

Looking Back and Gazing Ahead

Approaching the year's end affords a good opportunity to reflect on the events of the past 12 months and to look forward to the next 12.

The economic turmoil in the United States and the world is at the top of the list when many of us think about 2009. The struggling economy has certainly had an effect on all of us, but not all of those effects have been negative.



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For example, the drop in demand for fuels due to manufacturing slowdowns has led to lower and more stable natural gas prices. This is important to electricity users in Texas because the majority of the state's electric supply is generated with natural gas.

In addition, prices for other goods vital to transmitting electricity, which had been undergoing big jumps in cost in recent years, leveled off in 2009. We certainly hope that 2010 is a better year for everyone economically and that prices remain stable.

Speaking of prices, one big topic for co-ops and electricity consumers in 2009 was the energy legislation making its way through Congress. When the Waxman-Markey energy bill is enacted—and co-ops nationwide recognize that, in some form, it will be—it will make our current system of

electricity generation more expensive. How much more expensive remains an open question.

Electric co-ops in Texas and nationwide have been at the forefront of the effort to see that the price of electricity remains affordable for everyone. Through the grassroots "Our Energy, Our Future™" campaign, members like you have been able to communicate your concerns to your elected representatives.

And the campaign has been effective in modifying some proposals that could have led to steeply higher rates. But your attention and your voices are still needed.

In the coming year, we need you to stay informed and stay active. Visit www.ourenergy.coop and keep reading the pages of this magazine for information about the future of

electricity. Call your representatives and write them letters to remind them not to forget you or dismiss your concerns. Stay involved: Your participation really does matter.

And your participation is appreciated. I'd like to not only thank those who did take the time to reach out through Our Energy, Our Future, but also each and every one of the 8,932 members of Comanche Electric Cooperative. Without you, our co-op would not exist.

Finally, I'd like to thank the employees of Comanche Electric who helped our co-op have a successful 2009. I know these men and women will continue to work hard to keep the lights on and give you the best possible service at the lowest possible price.

Here's to a happy, healthy and prosperous 2010 for us all!

For Happy Holidays, Follow Safety Tips

Keep electrical safety in mind when decorating for the holiday season:

- Before decorating, read and follow the manufacturer's instructions concerning installation and maintenance of all decorative electrical products.
- Indoors and out, use lights and other electrical decorations certified by a recognized independent testing laboratory such as CSA, UL or ETL.
- Outdoors, use lights and other electrical decorations certified for outdoor use.
- Carefully inspect each decoration before plugging it into an outlet. Cracked, frayed, loose or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious electric shock or start a fire. Replace damaged items.
- Always unplug decorations before replacing lightbulbs or fuses.
- Don't mount or support light strings in any way that might damage the cord's insulation. Never nail or staple light strings or extension cords.
- Do not connect more than three light string sets together. Light strings with screw-in bulbs should have no more than 50 bulbs connected together.
- Don't overload extension cords—they can overheat and start a fire.
- Keep all outdoor extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water and well protected from weather.
- Don't decorate near power lines. Contact with a high-voltage line could lead to electrocution.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree.
- Don't allow children or pets to play with electrical decorations.
- Turn off all electrical decorations before leaving home or going to bed.
- Plug outdoor lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable GFCIs can be purchased wherever electrical supplies are sold.

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE AT WWW.CECA.COOP

AT COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Conservation Matters

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



How Is Your Home's 'Physical Fitness'?

The “physical fitness” of your home can make the difference between soaring energy bills or comfortable savings this winter.

An energy-efficient home is a strong defense against winter winds, rain, sleet, snow and chill while also protecting the environment by cutting wasteful energy use. A home “energy diet” benefits your pocketbook and the planet, notes the Alliance to Save Energy, which offers consumers step-by-step home physical fitness tips to cut energy bills and increase comfort:

Plug Energy Leaks

- Plug air leaks with sealant, caulking and weatherstripping to increase your comfort, make your home quieter and cleaner and reduce your cooling and heating costs.

- “Insulate” yourself from price shocks. Appropriate insulation can increase your comfort and reduce your heating costs up to 30 percent. Start with attic insulation, followed by exterior and basement walls, floors and crawl spaces. Insulate and seal attic air ducts.

- Go “window shopping” at www.efficientwindows.org to discover how high-performance Energy Star-labeled windows can cut heating and cooling costs by as much as 30 percent while increasing indoor comfort and keeping your home furnishings from fading.

- Refinancing your home or obtaining a home equity loan to remodel? The big news is home decorating and remodeling. Consider wrapping in energy-efficiency home improvements to your refinancing package. Interest could be tax-deductible, and you could reduce your monthly energy bills comfortably.

Use Heating Wisely

- Consider replacing a faulty or inefficient HVAC system with a unit that has earned Energy Star certification. Installed correctly, these high-efficiency heating and cooling units



Let a programmable thermostat help you save energy.

can reduce heating and cooling costs by up to 20 percent.

- Let a programmable thermostat “remember for you” to automatically coordinate the indoor climate with your daily and weekend patterns. This reduces heating costs by some 10 percent when you’re home and saves energy when you’re not.

- Open curtains and other window treatments during the day to allow sunlight to natu-

rally heat your home; close them at night.

Look for the Energy Star label, the symbol for energy efficiency, when replacing your heating and cooling systems —as well as appliances, lighting, windows, insulation and home electronics. Find retailers near you at www.energy star.gov.

Lighten Up Efficiently

- Popular halogen torchiere lamps are relatively inexpensive to purchase but are expensive to operate and can cause fires. Consider safer, more efficient Energy Star torchiere lamps instead.

- Don’t like coming home to a dark house on short winter days? Instead of leaving lights on, put timers on a few of the lights in your home, or install motion detectors and daylight sensors. Motion detectors on exterior floodlights improve your home security at a lower operating cost.

- Replacing four 75-watt incandescent lightbulbs with 23-watt compact fluorescent lightbulbs that use two-thirds less energy and last up to 10 times longer saves \$190 over the life of the bulbs. If all our nation’s households did the same, we’d save as much energy as is consumed by some 38 million cars in one year.

- Turn off everything not in use: lights, TVs, computers.

The Alliance to Save Energy is a coalition of business, government, environmental and consumer leaders who promote the efficient and clean use of energy.

We've Got the
PERFECT GIFT!



Have you ever spent hours searching for that perfect gift, only to feel as if you have failed in your mission? Well, look no further! Comanche Electric Cooperative has taken one giant step toward making your Christmas shopping easier!

We may have different tastes, needs and sizes, but we all have electricity bills. So what better gift for that hard-to-shop-for person than a gift of electricity? It's the perfect gift for a parent, grandparent, best friend or babysitter.

Give us a call at 1-800-915-2533 or stop by any of our offices if you have questions or to make a purchase.

Well Pump Problems: A Hidden Energy Waster

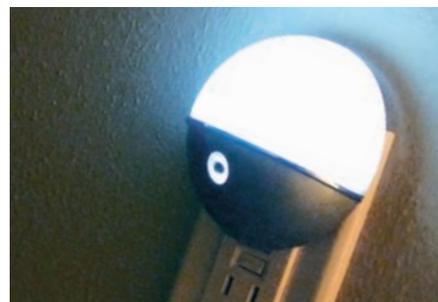
A leaky faucet or toilet can be more expensive in a house that gets water from a well instead of a utility company. That's because a leak can cause the well pump to run more than it needs to, wasting energy with every drip.

Repairing leaks isn't the only way to keep your pump in top shape. Regular maintenance not only can help your pump operate more efficiently, but it can also help extend the life of the equipment. A service technician should inspect your pump to see if it has fallen victim to either of these two major energy wasters:

- A waterlogged pressure tank. If this problem exists, the pressure sensor inside the tank becomes overactive, causing the pump to start and stop continuously. Because the pump uses the most energy when it's starting up, such unnecessary cycling can put a drain on your energy bill.
- The pump is oversized for your needs. Many homes have 3- to 4-horsepower pumps, when they really need only 1- to 2-horsepower pumps. A properly sized pump can save about 100 kilowatt-hours of electricity a year.

Take Comfort in Night Light Safety

With fewer hours of daylight in the winter, parents and caregivers often turn to lamps and night lights to help small children become accustomed to the dark. A number of lamps and night lights manufactured and sold today with cartoon-like designs may have a toy-like appearance and are attractive to children.



The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) warns parents and caregivers that such lights can pose safety hazards when not used properly and recommends these safety tips:

- Only parents and other caregivers should operate electrical lamps and other equipment. Small children should never be allowed to operate portable lamps or night lights.
- Don't allow children to plug in or unplug night lights or lamps. Instead, remind children to ask an adult for help.
- Parents should check to make sure the proper wattage lightbulb is being used.
- Handle night lights carefully to ensure that the plug prongs are fully inserted into the outlet. Use caution when handling night lights and avoid twisting or using pressure, which can cause components to break off and expose wiring. This can result in risks of electrical shock and burns.
- Make sure that new night lights or lamps have a safety certification mark, such as CSA, UL or ETL.

To avoid disaster, children need to be aware of improper uses of electric items and the consequences of unsafe behavior. Practicing safe electrical habits early in life will be valuable throughout adulthood.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

from

**COMANCHE
ELECTRIC CO-OP**

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George Campbell
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Brenda Carroll
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Jennifer Hanson
Craig Hardy
Larry Hatley
Billy Henry
Josh Honea
Julia Hunter
Nancy Isham
Larry Jacobs
Mary Johnson
Kendall Keith

*Our offices will be closed Thursday
and Friday, December 24 and 25, so
our employees may enjoy the Christmas
holiday with their families.*

*Cooperative staff will remain on call
to respond to outages.*

**WE WISH YOU A BLESSED AND
JOYOUS CHRISTMAS SEASON.**

Alan Lesley
Jim Lester
Ro Lopez
Pam McClain
Larry Morgan
Doc Murphree
Chad Newman
Lewie Newman
Dale Ogle
Rose Ojeda
Tim Pallette
Tommy Patterson
Bobby Reed
Justin Riley
Scott Rutledge
Labin Scott
Kay Slavens
Ruby Solomon
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Shane Tucker
William Works

