

Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

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Y-W Electric Association, Inc. is dedicated to providing high-quality, reliable electric service and related products to our members at competitive prices. Our members deserve and shall receive quality service unexcelled in our industry. We are committed to maintaining an environment where the Board of Directors and employees can perform at maximum potential to benefit our Y-W community.

UNPLUG TO BE MORE CONNECTED

BY TRENT LOUTENSOCK, GENERAL MANAGER

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.” Author Anne Lamott cleverly captures the benefits of unplugging in today’s device-driven, multitasking world. Keeping up with work, family and school activities or the latest trends on social media makes most of us feel compelled to constantly check our devices.

Summer is a great time to take a family vacation, but it’s also a good opportunity to unplug from our devices and enjoy the great outdoors with family and friends. Research has shown that we all need downtime after a busy day to recharge — even though we may resist it. Take a moment to slow down and enjoy some peaceful hours away from technology.

While you unplug from your devices, take a look around your home to identify electronics that consume energy even when they are not in use. (This is known as “vampire” energy loss.) Televisions, gaming consoles, phone chargers and computers are some of the biggest culprits.

If your summer plans include a “staycation,” take time to recharge your relationships and be more present with those you love. Stop by the local walking trails in our communities, visit some of our historic areas or head over to one of the fishing holes in your community. Enjoy our beautiful surroundings with your family and friends.

Speaking of spending time outdoors, you can also enjoy energy savings by incorporating LED products and fixtures for outdoor use, such as pathway, step and porch lights. Many include features like automatic daylight shut-off and motion



TRENT LOUTENSOCK

sensors. You can also find solar-powered lighting for outdoor spaces.

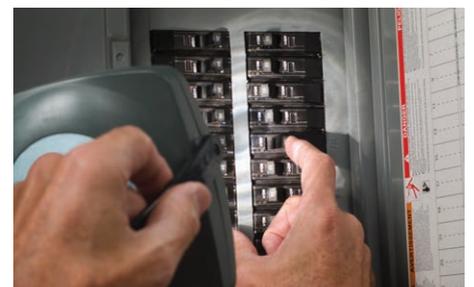
Save energy by keeping warm summer air outside where it belongs. Add caulk or weather stripping to seal air leaks around doors and windows. You can also employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings for your air conditioner a few degrees higher when no one is home.

In our connected world, we forget how to slow down. We multitask and text. We check email, then voicemail, then Facebook. Do yourself and your loved ones a favor: Put down the device and smell the fresh air.

While Y-W Electric Association, Inc., can’t help you recharge your relationships, we can help you save money and energy by connecting you with our energy-saving programs and services. When you do plug back in, we’re just a call or click away. [Darlene Fadenrecht, 890609100]

BLOWING A FUSE

Fuses are rated to protect the wire, not the appliance. If a fuse blows continuously, it should not be replaced with a larger one just to keep it from blowing again — something else is wrong. It needs to be checked.



Power Surges and Ways to Intercept Them

As its name suggests, a power surge is a surge or increase of power. The brief jolts of electrical voltage range from minor to severe and can leave their mark. Major surges can damage or fry your computer or television while minor surges may cause no apparent damage but can take their toll on devices over time.

Electronics and appliances are especially susceptible to a power surge, but spikes in power can also damage outlets or start electrical fires. Although many people associate lightning with power surges, Mother Nature's strike is not the most common culprit.

Other causes can be found at home. Devices that require a lot of power to switch compressors or turn motors on or off — air conditioners, refrigerators and space heaters, for example — call for sudden, brief draws on power. These power demands upset the steady flow of volts in the electrical system.

While the surges caused by these items are far less intense than a lightning strike, they can still cause damage.

Other causes of power surges include faulty wiring and overloaded outlets or circuits.

To protect appliances and electronics, Y-W Electric suggests:

1. Use surge protector strips or devices. Most surge protectors are no match for lightning's wallop, however. During a severe storm, it is best to unplug your computer, televisions and other electronics.
2. For electronics, consider investing in the surge protector's big brother: uninterruptible power supply devices. They work like a surge protector but have battery backup to keep them running during surges, power reductions or brief outages.
3. Have a whole-house surge



- protector installed by a qualified electrician. Typically installed to the electric service box, it offers greater protection for your appliances than individual surge-protecting devices.
4. If you do not have them already, outlets that feature ground fault circuit interrupters should be added. Today's electrical code requires them near a water source for new or remodeled homes. They help prevent electrical shock and fire and they are reset with the push of a button after they are tripped.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. [Mark Sievers, 1140315701]

3-Step HVAC Test

As summer temperatures rise, so do electric bills. Follow these steps to test the efficiency of your HVAC unit.

The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test.

1. Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
2. Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.
3. Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant. If the difference is greater than 20 degrees, your ductwork may need to be inspected for airflow restrictions.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

[David & Abbey Kendall, 2045003513]



June 2019

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Want to light up your outdoor space without increasing your energy use? Try outdoor solar lights. They're easy to install and virtually maintenance free.

Source: energy.gov

Claim Your Credit

Each month, Y-W Electric offers members a chance to earn a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. If you recognize your name and account number in this magazine, call 800-660-2291 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* magazine and pick up the phone. That's all the energy you'll need to claim your energy bucks.

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine. (Check the date on the front cover.)

Consumers claiming a \$20 credit from April 2019 issue:

Ashton J. & Sharon E. Ferguson
Gary M. Vaughn
Raymond & Linda Eskew
Mark & Kristi Dix

Y-W Sends Local Student to Washington, D.C.

Y-W Electric is sponsoring one student from the service territory on an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June. Joseph Barr from Wray High School was selected to represent Y-W Electric on the Washington D.C. Youth Tour. He is visiting the nation's capital with more than 30 students from Colorado and more than 1,900 students from across the country.

On the trip, the students will tour many of the famous sites in Washington, D.C., such as the White House, the Jefferson Memorial, several Smithsonian museums, the World War II Memorial, Mount Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery and the Library of Congress. The group plans to visit with some of Colorado's U.S. senators and representatives, and discuss today's issues. [C. John & Marcelyn Patterson Joint Rev Tr, 531507202]



Billing Corner

Save on Summer Energy Costs

We live in an area where the temperature in the summer can be extremely hot. We don't always associate high energy bills with summer usage. However, keeping cool in the summer can consume a great deal of power.

Following are some tips on lowering your summer energy costs:

INSULATE: Insulating attics and walls, as well as weatherizing doors and windows, is key to preventing conditioned air from escaping your home.

COOL WITH FANS: Using as little energy as a 100-watt bulb, ceiling fans are an easy and energy-efficient way to keep things cool.

PLANT TREES: Summer is the season for home improvements. Plant deciduous (leafy) trees near south- and west-facing windows. They will shade your home during the warm, summer months and when the leaves fall off in the winter, they will allow the sun to heat your home.

REPLACE LIGHTS: Replace incandescent lightbulbs with LED bulbs, which emit less heat, use less energy and cost less to use. LEDs also last longer.

CLOSE THE REFRIGERATOR:

Resist the urge to stand in front of the refrigerator with the door open. The refrigerator is one of the most energy-consuming appliances in the home; less time with the door open means less energy spent keeping your food at a cooler temperature.

TURN UP THE AIR-CONDITIONING:

Keep your thermostat at 78 degrees instead of 73 degrees and save up to 5 percent on your energy bill.

KEEP FILTERS CLEAN: Vacuum or replace refrigerated air filters once a month during the cooling season. Easy airflow means more efficient use of your cooling dollars.

RETHINK THE DISHWASHER: Use the "no heat" option for your drying cycle and run it only when it is fully loaded. A hot dishwasher will warm your home and increase your electricity bill at the same time.

If you have any questions or concerns about your bill, please contact the billing department at 800-660-2291, or if in the Akron area, 970-345-2291. Please have a safe summer.

Prepare Your Home Before Vacation

Your bags are packed and you're ready to leave your humdrum routine for a much-needed vacation. As you pack for your destination, remember your home needs a little prep, too.

Along with the usual tasks, such as having your mail stopped, here are other steps you can take to help deter burglars and even save you a little green:

- Adjust your hot water heater. For a natural gas water heater, turn it to low or vacation mode. For an

electric version, turn it down or off at the circuit breaker panel.

- Set or program your thermostat to a temperature that mimics the outside temperature (about 80 to 85 degrees). This still protects your wood floors and furniture, and saves on energy costs, too. Do not completely turn off your air-conditioning during vacation, however, so the air in your house continues to circulate.

- Unplug small appliances and electronic devices, such as gaming systems and toaster ovens, so they don't draw power. Also do not leave chargers plugged into an outlet. (This tip is important when you're home as well. Do not leave chargers plugged in when they're not in use since they can overheat. Unplug charging devices after electronics are fully charged.)
- Make sure your sump pump is working.

Give potential burglars the impression you're still home:

- If you have a smart home, regulate lights in your home remotely. Turn various lights on and off intermittently or have them timed to do so.
- If you do not have smart lighting, put lights on timers.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to park in your driveway occasionally while you are gone.
- Use motion detectors on outside lights.
- Before you leave, check all windows and doors to make sure they are locked.

Take electrical and plumbing precautions by turning off water valves to the dishwasher, refrigerator, washing machine and all sinks. Or consider shutting off the main water valve, which cuts off water to the house but still allows water supply to an outdoor sprinkler system. Finally, remember to clean out your refrigerator before leaving so you don't come home to moldy leftovers.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. [Paul J. & Joyce L. Davis, 3305002402]

5 EASY WAYS TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR Vacation

- 1. Set or program your thermostat to 85 degrees** while you are away.
- 2. Unplug** small appliances and electronic devices including gaming systems so that they don't draw power.
- 3. Adjust your hot water heater.** For a natural gas water heater, turn it to low. For an electric version turn it off at the circuit breaker.
- 4. Shut** all your curtains and blinds.
- 5. Make sure your sump pump is working.**

SafeElectricity.org