



## Fight the Winter Chill

Winter is here, and frigid temperatures can cause heating systems to work overtime. Heating and cooling can make up nearly half of your electric bill, giving you sticker shock when you open your bill. Instead of waiting until after a potentially high bill is in your mailbox, be proactive. There are things you can do now to help ensure you are managing your energy use and spending less.

These simple steps can help you manage your use:

- Wrap exposed pipes and water heaters that are in unconditioned spaces.
- Make sure to change your air filter once a month.
- Keep drapes closed at night and keep those that don't get direct sunlight closed during the day, also.
- Keep the fireplace damper closed when it is not in use. Keeping it open can bring cold air into the room.
- Caulk around the fireplace hearth, and caulk or weather strip around doors and windows.
- Dress for the weather, even if you are inside. Wearing proper clothing like long sleeves and pants, or wrapping up in a cozy blanket will help combat the temptation of bumping up the thermostat.

So, when temperatures fall this winter and you hear your weatherman talking about bringing in pets and plants, take the steps above to help manage your usage.

Using the tips above can certainly help you manage your energy usage, but your bill may still be higher than normal in winter months. Why?

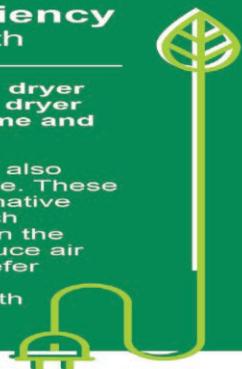
- The weather makes a big impact on electric bills, accounting for nearly half of your bill.
- Even those with the most efficient HVAC systems will see more use in extreme weather.
- When extreme cold temperatures hit, our heaters work overtime.
- When you set your thermostat to our recommended 68 degrees in the winter, and it is 39 degrees outside, your system has to work hard to make up that 29-degree difference.
- Your heater works harder and cycles on and off more often, making your usage much higher. That means your bill will be much higher.
- Remember, there is value in comfort. For us to be comfortable in our homes, our heaters are going to work harder, but it may be worth the additional cost to you.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)



spring *forward*



Daylight Savings  
Time Begins  
Sunday,  
March 14, 2021



## *Manager's Message*

*By: Mark A. Suggs*

Pitt & Greene EMC is proud to join electric cooperatives across North Carolina in announcing efforts to build a brighter future through energy innovation, expanded services to members, sustainability goals, and continued support for communities through local programs and economic development. We provide power to approximately 8,700 members in Edgecombe, Greene, Lenoir, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson counties. Electric cooperatives, like Pitt & Greene EMC, are unique because we are based in the communities we serve and are owned by our members. We are also not-for-profit, which means we do not have shareholders.

We have always strived to provide safe, efficient and affordable power to our members, and we are proud to share new, forward-looking efforts to support local people, businesses and communities, now and in the decades to come. More than 50 percent of the power our members rely on comes from carbon-free sources, including safe, emissions-free nuclear and renewables. Nuclear is important to our generation mix because it is the only dependable way to achieve a low-carbon future without compromising reliability and affordability.

Pitt & Greene EMC is working toward sustainability goals while upholding a commitment to providing reliable power at the lowest possible cost. A 50 percent reduction in carbon emissions from 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We aim to meet these goals through a diverse portfolio of generation resources that includes safe, reliable and affordable emissions-free nuclear and incorporating more renewable energy sources into our diverse mix and complementing those with existing and new advanced natural gas that can be dispatched quickly, day or night, when other renewable sources may not be available. We will work through North Carolina's electric cooperative network to implement and coordinate advanced energy technologies and resources throughout the grid, such as microgrids, battery storage and devices that can bring down energy demand at peak times. Pitt & Greene EMC supports the advancement of new technologies that effectively capture carbon emissions.

Pitt & Greene EMC and electric cooperatives statewide are implementing a network of EV charging stations that will help make ownership and operation of electric vehicles a viable alternative to driving a fossil-fueled vehicle and bring tourism and increased economic opportunity to cooperative communities. We have installed an EV charging station at Rouse's Restaurant in Snow Hill. By visiting [ncdriveelectric.com/pgemc](http://ncdriveelectric.com/pgemc), members can learn more about federal tax credits, rebates, loans, and our special rate available for EV drivers. The website also answers frequently asked questions about driving electric and includes a calculator that lets you see how much money you could save by switching to an electric vehicle.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our communities, Pitt & Greene EMC is committed to helping members experiencing financial distress, as well as local organizations that are aiding the community. Members facing financial hardship related to COVID-19 are encouraged to contact us immediately to arrange a special payment plan and learn about crisis assistance.

We are now offering free Wi-Fi at our offices in Farmville and Snow Hill.

# Electrical Safety Measures for Older Adults

Statistics show that home fires, from a variety of causes, result in a significant number of deaths and injuries each year. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), U.S. fire departments respond to an estimated average of 371,700 home structure fires per year. These fires cause an estimated average of 2,590 civilian deaths and 12,910 civilian injuries.

Although electrical hazards plague the public at large, older adults are burdened with the gravest risk. Adults over the age of 65 are more than twice as likely to die from a house fire as the general population, and this risk increases with age. Those 75 years of age and over are challenged with a risk that is 2.8 times higher, and adults over 85 are at a staggering risk that is 3.7 times higher. As baby boomers enter retirement age, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) has predicted that the percentage of older Americans will increase significantly, thus making a corresponding increase in fire deaths and injuries among older adults probable.

Electrical failures are a leading cause of home fires every year, and electrical distribution and lighting equipment fires have been shown to increase in frequency with increasing dwelling age. Homes with aging electrical systems are at a heightened risk for electrical fires, posing a serious risk for older adults who have remained in the same home for an extended period of time.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, half of the homes in use in the United States were built before 1973, which is long before many of the electronics and appliances we use today were even invented. Unfortunately, our increased demands for energy can overburden an older home's electrical system causing fires or electrocutions.

Many home electrical fires can be prevented by using more up-to-date technology and by recognizing warning signs your home may be showing. Follow these easy safety tips to identify and prevent electrical hazards in your home:

- \* Regularly check all cords, outlets, switches, and appliances for signs of damage or wear.
- \* Use extension cords only temporarily.
- \* Be sure that outlets are not overloaded with too many devices. They can overheat and start a fire.
- \* Look and listen for warning signs of an electrical problem such as outlets and switches that are warm, or make crackling, sizzling or buzzing sounds.
- \* Always replace fuses or circuit breakers with the correct size and amperage. And make sure all circuits are labeled correctly.
- \* Consider having your breakers upgraded to state-of-the-art AFCI circuit breakers. Keep the electrical panel accessible so you can quickly shut off power in an emergency.
- \* Install smoke alarms on every level of your home. Place alarms inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area. Test them once a month, change the batteries at least once a year, and replace the alarm itself every ten years.

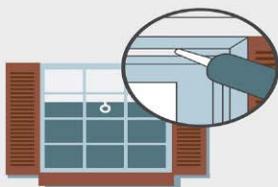
A full range of resources for older adults, including detailed fact and tip sheets as well as public service announcements, can be found by visiting [www.esfi.org/safetyeducators](http://www.esfi.org/safetyeducators).



## EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

### WEATHERIZE

Seal doors and windows with caulk, weather stripping and/or plastic film.



### SEAL IN WARMTH

Close blinds and curtains during the night to keep cold air out. Open them during the day to let sunlight in.



### COOK UP SAVINGS

Use smaller appliances, like microwaves, toaster ovens and slow cookers when possible.



# 10 Quick Tips to Avoid High Winter Bills

Looking to lower your bills this winter? Use the 10 tips below to conserve energy.

-  Seal air leaks and insulate well to prevent heat from escaping and cold air from entering your home.
-  Reduce waste heat by installing a programmable thermostat.
-  Turn off lights when not in use.
-  Lower your water heater temperature. The Dept. of Energy recommends using the warm setting (120 degrees) during fall and winter months.
-  Unplug electronics like kitchen appliances and TVs when you're away.
-  Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home.
-  Close blinds and curtains at night to keep cold, drafty air out.
-  Use power strips for multiple appliances, and turn off the main switch when you're away from home.
-  Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible.
-  Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75 percent less energy.

## Reminder.....

Colder weather has arrived, have you thought about what your heating system is set on? For example, if you have the thermostat set on 73, the system will come on more to keep it that desired temperature than if you have it set on a lower setting. The colder it is outside the more your heating system will run to keep your home warm, which will make your utility bill higher. So when you receive your utility bill and it is higher than usual, remember the colder weather outside and what your thermostat was set on inside.

De lunes a viernes de 8:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m.  
252-753-3128 / 1-800-622-1362 / 252-747-7600

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