

Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2022



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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.

WORKING WITH LOCAL LEGISLATORS

BY TRENT LOUTENSOCK GENERAL MANAGER



TRENT LOUTENSOCK

“All politics is local.” This observation by the late Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill, Jr., former Speaker of the House of Representatives, means that even national politics have a local impact and people care most about issues that directly affect them. Indirectly, this famous adage underscores the importance and value of local politics.

At Y-W Electric Association, Inc., we think it is critical to develop and cultivate relationships with local legislators because they craft, introduce and vote on legislation that impacts the local business climate, the environment and the quality of life for our community. That’s why we work closely with our local elected officials. After all, our purpose is to provide safe, reliable, affordable energy, but our mission is to enhance our community resilience.

Y-W Electric is a local business that powers economic development and prosperity for our region. As a cooperative, we have deep roots here, and we listen closely to our consumer-members to better understand the needs of the community. Our leadership, board members and employees live and work right here in the community we serve.

We strive to be an advocate for our community, ensuring that local legislators know, understand and act on the issues that are important to our area.

PROVIDING INDUSTRY GUIDANCE AND EXPERTISE

As a practical matter, we recognize that most legislators are “generalists,” yet they vote on a wide range of issues. Their expertise may not include the changing energy industry, which is why Y-W Electric provides guidance and expertise from subject matter experts who have been in the energy industry for many years.

Today’s energy landscape is an increasingly complex topic covering not only the

traditional engineering and vegetation management aspects of the industry, but also technology, cybersecurity, the electrification of the transportation sector and more.

Our experts, often provided through CREA, our statewide trade association, offer briefings and background information to legislators, committees and staff, and we also offer to provide expert testimony for hearings and other legislative or regulatory meetings or gatherings. And because we’re involved in economic development and we know local community leaders, we can provide insight on how issues and policies under discussion might impact our region.

CO-OP AS A CONVENER

In addition, we periodically invite legislators and their staff to the co-op for tours so they can see firsthand how we operate. We also meet with legislators at events organized by CREA and discuss the issues important to us and to you as electric co-op consumer-members.

REPRESENTING YOUR BEST INTERESTS

We strive to be a trusted resource on energy issues. Because of our deep roots in the community, we have a firm understanding of local issues and needs. We will continue looking after the long-term interests of our consumer-members. This means we aim to cultivate and foster positive, productive relationships with legislators who know and trust us, because we’re advocating on behalf of the community we serve.

We’re proud to power your life and bring good things to the community. We hope you’ll let Y-W Electric know how legislative matters will affect you and your livelihood so we can continue to advocate on your behalf and improve the quality of life for all.

DON'T MISS OUT ON COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Available through Y-W Electric for 2022

GET YOUR APPLICATIONS IN PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE TO COMPETE FOR THE FOLLOWING SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Y-W Electric* \$1,000 per year scholarships, renewable up to \$4,000
- Y-W Electric \$1,000 scholarships
- Basin Electric \$1,000 scholarships
- Y-W Electric \$500 scholarships
- Y-W Electric \$500 continuing education scholarship
- Tri-State Generation and Transmission \$500 scholarships
- Y-W Electric \$1,000 line technician training scholarship

* Y-W Electric scholarships are funded by unclaimed capital credits.

TO QUALIFY FOR THESE SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Your parents or guardians must receive electric service from Y-W Electric.
- You must be a graduating student from a local high school or approved homeschool program or be a continuing college student.
- You must maintain full-time resident student status.
- Semesters must be continuous, excluding summer.
- You must provide a copy of your grade transcript to Y-W Electric at the end of each semester to receive renewable



funding for specific scholarships.

- You must maintain minimum GPA requirements.
- Visit ywelectric.coop to start the application process.
- Applications must be delivered to Y-W Electric prior to 5 p.m. on January 28, 2022.
- Applications received after January 28, 2022, WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED, regardless of postmark.

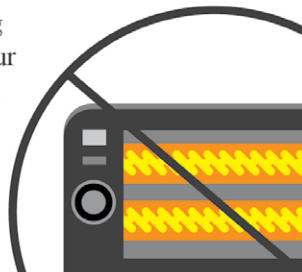
For more information, please see your high school guidance counselor or call Andy Molt at Y-W Electric at 970-345-2291, and he will be happy to answer any questions. [Beth Bortner, 2044004005]



TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.



January 2022

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system. Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Department of Energy

BILLING CORNER

SMART HUB BILL PAY & MORE

For convenience, Y-W Electric Association offers the ability to pay your account with a SmartHub app. This service allows you to pay your bill electronically with a credit or debit card or checking account. This is also a great place to go to get account information. Information on billing history, usage, payment history and past billing invoices are available. There is also a link to sign up for auto payment.

Reporting an outage is also available on SmartHub. This information goes directly to our Operations Department in an email. This leaves our phone lines open for those who do not have SmartHub available.

The app is compatible with iPhones as well as Android devices. Check our website at ywelectric.coop for more information. [Lila M. Harms, 3012004002]

CLAIM YOUR CREDIT

Each month, Y-W Electric offers consumer-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.)



Winners claiming \$20 from the November 2021 issue:

- Johnny E. and Connie J. Moore
- CJ and Wendy Weatherly
- Darlene Fadenrecht
- Amber R. Kessinger
- James L. Hatheway

CAUTIOUS CARE FOR YOUR GENERATOR

Unsafe operation of a backup generator can threaten you, your family, neighbors and the linemen working to restore power. Unsafe installation or operation may also result in a lawsuit and your insurance may not cover your liability. [Chad Young & Christine L Wagers, 2701008516]

EXPEL ENERGY EATERS

According to EnergySavers.gov, heating and cooling account for about 56% of the energy use in a typical U.S. home, making it the largest energy expense for most homes. Tip: Doors and vents of unused rooms can be closed if there is a cold air return in the room; otherwise, closing them off will put inefficient stress on your air-handling system. [Barney and Jessica Filla, 341503501]

feeling chilled?

HEAT YOUR SPACE SAFELY



2



Place on a flat, level surface

1



Keep flammable items at least 3 feet away

3



Make sure the cord is not frayed or cracked

4



Plug it directly into an outlet

6



Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which can overheat

5



Follow all instructions and use models endorsed by a reputable testing lab

7



Do not use around small children or pets

8



Do not use one with a damaged plug or prongs

Safe Electricity.org®

MAKING DOLLARS & SENSE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY

BY PAUL WESSLUND

The term “energy efficiency” can cause confusion. Some see it as a way to a cleaner environment. Others see extra expense and inconvenience.

Sorting out those views gets even more complicated as technology gives us a dizzying array of choices for saving electricity, from smart thermostats to varieties of lightbulbs.

The basic idea of energy efficiency is simple: Use less energy to do the same amount of work, which can save you money on your electric bills.

Here’s where it starts getting confusing. Sometimes you must pay more for something that’s considered energy efficient — it costs more up front but actually saves money in the long run. That may sound illogical at first, but consider the old phrase, “You have to spend money to make money.” It makes sense once you think about it for a minute — most moneymaking projects require an initial investment, whether it’s a factory or a lemonade stand.



According to the U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Star-rated appliances can save you 10% to 50% of the energy required for standard models that don’t receive the Energy Star sticker. Photo Credit: Maytag.

PAY A LITTLE NOW, SAVE A LOT LATER.

From computers to major appliances, manufacturers are increasing the energy efficiency of their products. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Star-rated appliances can save you 10% to 50% of the energy required for standard models that don’t receive the Energy Star sticker. Considering that most major appliances last 10 years, those savings can stack up over time.

Even more savings are in store when you replace older appliances that weren’t built with today’s efficiency standards in mind. Improvements in refrigerators are cutting their energy use in half

about every 15 years. So, if your refrigerator is more than 20 years old, replacing it with a new high-efficiency model could save you \$300 in operating costs over the next five years.

“Smart power strips” also show how spending now on efficiency can make money in the future. Keeping your phone charger and other electronic devices plugged in can consume electricity even after they’re fully charged or not in use. A smart power strip cuts off the electricity once charging is complete. A smart strip costs about \$40 and, depending on your electric rates and how much charging you do, it could save as much as \$40 a year on your electric bills, recovering your initial investment almost right away.

Another example of returns on energy efficiency investments comes from the world of real estate. Realtors will be the first to tell you that energy efficiency sells houses. If you’re in the market to sell, spending a little extra on insulation and efficient appliances increases resale value.

SAVE \$200 PER YEAR ON LIGHTBULBS.

Lightbulbs offer the most dramatic story of efficiency technology improvements. By spending \$5 to \$10 on an LED bulb (compared to about \$1 for an old incandescent), you get a product that uses 75% less electricity and, incidentally, can last 20 years compared to about a year for an incandescent bulb. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the average home could save more than \$200 a year by replacing incandescent bulbs with LEDs.

Maybe the best news of all is that, as efficient products improve and gain popularity, they’re not always more expensive. Many less-expensive appliance models have similar annual operating costs compared with the pricier versions.

Two key tips for turning energy efficiency into dollars are to know what you want from your energy use and to do your homework. Products come with a wide range of features that cost extra and may actually be less efficient — do you want a refrigerator that offers the best efficiency, or do you want to pay more for a less-efficient model that has an ice dispenser in the door?

And ask for help. Your local electric co-op has energy experts who can tell you how to make the best use of electricity. To compare efficiency among appliances, look for the yellow Energy Guide label, which shows information like estimated annual operating costs. Explore the energy.gov website for online calculators and additional resources that can help you turn efficiency data into real savings on your energy bills. [Robert L. Richmond, 131309408]

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.