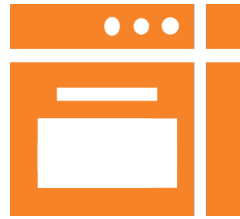


## Unwrap energy savings this holiday season

**T**he holidays are upon us. It's the time of year when we look forward to family traditions and making memories with good friends. But, it can also mean increased use of electricity with cooler temperatures, holiday lighting, hosting guests and cooking special meals. As you find yourself wrapped up in the holiday excitement, energy efficiency may not top your list of priorities. However, implementing a few of these simple measures can help you unwrap savings this season.



**Keep the oven door closed**  
Each time you open the oven door to check on that dish, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees. If you're using a ceramic or glass dish, you can typically set your oven 25 degrees lower than stated, since they hold more heat than metal pans.



**Make smart upgrades**  
If new appliances are part of your Christmas gift plan, make sure they are Energy Star rated. They will save you a lot of power because the standby mode is lower and the device will use less energy overall.



**Choose smarter light bulbs**  
Decorate for the holidays efficiently with strands of light-emitting diodes (LEDs). Using LED holiday lights for 12 hours a day cuts seasonal lighting costs by 90 percent when compared to traditional incandescent holiday lights. They can last up to 10 times longer as well.

**Utilize small appliances**  
Use a slow cooker, turkey roaster, microwave, toaster oven or warming plate. This will result in substantial energy savings.



**Unplug appliances**  
When you are not using an appliance or an electronic, unplug it to prevent "vampire" energy waste. Power strips are a good investment for your home.

**Use a programmable thermostat**  
Set the thermostat no higher than 68 degrees and lower the temperature when you go to bed or leave home. Programmable thermostats can reduce heating bills by 10 percent with the ability to turn temperatures down 10 to 15 degrees for 8 hours a day.

*Continued on Page 2*

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**Editor** - Laura Araujo

VVEC offices will be closed Friday, December 23, Monday, December 26 and Monday, January 2. Please call 918-371-2584 or 800-870-5948 if you need to report an outage.

**Winter Residential Rates**

October through March usage,  
November through April billing

Customer Charge       \$30.00

Energy Charge   \$.07772/kWh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 59.87 mills per kWh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2 percent of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes if applicable.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

*Continued from Page 1*

**Take advantage of sunlight**

Open your curtains during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.

**Install a storm door**

A storm door and storm windows provide another barrier between indoors and outdoors, especially when cold winter winds are blowing.

**Add insulation**

Heat loss through the ceiling and walls in your home could be very large if insulation levels are less than the recommended minimum. Given today's energy prices—and future prices that will probably be higher—your insulation might be inadequate, especially if you have an older home.

“ Electric bills can **increase** during the **winter** for a variety of reasons—holiday gatherings, houseguests, and shorter days and longer nights.

**Small measures**, like turning down your thermostat, replacing incandescent bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can **help control energy costs**. ”

*Source: cooperative.com*

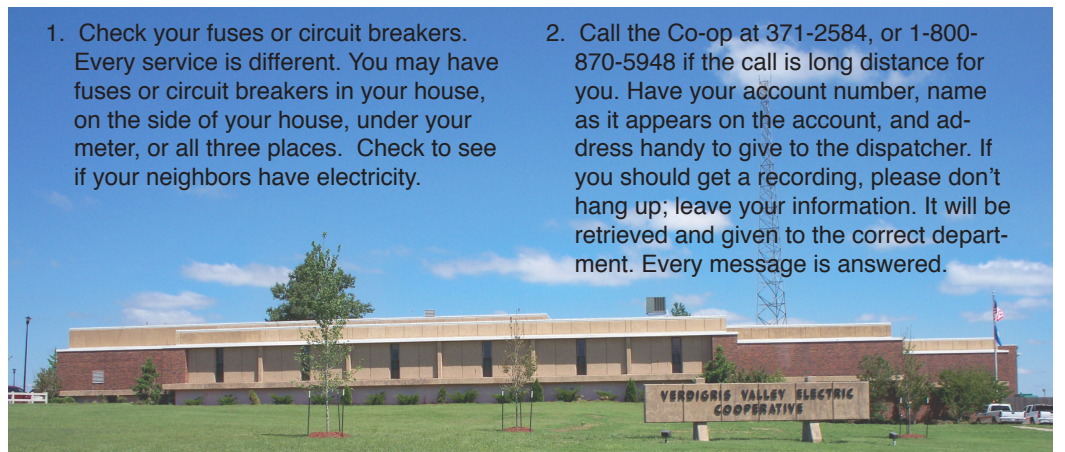
**Find and seal air leaks**

Check areas near pipes, gaps around chimneys, cracks near doors and windows and any unfinished places. Add caulk or weather stripping where needed.

*Energy savings information courtesy of NRECA's Straight Talk.*

**What to do if your power goes off**

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
2. Call the Co-op at 371-2584, or 1-800-870-5948 if the call is long distance for you. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, please don't hang up; leave your information. It will be retrieved and given to the correct department. Every message is answered.



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## Trustees retain board positions



VVEC board trustees, from left, Chuck Huerter (District 7), Ken Howard (District 8) and Buddy McCarty (District 9). All three trustees will retain their positions since no quorum was reached during October's District Meetings.

### Efficient water heating

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, water heating accounts for up to 20 percent of the total utility expense for many U.S. households. Insulating your water heater and wrapping pipes connected to it will save you money on your electric bill.

Purchase a pre-cut jacket or blanket (available for \$20) and you could reduce standby heat loss by 25 to 45 percent and save 4 to 9 percent in water heating costs.

Lowering the water heater temperature from 130 to 120 degrees can save about \$75 annually; or, put your water heater on a timer and set it to turn on 45 minutes before you need to use it each morning and evening. Before going on vacation for more than 4 days, turn the water heater to vacation mode.

### How to insulate an electric water heater

#### MATERIALS

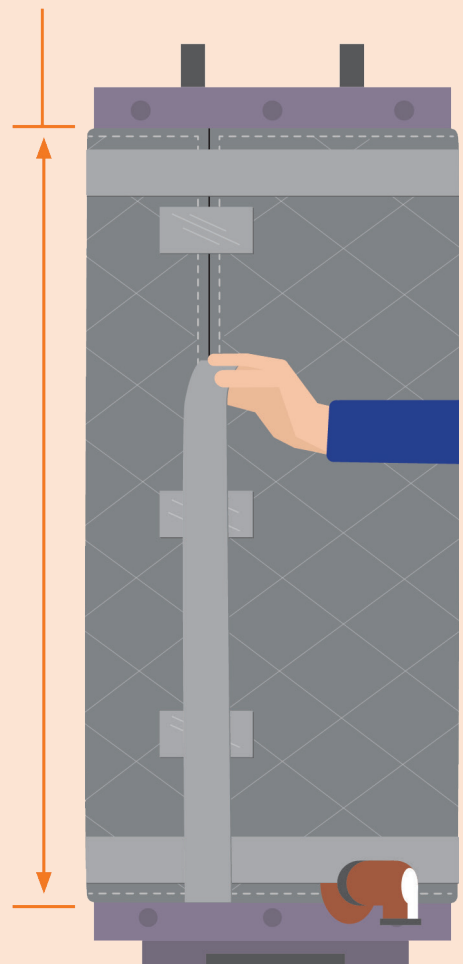
Water heater blanket  
Scissors  
Duct tape

#### STEPS

1. Turn off the electric water heater at the breaker panel.
2. Measure the height of the water heater and cut the blanket to fit if necessary.
3. Leave the top of the water heater open.
4. Wrap the blanket around the water heater and temporarily tape it in place. Position the blanket so the ends do not come together over the access panels on the side of the tank.
5. Mark the areas, then cut holes where controls are located. For electric water heaters, there will be two panels on the side of the tank. Mark the area where the pressure relief valve and pipe are located. This will be a pipe that protrudes from the side of the water heater.
6. Adhere the blanket. Be careful to line up the cut out areas and then tape it permanently in place.
7. Turn the water heater back on.

**Safety note:** Don't set the thermostat above 130°F on the electric water heater with an insulating blanket or jacket; the wiring may overheat.

Cover the whole tank except temperature and pressure (T&P) valve and drain.



Source: NRECA's Straight Talk

## Holiday savings with your Co-op Connections Card

This holiday season, don't forget to take advantage of the great deals available by using your Co-op Connections Card. Visit [www.vvec.com](http://www.vvec.com) or [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop) for a full list of businesses. A few of the merchants are listed here.

Accurate Automotive in Bartlesville: 10 percent off labor with \$50 maximum discount. 918-331-0211.

Chelsea Flowers and Gifts in Chelsea: 10 percent off all purchases. 918-789-3446.

David's Electrical Service in Owasso: 10 percent off all service calls. 918-371-6537.

Gail's Hairstyling and Spa

in Bartlesville: 10 percent off services; 15 percent off hair/skincare retail products. 918-333-5200.

Peters-Stumpff Funeral Home in Skiatook: 10 percent off the purchase of a new monument and 10 percent off a new prepaid funeral arrangement agreement. 918-396-1111.

Super 8 Motel in Claremore: 10 percent off standard rate. 918-341-2323.

The Mens

Shop in Claremore: 20 percent off entire purchases at regular price of in-stock merchandise. 918-341-6433.

Thomas Kwik Kar in Owasso: 10 percent off any service. 918-798-8333.



## RECIPE

### Christmas Morning Pie

*Yields 2 pies*

- 2 9-inch, unbaked pie shells
- 1 pound pork sausage, cooked and drained
- 1 cup shredded swiss cheese
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 6 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/3 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 teaspoon black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Divide the cooked sausage and

cheese in half between the two pie shells. In a medium bowl, mix together the remaining ingredients. Pour half of the egg mixture into each of the two pie shells. Bake for 55 to 60 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow pies to stand for 5 minutes before serving.



Christmas Morning Pie. Photo courtesy [graphicstock.com](http://graphicstock.com)