

Energy Partners

A monthly look at the happenings of and related to:



New-Mac Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 
The power of human connections

Bitter temps remind us to be prepared

This past month New-Mac customers experienced one of the coldest weeks in several years, which serves as a reminder that there's no telling what the weather will bring. While we experienced snow, at least there wasn't significant ice. Again, though, who knows what still awaits us this winter?

While we can't predict the weather, something everyone can do is be prepared if extreme storms do indeed come.

By planning ahead, the hardships of destructive storms can be alleviated. New-Mac encourages customers to keep the following items on hand, and be prepared:

- Flashlight (with extra batteries) and candles.
- Battery-powered radio.
- Bottled water and non-perishable food items.
- Manual can opener.
- Extra medicine and baby items.
- First-aid supplies.
- Back-up heating source – NEVER use a charcoal grill to cook or heat inside!
- Fire extinguisher and smoke detector.

New-Mac also reminds everyone to never approach downed power lines as they may be energized.

In the event of outages, New-Mac customers should have their location number ready and call 451-1515 or 800-322-3849.

Don't assume that someone else has already called for your area.

During extended outages, customers can get updates on the progression of restoration efforts by checking our website, www.newmac.com, or through the local media: TV stations (KSNF-16, KODE-12, KOAM-7, Fox-14), radio stations (KBTN AM-1420 and FM-99.7, KMXL 95.1 FM, KNEO 91.7 FM, KZRG 1310 AM, 1230 AM The Talker, Big Dog 97.9 FM, KSYN 92.5 FM, Lite Rock 93.9 FM, KIX 102.5) and newspapers (*Neosho Daily News*, *Joplin Globe*, *McDonald County News Gazette*, *Seneca News Dispatch*).



Above, despite the bitter cold, it was business as usual for New-Mac linemen. At left, New-Mac's digital sign displays one of the warmer temperatures during the second weekend of January, which saw early morning temps below zero and wind chills around -20.



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New-Mac Electric Cooperative

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Energy Partners is a monthly publication of New-Mac Electric for the purpose of informing members of the programs, services and happenings of, and related to, the cooperative.

Co-op set to attend trade shows

New-Mac Electric will be hitting the road and making its usual stops at three local trade shows in the weeks ahead.

Come by and visit with us and see how you can be more energy efficient around your house.

First, we'll be at the Home Builders Association of Southwest Missouri's 22nd Annual Home Show, to be held Feb. 26-28 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Joplin.

The show times are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 1-5 p.m. Sunday.

Next, New-Mac will be at Neosho's 18th Annual Business & Industry Review, scheduled for March 12-13 at the Neosho High School cafeteria & junior-high gym.

The B&I Review will run from 5-8 p.m. on Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Finally, we will be in Anderson for the 4th Annual McDonald County Business Expo, scheduled for March 27 at McDonald County High School.

This Saturday only event will run 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

So, be sure and see us at these events. You might even come away with a souvenir.

Affordable electricity our goal in 2010

It may be a new year, but the goal at all of Missouri's electric cooperatives will remain the same in 2010: to keep electricity affordable and reliable for our members. For every employee who works for a Missouri electric cooperative, that thought will be the foundation for all they do in the coming year.

Across the state, electric co-ops are focusing on ways members can use electricity more efficiently. Through rebates for energy efficient appliances or simply information on how to lead an energy-efficient lifestyle, electric cooperatives are working hard to help members through these trying times. As a result, even though rates may have increased, many members are seeing their monthly bills reduced.

If you haven't yet checked with your electric cooperative about its programs to save energy, give them a call or go by the office and ask what is available to help you save.

In Jefferson City, the state legislature will go back to work this month considering hundreds of bills. If this year is like others, the legislative session will require our constant vigilance on your behalf because any of these bills could have a major impact on your electric bill, intentionally or not. Our state legislators want to work with us on these issues because they know the cooperative way of business means we put your interests first and share their goal of putting people first.

One issue we will certainly be following involves a Department of Revenue interpretation of a Missouri Supreme Court case that could lead to the state forcing your electric cooperative to pay sales taxes on electricity sold to previously tax-exempt organizations. One early estimate shows this issue alone could cost electric co-ops 20 per-

cent of their normal margins, which is the money that is returned to you in the form of capital credits. We are already working with other business groups, legislators and statewide elected officials to assess the impacts of the decision and recommend legislative changes, if needed, to make sure the sales taxes don't impact Missouri consumers.

On the national legislative front, we will continue to focus on the climate change debate. This issue has the potential to cause the most damage to your wallets.

A lot of effort has been put into this debate in the two years it has been on the front burner in Congress. And the goal behind this monumental effort has been the same as for the other issues — to protect the price you pay for electricity and to ensure you have the reliable electric service you demand on a monthly basis at your home or business.

Closer to home, representatives from all of Missouri's electric cooperatives recently took part in a long but important meeting with officials from FEMA, the federal agency charged with helping communities recover from natural disasters. This meeting helped your cooperative's leaders understand the new procedures they must follow to be eligible for FEMA funding should another devastating storm hit our state.

This wasn't the only meeting we've hosted on this topic. Any time there is a disaster we wait for the crisis to be over, then gather all of those involved to search for ways to improve our response with a goal of getting the power back on as efficiently and economically as possible.

I'll leave you with why it's so important for all Missourians to fill out the census forms when they arrive in early 2010. If Missouri's population goes

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By Barry Hart
*Executive Vice President
of the Association of
Missouri Electric
Cooperatives*

Standby generators must be set up & ran correctly

A standby generator can be helpful during an extended power outage, but proper installation and operation is critical!

Generators come in a variety of sizes. They can range from 500 watts up to several megawatts of output, and run on gasoline, diesel, propane or natural gas. The size of generator needed can be determined by totaling the wattage of the lights, appliances, devices, etc., and then add about 20 percent

for the increased start-up power requirements.

Improper installation of a generator puts people, including electrical linemen, at great risk. A whole-house generator — one that is tied directly into your wiring — must have a double-throw transfer switch installed at your breaker panel by a qualified electrician. Without the switch, a generator can backfeed 240 volts to the transformer, where it is then stepped up to

7,200 volts and sent down the lines, creating a life-threatening situation for the linemen trying to restore your power.

The double-throw switch makes it impossible to have both the generator and the power supplier service connected at the same time. It opens one to close the other.

Another reason for having a qualified electrician hook up your generator is for the protec-

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Don't neglect your filters

Changing a filter might be the simplest of maintenance tasks, but if you want to keep your heat pump or furnace running, it may be the most important.

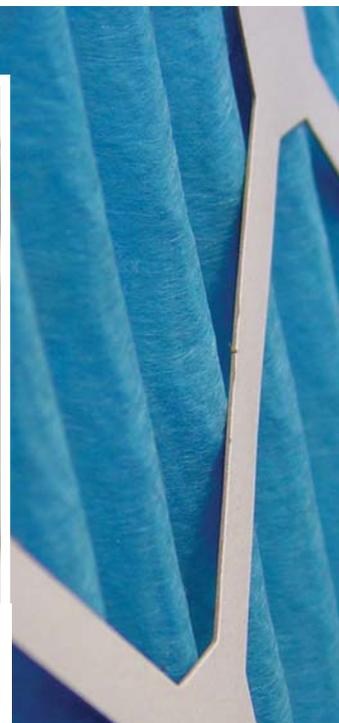
If you find your heating unit struggling to keep up this winter, the first thing to check would be your filter(s). When a filter becomes clogged it reduces your unit's efficiency by making it work harder to move the air in your house. Even worse, if it is not getting adequate air due to an extremely clogged filter, your unit could become irreparably damaged due to overheating.

You should check your filter every month, especially during seasons of heavy use. Some filters are designed to last as long as three months but should still be checked regularly, especially in farm homes or busy households with lots of coming and going.

Many times costly service calls to repair heating units could have been prevented simply by regularly checking filters. So remember, keep your unit running, and running efficiently by changing your filter.



A dirty filter, such as the one pictured above, can lead to a considerable loss in energy efficiency or much worse.



What are capital credits?

Capital credits are one of the many benefits of being a member of an electric cooperative, however sometimes they can cause some confusion.

Every year, New-Mac Electric sends each of its members a card informing them of their capital-credit amount for the past year.

So, what does it mean if I've gained capital credits?

Capital credits are your share of the operating margins realized by your cooperative each year. These margins are equally allocated to all participating consumers based upon total dollar billing.

These margins (payments in excess of expenses) become patronage capital and are used by your cooperative for operating capital, necessary reserves, storm damage, and other contingencies. Patronage capital is

paid back to the members as the financial condition of the cooperative permits and the by-law provisions are met.

Patronage capital credits are returned in the same order in which they were earned; that is, the capital first paid in will be the first refunded.

Should you cease to purchase energy from the cooperative and change your present address, you should notify the cooperative of address changes so that when future payments are issued they can be forwarded to the proper address.

At New-Mac's most recent annual meeting, this past October, the cooperative returned capital credits to its members for the 12th consecutive year. Those not attending the meeting received their capital-credit checks in the mail.

○ Generators

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tion of everything you plan to have powered by it. Improperly connecting to the generator could damage all of your appliances, electronics, etc.

When weather threatens, generators can provide peace-of-mind, but they must be installed correctly. Please also consider the following safety tips involving generators:

- Follow the instructions included with your generator.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Never overload the generator.
- Never add fuel while it is running.
- Never use a generator indoors.
- Always keep a fully-charged class ABC fire extinguisher nearby.
- Turn off all appliances powered by your generator before shutting it down.

Energy Partners' Recipe of the Month:

EASIER CHERRY PIE

Submitted by New-Mac member: **Audra Elliott**

2 pkg. (4 servings) instant vanilla pudding & pie filling
 2¼ cups milk
 1 8 oz. tub whipped topping
 1 box of honey graham crackers
 1 GV can cherry pie filling

In large bowl with rotary hand beaters, mix dry pudding mix with milk. Let set 5 min. Then blend in whipped topping. In 8-inch square pan line bottom with graham crackers and layer half of pudding mixture, layer graham crackers, remaining pudding mixture, another layer of graham crackers and top with cherry pie filling. Chill and enjoy.

Send your recipe, along with your name and customer number, to: Recipes, c/o New-Mac Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 310, Neosho, MO 64850; or recipes@new-mac.com. If your recipe is selected, New-Mac will apply a \$15 credit to your bill.

‘Why I do what I do’

“You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink it.” That’s an old saying that well fits my occupation. And speaking of occupations, I’m often asked how I make a living. My response is that I teach folks how to have lower utility bills and a more comfortable house. If my wife is with me, she often says to the person asking the question, “it is not only his occupation but it is his passion.”

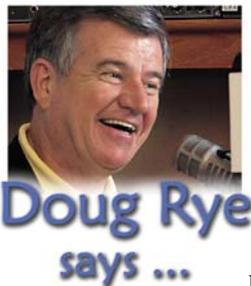
I plead guilty to that. I spent 23 years as a licensed architect working for the federal government helping provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families. During that period, I came to realize that the monthly electricity bill was a big part of the cost of a home. The electricity bill came every month, just like the mortgage payment, and if we were to make homes affordable, we would have to do something about energy usage. That became especially evident during the oil embargo of the 1970s.

I guess you could say it was then that my energy passion was born. Even our national office in Washington, D.C., began promoting energy efficiency. I was privileged to help write regulations for the entire U.S. to assure that the housing units being financed used less energy than before. We got deeply involved in the financing of solar water heating systems. That experience taught me that reliable systems were not as easy to obtain as the marketing material indicated.

One such building’s roof contained 220 solar panels. It was a total failure in less than 10 years. Live and learn.

As I had the opportunity to teach in more places around the country, I became better known and in more demand. And it became quite clear to me that I couldn’t help the world if I had to stay behind a desk in a federal building. I had a great career in the government, but it was time to move on. As I prepared my resignation papers, I had to answer the question, “reason for leaving.” I wrote, “To teach the world how to build a truly energy-efficient house.”

I thought to myself as I wrote those words, “World, watch out, here I come.” I just knew that people would jump all over energy efficiency when they learned the truth. Was I ever wrong. In fact, most fought against it.



I would spend many hours teaching a family about energy efficiency. I would show them that energy efficiency would actually make them money every month. They would shake their heads “yes!” and smile and I was so happy.

Later, I would ask if they implemented those things in their new house. More often than not, they shook their head “no.” I would actually lie awake at night worrying about that family. You cannot imagine how many times that I was told that the builders said, “You don’t really need to do all these things.”

Well, time has proven that they did need to do all these things exactly as I said. Thankfully many did heed the advice and they are still bragging about their houses (and saving money every month). If you listen to my radio show, you have likely

heard these folks call in and share their remarkable stories.

I had to quit worrying about those who did not heed the advice or I would have keeled over as a young man. I simply wrote my life’s priorities, in order. Those are my religious convictions, my wife, our children and now our grandchildren. And then comes my passion for teaching about energy efficiency. I must confess to you that on some days, the grandchildren move up on the list.

I think that all of you would agree that the subject of energy efficiency is at an all-time high. The Electric Cooperatives of Missouri have long promoted energy efficiency efforts and are taking it to a new level this year.

The purpose of all my efforts is to teach all of you how you can improve the energy efficiency of your house. We are going to lead you to water, so get ready to drink.

Doug Rye, a licensed architect living in Arkansas and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show (as heard on KBTN 1420 AM & KQYX 1450 AM), works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To order Doug’s video, call Doug at 1-888-Doug-Rye. More energy-efficiency tips can also be found at www.ecark.org.



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Services Provided to Members

Call our consumer services department for information on the following services:
Autowithdrawal Payment
Levelized Billing
Rental Light
Meeting rooms available at both locations
Credit Card Acceptance
Safety Programs (upon request)
Surge Protection
Green Power

Questions? Comments?

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○ Hart

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down because large numbers of people are not counted, we stand to lose representation in the U.S. House of Representatives. If Missouri loses a congressional seat, another state that may not share our views will pick up the seat. And that will make it more difficult as we work to keep electricity affordable and reliable for all Missouri electric cooperative members.

We will do our best to continue to communicate to you these and other important issues in the 2010 communications from your local electric co-op.