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Five Ways to Spring into Energy Efficiency

Spring marks a perfect time of year to make your home more energy efficient. Here are five quick tips that will save both energy and money:

1 Seal cracks and gaps around your home. As you put away your storm windows consider adding weather stripping around leaky doors and caulking around window frames. **TogetherWeSave.com**, a website sponsored by Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, the branding program of the nation's not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric co-ops, shows how easy it is to use a caulking gun to seal up leaks around vents, ductwork, and windows. A typical member can save more than \$200 annually by taking this simple step according to **TogetherWeSave.com**.

2 Change filters regularly. Change furnace and air conditioner filters monthly. Dirty filters restrict air flow and reduce the overall efficiency of your heating and cooling system by making it work harder on hot summer days.

3 Clean the refrigerator inside and out. Now's a good time to not only throw out that leftover fruitcake from the holidays but check the temperature

settings on your refrigerator. Ideally, a refrigerator's temperature should be between 37 and 40 degrees for maximum operating efficiency. When it's time to replace that old refrigerator, be sure to buy one that's ENERGY STAR rated. These energy-efficient appliances can save members as much as \$100 a year based on calculations from the **TogetherWeSave.com**.

4 Think sun block. **TogetherWeSave.com** points out that by pulling down the shades on your windows this spring and summer, you could save about \$35 a year. Your local hardware store likely carries lots of inexpensive window coverings. Best of all, by blocking the sun, your house will stay cool and comfortable year-round.

5 Enjoy spring breezes. Use a clothesline during warmer months and let sunlight and breezes dry clothes naturally. This will reduce your electric bill by not running a dryer, and add a genuine clean scent to your family's laundry.

You can learn more about ways to lower your monthly energy bill by visiting **TogetherWeSave.com**.

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2022

Using Debit and Credit cards are easy and convenient for all of us. Unfortunately, the banks charge businesses a processing fee for each transaction. This applies to Pitt and Greene EMC as well. We are charged a processing fee of 2.45% on each transaction. **Beginning January 1, 2022, a fee of 2.45% of your total bill will be charged to offset what the bank charges us.** Example, your bill is \$100.00 for the month. At 2.45%, the fee applied will be \$2.45. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.



Co-op Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
252-753-3128 | 1-800-622-1362 |
252-747-7600

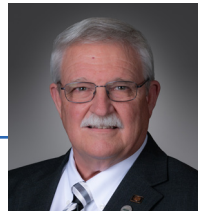
POWER OUTAGES & EMERGENCIES

During weekends, holidays and
after office hours: 252-753-8778

De lunes a viernes de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m.
252-753-3128 | 1-800-622-1362 |
252-747-7600

CORTES DE SUMINISTRO ELÉCTRICO Y EMERGENCIAS:

Durante fines de semana, días festivos
y después del horario de oficina:
252-753-8778



Electric Bills Affected By Weather Patterns

Electric bills vary with the seasons, driven by weather and consumer use patterns.

Weather matters. When it's cool outdoors, family members generally want the house warm. When it's warm outside, air conditioners make living areas pleasant.

How much weather affects your electric bills depends on many factors, including your home's original construction materials, insulation, and air leaks. Personal comfort plays a role too, as does the difference between the thermostat setting inside and temperatures outdoors.

When a house stays at 68 degrees Fahrenheit, but the outdoor temperature varies from being in the 30s in winter to more than 100 degrees on a muggy summer's day, demand for heating and cooling can be significant.

If a home does not have sufficient insulation, cooled air leaving a home essentially wastes the money spent to cool it. The same is true for air a homeowner has paid to warm.

R-value offers a way of measuring insulation's effectiveness (a higher R-value indicates more effective insulation). For example, on a 28-degree day, heat loss from a residence set at 68 degrees could hit 2,464 Btu per hour even through an 8 ft.

x 10 ft. exterior wall packed with R-13 insulation. Reverse that situation on a scorching day—100 degrees outside—and heat gain indoors will still reach 2,464 BTU per hour.

To save money, set your thermostat five degrees closer (higher in summer, lower in winter) to the outdoor tem-

perature, this simple change could result in a savings of 90 watts per hour of electricity, about 197 kilowatt-hours (kWh) in three months.

Keep blinds and drapes on the sunny side of your home closed in summer and open in winter. Find mysteriously "hot" or "cold" spots in the house and solve them by installing gasket seals around outlets and weather stripping along doors and windows, replacing old windows, and upgrading insulation. When practical, adjust landscaping to provide shade for your property in summer and sunlight in winter.

Weather doesn't have to play havoc with electricity bills. There are a variety of tools, appliances, and resources available to solve all sorts of energy challenges. Improvements such as new windows or a roof, require significant financing. But there are a lot of options that are inexpensive and simple enough to do yourself. Find more ways to save at [TogetherWeSave.com](https://www.togetherwesave.com).



Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

LOW TREE ZONE

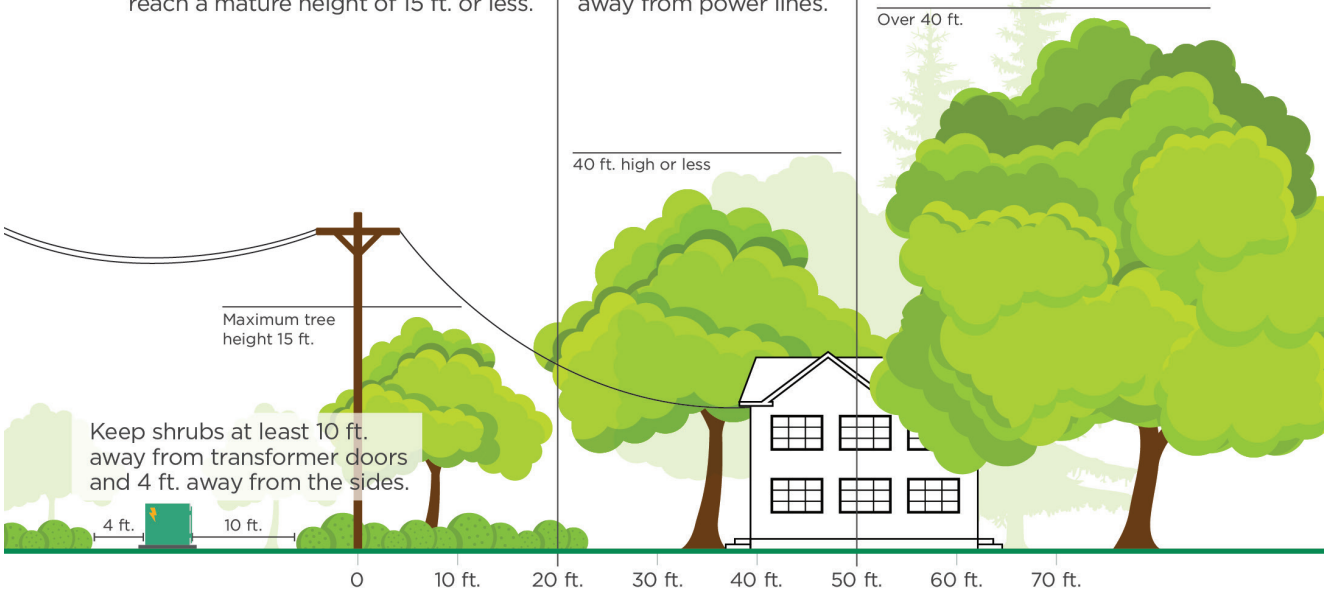
Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.



Energy Efficiency

TIP OF THE MONTH

When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune up for your home's cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush when the pros are busiest.

A qualified professional can check the amount of refrigerant, accuracy of the thermostat, condition of belts and motors and other factors that can impact the efficiency of your system.

Source: Dept. of Energy

The steps to restoring POWER

Hurricanes and ice storms. Tornadoes and blizzards. Electric cooperative members have seen them all. And with such severe weather comes power outages. Restoring power after a major outage is a big job that involves much more than simply throwing a switch or removing a tree from a line.

The main goal is to restore power safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible.

The major cause of outages is damage caused by fallen trees. That's why your electric cooperative has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.

This illustration explains how power typically is restored after a major disaster.

Consumers themselves (not the co-op) are responsible for damage to the service installation on the building. Your co-op can't fix anything beyond this point. Call a licensed electrician.

Step 5. Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.

During a major outage, other cooperatives send line crews to assist with restoring power. These additional crews, as well as communications, equipment and supplies, are coordinated through the cooperatives' statewide organization.

Report an outage to Pkt and Greene EMC at 252.753.3128. Employees or response services use every available phone line to receive your outage reports. Remember that a major outage can affect thousands of other members. Your cooperative appreciates your patience.

Do you or a loved one rely on medical equipment that is supplied by electricity? If so, now is the time to put a backup plan in place in the event you lose power. We will restore power as soon as possible, but depending on the type of damage caused and where the damage may be, we cannot guarantee how long you may be affected by an outage. Don't wait, make your preparations today!

Step 4. The final supply lines, called tap lines, carry power to the utility poles or underground transformers outside houses or other buildings. Line crews fix the remaining outages based on restoring service to the greatest number of consumers.

DANGER!
Stay clear of fallen lines

Step 1. Transmission towers and lines supply power to one or more transmission substations. These lines seldom fail, but they can be damaged by a hurricane, tornado or excessive ice loading. Tens of thousands of people could be served by one high-voltage transmission line, so if there is damage here it gets attention first.

Step 2. A co-op may have several local distribution substations, each serving thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, the local distribution substations are checked first. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected at the substation level, power may be restored to a large number of people.

Step 3. Main distribution supply lines are checked next if the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

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