



## Winter energy-saving tips

Be sure your home is ready for the cold winter days that lie ahead. By implementing the following tips, you can save energy...and money...during this winter season:



- **Set your thermostat to 68 degrees F or lower.** Every degree above 68 degrees adds 3% to 5% more operating costs to your system.
- **Check heating system filters at least monthly and clean or change them as needed.** Dirty filters can increase operating costs significantly and reduce efficiency...*plus Sawnee offers a rebate!*
- **Install a programmable thermostat.** If used wisely, a programmable thermostat can save as much as 10% on annual heating costs.
- **A 1500-watt electric space heater costs approximately \$0.12 per hour of operation** on the 'high' setting, regardless of the size of the space heater.
- **Adjust ceiling fans so they operate in a clockwise motion** to push warm air down into a room.
- **Add insulation to the attic.** Upgrading attic insulation to an R-38 (approximately 17 inches of blown fiberglass), helps to stop heat from escaping through the ceiling.
- **Caulk and weather-strip around doors and windows.** Sealing all cracks and openings to the outside prevents warm air from leaking out of your home.
- **Install inexpensive foam gaskets behind outlet and switch plates** on exterior walls.
- **Make sure fireplace dampers fit tightly** and keep them closed when fireplace is not being used. Add a glass fireplace screen, if possible.
- **If you have a heat pump, choose a thermostat setting you are comfortable with...and leave it there!** Changing the setting more than two degrees can cause heat strips to operate.
- **Insulate and seal knee walls and knee wall doors.** Knee walls are walls with attic space behind them and are typically under insulated.

If you have questions about any of these winter energy-saving tips, contact our Energy Services Department at 770-887-2363, extension 7544 or via email at [marketing@sawnee.com](mailto:marketing@sawnee.com). Don't wait – get started saving energy...and money...today!

## 10 EASY ENERGY TIPS

Here are tips to help you save energy in different areas of your home. Why not get started today!

### KITCHEN

- Set refrigerator temperature to 34-37 degrees.
- Clean refrigerator coils annually.

### WATER HEATING

- Set the water heater temperature no higher than 120 degrees.
- Install low-flow shower heads.

### LAUNDRY

- Wash clothes in cold water. Use hot water only for very dirty loads.
- Clean your dryer's lint trap before each load.

### LIGHTING

- Replace expired bulbs with its equivalent CFL.
- Turn off any unnecessary lighting.

### HEATING AND COOLING

- Set thermostats to 68 in the winter and 78 in the summer.
- When installing air filters, make sure they are facing in the correct direction (look for the directional arrow on side of filter).

## Electricity demand is growing. How will we keep up?

Let's be honest, the need for new electric generation in this nation and in our state has been steadily increasing over the past five (5) years. The existing generation will not, on its own, meet our needs in the future...and we cannot meet all of our future energy needs with conservation efforts alone. They will help, but they are not the solution. This says that we must build new generation of some type and do so very soon. We are often asked what will this new generation cost? That is a moving target. At the same time that an increased need has been developing, the cost to construct this new generation has been going up as well. Why? This is due largely to the rapidly rising cost of the basic construction materials needed to build a new plant (e.g. steel, concrete, copper, labor and others). These are the same things that are going up all around us and the same increases you are seeing in your everyday lives.

Knowing that we need more generation and that it will be more costly than existing resources, we are asked what type of new resources should be deployed? Generation options today are largely limited to nuclear, natural gas, coal and renewables, such as wind and solar. You may be asking yourself, "Why build coal? Isn't it expensive, too...and what about the effects of 'greenhouse gases' for a coal plant?"

The debate concerning climate change has halted most efforts to build new coal plants and much discussion is occurring on this issue. An overall decision will be needed on how to move forward before new facilities take shape and are supported by the various stakeholders.

What about nuclear? Well, there is much concern with new nuclear power facilities as well, and some feel that the cost of new facilities is too great to make it a viable option. The environmental benefits are great and if other resources are not allowed, we will need this as an option.

Now, you may be asking, "What about renewables, such as wind and solar?" Again, the answer is not as simple as a few wind turbines or a solar panel or two. Renewable energy is still facing significant issues, primarily cost and the lack of resources in certain regions. For example, in Georgia the wind doesn't blow at the consistent rate for it to be a reliable option, except for off shore (which has its own unique challenges), and solar is currently just too costly for the average person to afford. So what are our options given all of this uncertainty, limitations and these costs? We feel that all options need to be explored and considered. All available generation types should be considered, cost effective renewable options should be deployed and conservation should be promoted on all levels.

For all Americans to enjoy safe, affordable and reliable electric energy for years to come, far reaching solutions must be developed with a regional presence in mind that will work now and in the future. We would like to ask that you get involved by participating in a national program called "Our Energy, Our Future". This effort seeks to engage our elected officials to focus on these critical energy questions confronting our nation. Please let your voice be heard by visiting [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) today. Also, if you have thoughts or ideas, drop us a line at [marketing@sawnee.com](mailto:marketing@sawnee.com). We would love to know what you think and where you feel this debate should go. No matter what, we are going to see increased cost and, as such, we are committed to keeping it as low as possible while balancing the needs of our members and of our state and our environment.



## Cool off your Christmas tree with LED lights

If you're one of the 33 million Americans who fills your Christmas tree stand with a live tree, you know those tiny, twinkling lights can get hot.

Cool things off this Christmas season by replacing your holiday lights with LEDs (light-emitting diodes). They're cool to the touch, so they don't heat up your tree branches and they save energy.

Decorative LEDs don't just burn cooler, they're more energy efficient than your traditional incandescent holiday bulbs. They also last up to 50,000 hours and feature a nearly unbreakable epoxy plastic coating. Newer versions come in all shapes, sizes and colors.

Although they're more expensive than regular strands, they'll last far longer.



## SAVING ENERGY: Just Do It!

It's as simple as turning off lights when they are not needed or turning off ceiling fans in unused rooms. Need more help? Contact us at (770) 887-2363 or via email at [customerservice@sawnee.com](mailto:customerservice@sawnee.com) for details.

**Just do it today!**

## POP QUIZ

What is the biggest user of electricity in your home during the summer?

- Refrigerator
- Ceiling Fan
- Air Conditioner



The answer is "c" - the air conditioner! Cooling costs account for ~45% of your bill in the summer. Guess what? **The same is true for your heating costs in the winter.** Check that thermostat setting today!

## THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT REBATES

By now you've probably heard that Sawnee EMC offers rebates to its members that promote energy efficiency. Below are some items to note to be sure you can take advantage of these savings.

### REBATE REVIEW

Sawnee offers rebates on attic insulation, CFLs, ventilation, programmable thermostats, air filters and heat pumps. Visit our Web site at [www.sawnee.com/energy](http://www.sawnee.com/energy) for all details and criteria.

### DEADLINES

Energy upgrades must be completed in 2008 and all supporting information should be received no later than December 31, 2008.

### DON'T PUT IT OFF

Sawnee EMC's rebates are subject to change from year to year. There are no assurances that the current rebates will be offered in 2009.

### MORE INFORMATION

Visit our Web site at [www.sawnee.com/energy](http://www.sawnee.com/energy) or contact our Customer Call Center at (770) 887-2363 or email us at [marketing@sawnee.com](mailto:marketing@sawnee.com).



### Our Mission

Sawnee Electric Membership Corporation exists to serve the changing needs of members by enhancing the quality of life by actively supporting community developments and identifying and serving the members' energy needs.

### Quotable Quote

"A positive thinker does not refuse to recognize the negative; he refuses to dwell on it."  
Anna Quindlen

### Contact Us

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## Do you have a heat pump?



Whether you currently have a heat pump or you're thinking about purchasing one, it is important to understand how to properly operate it. Outside temperatures are getting colder and your heat pump may be working harder than it needs to.

Below is an explanation of how a typical heat pump works and other suggested operating tips to consider this winter:

**How does a heat pump work?** In the cooling mode, it operates just like any air conditioner— exactly the same. However, in the heating mode, it is your air conditioning running in reverse. An air conditioner uses a refrigerant to extract heat from the air inside your house, circulating the cooler air back into your home and releasing the heat outside. A heat pump uses the same refrigerant to extract heat from the outside air and pump it inside the home.

**What are the advantages of a heat pump?** Heat pumps use a limited resource – heat taken from the air –

and they are considered by many to be the most efficient way to electrically heat a home. Also, they operate best at a constant temperature. Sawnee EMC recommends 68 degrees in the winter. At this setting you don't have to constantly be worried about changing thermostat settings.

### **What about the disadvantages?**

The most prominent issue with heat pumps is that they do not operate efficiently when the outside temperature is 32 degrees F or lower. This is because there is not enough heat in the outside air to extract. At those times, heat pumps use electric heat strips to generate heat...which can be costly.

If you install a 14 "SEER" or Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio heat pump in 2008, you may be eligible for a rebate from Sawnee EMC. For additional information, contact our Customer Call Center at 770-887-2363 or via email at [marketing@sawnee.com](mailto:marketing@sawnee.com).

## HERE'S WATTS COOKIN'

### Crunchy Pecan Chicken

- 1 cup buttermilk baking mix
- 1/2 cup pecans, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 4 boneless chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup butter, melted



Combine first four (4) ingredients in a medium bowl; stir well. Dip chicken in buttermilk, dredge in pecan mixture. Place chicken in ungreased 13x9x2 inch pan. Drizzle butter over chicken. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 50 minutes or until done.

*Thanks to Carol Loftus. Send us your recipe - if we print it, we'll credit your account \$5.00.*