



[Rural Life]

THE PATH TO FURTHER NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

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While fireworks and Independence Day parades are synonymous with the Fourth of July, no such fanfare comes to mind when discussing energy efficiency. Perhaps it should. If you think about it, energy efficiency not only benefits individuals and families, but also the country as a whole. Energy efficiency combined with energy conservation and advances in technology in the utility industry ultimately help our country on a path toward greater energy independence. And that's worth celebrating.

BENEFITS OF EFFICIENCY

At its essence, greater efficiency means less energy is used for the production of goods and services. For individual consumers, a reduction in energy use usually translates to a tangible financial benefit: more money in your wallet at the end of the month. If your co-op neighbors are also using less energy collectively, it means the overall cost of providing that electricity could be lower. For many, this is reason enough to strive for greater energy efficiency. On a national level, energy efficiency, sometimes called the "fifth fuel," has a more profound impact. It can potentially boost the econo-

my by allowing consumers and businesses to invest in other areas. As importantly, greater energy efficiency may slow the rate at which domestic energy is depleted and therefore reduce or diminish the need for foreign energy.

WAYS TO BECOME EFFICIENT

Energy efficiency can generally be achieved three ways. The first is with mechanical change, such as replacing an older heating and cooling unit or less efficient appliance with a new Energy Star model or upgrading to new, insulated windows. Less expensive actions include improving the seal of your home's "envelope" by caulking exterior windows and doors and sealing openings where pipes and ductwork meet the outside. Swapping out the last incandescent bulbs (inside and outside) with LEDs also makes a noticeable difference.

The second way to realize energy efficiency is through smarter management of your energy use. Leveraging smart thermostat technology is a good place to start. Most smart thermostats contain an app allowing remote control by mobile phone or tablet. Program your thermostat

to reflect your family's schedule. Many thermostat programs allow you to view and edit your thermostat schedule and monitor the amount of energy used. Sometimes, however, energy efficiency is simply a matter of changing old habits, such as washing clothes in cold water instead of hot or running the dishwasher during off-peak times.

The third way is to explore generating your own power from renewable resources, such as wind or solar, at your home or business. Southeast Colorado Power Association not only offers net metering for these distributed generation solutions, but can also assist any consumer in the most effective sizing and technologies for their specific needs. This includes direct or indirect sales of such systems and installation options.

SECPA CAN HELP

Regardless of the path you take on the road to energy efficiency, SECPA can help you on the journey. For information about energy efficiency programs, including rebates for many of the above-mentioned initiatives, please visit www.secpa.com and look under Member Services.

You Could Be A Winner This Month

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN* your name, your account number), please contact Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill.

Last month's winner was Lester Snethen, Acct.# 1911550000, from Olney Springs.

OFFICES CLOSED *July 4th* FOR
Independence Day!



HOMSHER RETIREMENT

Kent Homsher retired after 42 years of service.

He began working at SECPA as an apprentice lineman, then became a journeyman lineman, next a working foreman and finished his career as staking engineer.

Homsher related that he really enjoyed working for SECPA and especially working with his co-workers.

Leave Worries Behind While on Vacation

Some people like to take in many activities while on vacation, while others prefer to just kick back and relax. Whatever you do on vacation, everyone hopes to leave worries of the daily grind behind.

To help you accomplish this, the Energy Education Council and its Safe Electricity program have tips to lower your electricity use and keep your home safe while you are away.

Energy vampires are a source of energy drain in unoccupied homes. Unplug appliances and electronics. You will not use your computer or television while you are away, but they will continue to use energy and waste money if you do not unplug them. It also reduces the chances of a power surge and associated fire hazards.

When temperatures are warm outside, it is unnecessary to keep your home as cool as you normally would since you will not be in it. You will save money on your electrical costs when the indoor temperature is as close to the outdoor temperature as possible. Turn the thermostat up to a warmer temperature or turn it off entirely. The U.S. Department of Energy warns that you should not set your temperature higher than 90 degrees. At this level of heat, such appliances as your refrigerator can sustain damage.

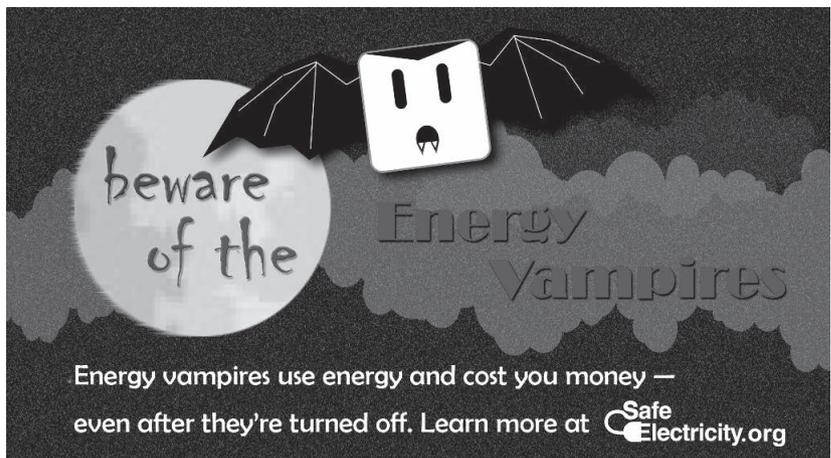
Before you leave town, also remember to secure all windows, such as lowering blinds and closing curtains, to slow the temperature climb in the home.

If you have a programmable thermostat, you can adjust it to cool the house just in time for your return home.

Water heaters continue to use energy to keep the stored water warm. Since you are not using this water while on vacation, either adjust the water heater temperature to the lowest setting, or turn it off if you will be gone for more than three days. Once you return home, be sure that you run the tap before turning the water heat on once again. This will avoid potential damages to the water tank.

If you plan on leaving lights on to deter burglars, put the lights on a timer. You can save money by not having lights on constantly and make it appear that people are home by varying the times the lights are on.

For more tips on electrical safety and efficiency, visit SafeElectricity.org.



BLIZZARD

COURTESY PLAINSMAN HERALD

PUBLISHED FOLLOWING THE APRIL 29-30 BLIZZARD THAT BROUGHT MORE THAN 2 FEET OF SNOW TO SECPA'S TERRITORY

Thank you SECPA for all you do!!
- Kylene Smith

We have power!! Thanks SECPA guys!!
- Rex & Linette Crawford

Thank You SECPA for all you do.
- Karen Brock

Thank you to the SECPA linemen for all their efforts in the bad weather. - Elvin Shaffer



Thank you for all your hard work! We really appreciate all you do! Be safe! - Felicia Jones

Thank you SECPA, we appreciate your hard work and dedication during this difficult time. - Shade Wright

So VERY thankful for all your hard work, & continuous work in these EXTREME conditions!! We couldn't ask for a better crew!!! You all deserve a copious amount of THANK YOU, and warmth/relaxation after everything is back in order!! Thank you once again from the Caseys!

Can't thank your crew enough for all they've done for our communities! - Julie Tate

Thank you! Getting power up in extreme cases y'all are awesome! - Garret Hodges

Bless every lineman working so hard! These men are angels! - Samantha Trumble

Thank you for all your hard work! We appreciate you very much and please stay safe!
- Trish Pierce

Thank you for all your hard work and being out in the storm to get everyone's power back on!!!
- Shelby Painter

Thank you so much, SECPA! You are always appreciated!! - Kim Harris

Thank you so much for all of your hard work! - Jessami Caddick

Be safe! You are important to us!
- Danelle Berg

Thank you for all do. We are grateful.
- Ivy Boley

We all appreciate the long hours spent in blizzard conditions and we have been humbled and it makes us appreciate electricity more. Thank you and want you to know you are appreciated. - Marilyn Albert

Thank you is not enough! We appreciate all the hard work! - Teri Neugebauer

You guys are remarkable!!! Thank you so much for all you do and God bless each and everyone of you! - Patty Ballard

God Bless the Linemen and their families!
- Barbara Dixon

Thanks for all you do. - Murray Barth

Thank you. - Kay Thompson

No matter the weather conditions! You guys are so appreciated! Thank you! - Linda McVey

Thanks guys for all you do, you are appreciated!
- Sharon Alldredge

Prayers to all the linemen! Thank you for all that you do! We appreciate you! Please stay safe! - Paula Willhite



Thank you all for your quick work and dedication. What a tough task you have ahead of you but you all are the ones who can get it done. - Walsh Ambulance Service

PTL! You guys Rock! Thank you! Power is on.
- Michelle England

Thank you Southeast Colorado Power crew for restoring my power. - Sharri Cooper

We have power. Thanks SECPA for all your hard work. We really appreciate it.
- Sherry Hancock

La Junta Crew: Kris Barbee, Joel Johnson, Jace Noe, Anthony Lobato.

Springfield Crew: Bill Cochell, Joe Self, Heath Piper, Mark Hall, Raymond Aguilar, Clint Arbuthnot, Phil Hinds, Buddy Myers, Taylor Wallace, Ryan Bair, Renee Grigat, Marcus Stegman.

Altitude Energy: This group came from Golden to help the linemen.

Thank you for everything. You risk your own life and take time away from your family to keep the lights on. I know it is your job but it takes great people with big hearts to do the job.

Also like to thank all of those who helped dig out neighbors, blade roads, find cattle and any other help that was needed: City Workers, CDOT, County Workers - Road and Bridge, Ranchers, Farmers. WIN* Clyde Sanders, Acct. # 1900320000 from Wiley.

Keep Food Safe

Before, During and After a Power Outage

Unfortunately, power outages do occur from time to time. It's important to know how to keep your food safe during an outage. Use these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of illness.

Before power outage



Keep refrigerator at **40° or below**. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately. Keep freezer set to **0° or below**. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

During power outage

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!

If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 hours**.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for **four hours**.

After power outage

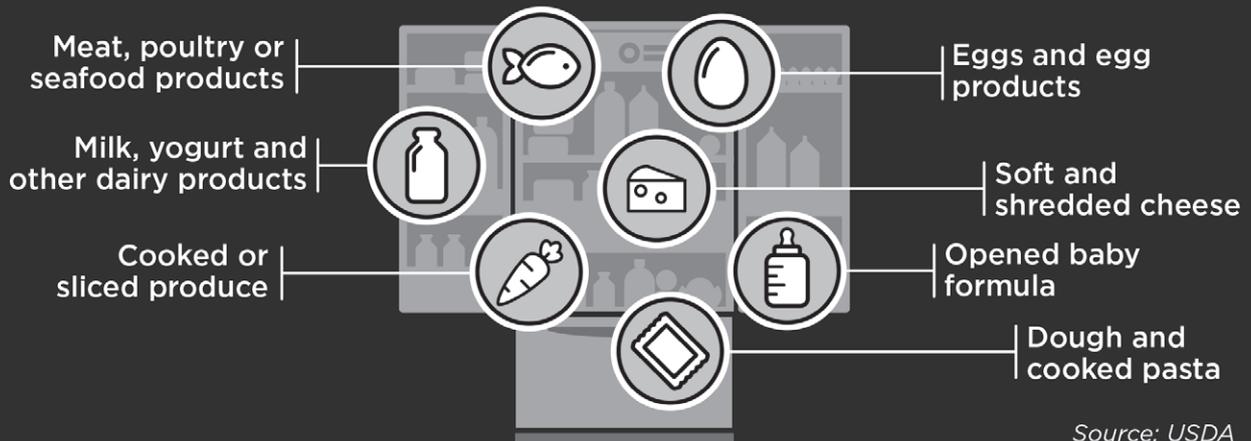


Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer.



If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

Foods that should be thrown out after an extended power outage:



Source: USDA