue; it will be good for a \$10 credit on your electric bill. To claim the prize, you must locate the account number - if the number is yours, contact REC by the 10th of the month and we will credit your account. Only the member assigned that number is eligible for the prize. If you don't know your account number, it can be located on your electric bill.

Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Heading out of town for the holidays? Remember to unplug electronics that draw a phantom energy load. Some gadgets, like TVs, gaming consoles, chargers and DVD players use energy when plugged into an outlet - even when they're not in use.

Learn more at www.energy.gov

Lane Cemetery 4000 SE 29th Del City, Okla. Location is in plot 2 in the Garden of Gethsemane area. Plots are valued at over \$9,000 a piece, will take \$4,500 plus closing cost for both. PH: 405-527-5191 or 405-201-7430.

PETS & LIVESTOCK-

FOR SALE: Full blood male Blue Heeler, 10 Weeks old. PH: 405-808-0949.

REAL ESTATE-

FREE: Older mobile home, south of Sulphur, approximately 14x 80 with 4 axles. To be moved. PH: 405-208-0877.

FOR SALE: 3600 sq. ft. steel building, on 6 acres. Totally outfitted as an event center with septic system, rural water, on REC. Great location on I-35 exit 64 in Garvin County, \$185,000.00. PH: 361-649-1516.



Local Co-op Connection Card Deals

A-U-Store It, Purcell -

\$5 off first month rent

Backroads Boutique, Lindsay -

5% off everything excluding special order and sale items

Best Western, Chickasha -

15% Off Regular Room Rate

Blue Moose Outdoor

Portable Rentals, Elmore City -

5% Off Septic Tank Pumping, Tent Rental and Special Event Toilet Rentals

Chickasha Diesel Services, Chickasha -

\$50 off any big diesel oil change

Edwards Canvas, Pauls Valley - 5% Off

Jenny's Pics Photography, Lindsay -

10% Off \$50 or More Purchase of Pictures

Lindsay Tire and Lube, Lindsay -

\$5 Off Any Full Service Oil Change

M & M Furniture, Chickasha -

10% Off Any Purchase

Mazzio's Italian Eatery, Purcell -

10% Off Purchase

Photos by Ginger, Pauls Valley -

1 Free 8x10 Print With First Order of \$25

4 Seat Saddles, Boots and Hats -

10% Off \$100 or More, or 5% Off Repairs

Western Fuel Co., Maysville -

2 Cents Off Per Gallon of Propane *on a Minimum of 125 Gallons*. Cash Sales Only. (No Other Discounts Allowed)

Pharmacy Discounts -

Check out the discounts available using your Co-op Connections Card at participating pharmacies throughout our area. For a complete list of pharmacies, visit REC's website to see if your pharmacy is offering discounts to Co-op Connections Card holders.

