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MAKE YOUR NEW YEAR A MORE EFFICIENT ONE

It is that time of year again — time to take down the holiday decorations, reflect on the past year, and set goals for the new year. Start this new year on the right foot by resolving to make energy efficient choices with these tips from the Energy Education Council.

When it comes to resolutions, it's important to set a clear and achievable goal to reach by the end of the year. Whether you aim to reduce your energy use by 5 percent, save \$150 over last year, or compete with your neighbor for more efficient energy use—choose a goal that works for you.

Once you've established your goals, it is time to identify where your home is losing energy by contacting a local home energy auditor or conducting an energy audit yourself by making use of an online energy audit tool. Although the latter method is not as thorough as if done by a professional, it can still help you pinpoint some of the easiest fixes and upgrades that can be done.

Once you have concrete objectives, it is time to start making energy efficient choices. Whether you choose a quick fix or a long-term investment, here are a few good starting points.

One of the most inexpensive ways to be more energy efficient is to make use of a power strip or smart strip. Televisions, computers, and even cell phone chargers continue to use electricity even when they are off, but this can be prevented with the flip of a switch if devices are plugged into a power strip.

From a lightbulb to a refrigerator, upgrading outdated and inefficient appliances can help you save as well. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, more than 30 percent of an average home's energy usage comes from lighting and appliances. Make the switch to energy efficient LED light bulbs, or better yet, EnergyStar rated appliances to put a serious dent in your energy use.

Weather proofing your home can reduce your annual energy use by up to 10 percent, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. This can include minor jobs, like installing weather stripping on doors and caulking around windows, or bigger jobs, like sealing air leaks and adding extra insulation in your attic.

Check your furnace filter regularly, and replace it if it is dirty. Why make your furnace work harder than it has to? A clogged filter can slow the flow of air and reduce the efficiency and life of your furnace.

And don't forget little steps like making sure furniture isn't blocking your heat registers, or opening curtains on south facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and closing them at night to reduce the chill.

For more information on how to reach your energy efficiency goals, visit EnergyEdCouncil.org.

CWEC will be continuing their Energy Conservation programs in 2017. These programs not only promote energy conservation and efficiency, which saves you money on your energy bill as you lower your energy consumption, they also provide you with an opportunity to get money back on qualified energy efficient products purchased in 2017 through the rebate program. You can find out more details regarding this program on the cooperatives website at www.cwecoop.com.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS

All electric space heaters are 100 percent efficient, regardless of the manufacturer's name, and watt for watt, they all provide the same heat output and cost the same to operate. For example, a 1,500-watt milk house electric space heater produces the same amount of heat as a 1,500-watt household quartz or infrared electric space heater.



If you're planning to purchase an electric space heater, it's important to know how many watts the space heater draws. The higher the watts, the more heat it will deliver and the more it will cost to operate. Most portable heaters do not exceed 1,500 watts because a higher wattage would overload a typical 15-amp outlet and likely trip a breaker or blow a fuse.

Know the size of your room you plan to heat with your electric space heater. A 1,500-watt heater, which can heat a room that's about 150 square feet, delivers approximately 5,120 BTUs/ hour. BTU, a British Thermal Unit, is a unit of measure for the output of heating and cooling systems. Typical residential furnaces (whole house) range from 45,000 to 120,000 BTUs/hour. It would be impossible to heat your whole house with one electric space heater. We do not recommend the use of multiple electric space heaters as they will increase your electric bill.

Scholarship Winners' Grades Needed

Here is a reminder to all 2016 Operation Roundup scholarship winners to submit a copy of your grades and proof of enrollment for second semester to the co-op. Please mail grades to Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative, Attn. Mark Forseth, PO Box 100, Rosholt, WI 54473 or electronically to mark.forseth@cwecoop.com.



Best Wishes in the New Year
from your friends and neighbors at
Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative

Prevent Costly Water Leak Damages

A water leak can cause thousands of dollars in damage. The Honeywell Lyric Water Leak and Freeze Detector can notify you of a water leak while it's measured in drops. It can also detect temperatures that can freeze pipes, and humidity that could damage valuables. Using your home's Wi-Fi network and a simple to use smart phone app the Lyric can alert you or your family/friends, wherever you are. The Lyric also uses an audible in-home alert, which allows it to be used without the internet. Available at our office for \$75.

Thank You to All!

Once again, CWEC members went above and beyond, with our Toys for Tots drive. CWEC worked with the Toys for Tots Foundation, local businesses and organizations, and many generous community members in our service area to help make almost 700 kids Christmas a little brighter this year. We helped children in the Bowler, Wittenberg, Birnamwood, Rosholt, Iola, Scandinavia, Manawa, Waupaca, Marion, Clintonville, Hatley, New London, Amherst, and Tigerton areas.



A big thank you goes out to all who donated and the businesses who volunteered to be drop sites for toy collection.

Energy Efficiency Rebates Available

Did you know your cooperative offers rebates for energy efficiency upgrades? If not, we're pleased to inform you we offer rebates for all sorts of upgrades including Energy Star appliance purchases, insulation, new windows, heat pumps, alternative water heaters, LED lighting and much more. For a detailed listing please visit www.cwecoop.com or give us a call.

Electric Line

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President & CEO.....Mike Wade
Editor.....Brenda Mazemke

If you have questions or comments please contact us at 1-800-377-2932.

Email: brenda.mazemke@cwecoop.com

10401 Lystul Road
PO Box 100
Rosholt, WI 54473

