



Top Winter Energy Thieves



Jump River
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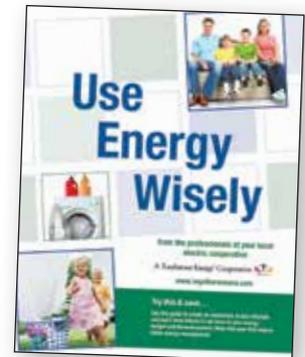
Members often contact us at the electric cooperative with questions about how their energy usage can increase from one month to the next when they think nothing has changed to warrant the increase. The following is a list the cooperative has compiled of what we believe to be the “Top Winter Energy Thieves.” Many of these items can be out of sight and, perhaps, out of mind, so they are not commonly thought of when members like you try to determine what is consuming the increased amount of electricity reflected in monthly bills. When any one of the items on the “Thieves” list is unknowingly or unintentionally left on, it can consume large amounts of energy in a short period of time.

- 1. Well and/or pressure system:** Defective, leaking or broken water lines, wires shorted at the well head, and water-logged pressure tanks can use excessive electricity.
- 2. Stock tank heater:** Inadequately insulated tanks may run up to 24 hours a day.
- 3. Portable space heater:** Uncontrolled space heaters may run up to 24 hours a day and may have thermostats set higher than necessary. Additionally, this form of electric heat does not qualify for a reduced rate dual fuel program.
- 4. Engine/tractor heater:** Because engine or tractor heaters may lack thermostatic controls, they may operate up to 24 hours per day.
- 5. Wood stove blower:** Check to ensure your wood stove blower is operating properly, as these may run continuously without being noticed.
- 6. Outdoor wood-burning unit:** Circulator pumps can run 24/7 in outdoor wood-burning units. If the fire in an outdoor unit goes out, it can cause the water heater in your home to attempt to heat the boiler within the wood burning unit.
- 7. Heat tape:** Take note of the status of your heat tape to ensure it has not become defective, that it is turned off when no longer needed, and that the temperatures is not set higher than necessary.
- 8. Hot tub:** Outdoor hot tub installations often don't have adequate insulation. Water is continuously heated to over 100 degrees and can unnecessarily shed heat to the outdoors.
- 9. Electric blanket or heated mattress pad:** Often left running 24 hours per day, electric blankets and heated mattress pads can be shut down when a bed is not occupied.
- 10. Room/wall air-conditioning units:** Improperly weatherized or inadequately insulated against winter's cold drafts, air-conditioning units leak heat to the outdoors and require greater heating input to make the home comfortable.

In addition, lighting may be a larger expense than you realize. According to Energy.gov, on average it accounts for 5 percent of overall home energy costs. Alongside whatever efficiency steps you take, your home lighting costs are subject to variation with the type of bulbs that are used.

Light emitting diode (LED) bulbs release very little energy as heat, and they use only between 25 to 30 percent of the energy of traditional incandescent bulbs. In addition, they usually last between 8 and 24 times longer than incandescent bulbs. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that although LEDs are more expensive than traditional bulbs, due to their longer lifespan and decreased energy use, if you replace 15 traditional incandescent bulbs with energy-saving bulbs, you could save about \$50 a year.

Your energy experts here at the cooperative encourage you to check each item that uses electricity to ensure any energy thieves you may be hosting are eliminated or brought back under control. Your cooperative also has different energy savings guides available to you, such as the Use Energy Wisely Guide that you can find online at www.jrec.com. This informative booklet will guide you through a more complete self-assessment of your family's unique home energy needs. The guide includes an extensive, detailed list of appliance and equipment electric use amounts, and a convenient calculator to estimate your costs.



Check out an electricity usage monitor at the cooperative or library and learn which individual appliances cost you the most, how much electricity some of those “phantom” electronics consume, and where you can save energy. You can easily measure by the hour, day, month, or year to figure your costs.

If you have any questions, or if you need help uncovering potential energy thieves in your home, please contact your local experts at Jump River Electric Cooperative. We offer energy assessments to assist members with their electric usage concerns. Your member-owned electric cooperative was founded on people helping people, a focus we will continue to pursue as we work to assist you. For more information on energy efficiency, visit EnergyEdCouncil.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HOLIDAY WINNERS!

A holiday open house was held in December, with several members stopping by to enjoy the hot apple cider, coffee, and cookies, and to enter their name into the drawing for a chance to win a ham or pint of maple syrup. The open house was held at both the Ladysmith and Hayward offices.

This year's ham winners were: Harold Treland (pictured below right) of Hayward and Pat and Ralph Cullison of Sheldon. Those taking home a pint of maple syrup were: Narcisa Jed Weinert (pictured below left), Michael Amrhein, and Bill Beckwith of Hayward; Ronald Johnson and Dean Prust of Ladysmith; and Keith Seramur of Hawkins.

Also walking away with big smiles and lots of prizes were the two lucky young cooperative members whose names were drawn from the many entries received for the giant stocking filled with toys. Again this year, we send a special



thank you to member Mark Tamm of Hayward who donated two hand-crafted rocking moose that were given away with the other toys this year. Pictured above is Tommy (right), son of James Kane Jr. of Sheldon, and Mona (pictured left with brother Teagan), daughter of Rachel Jones of Hayward. It is always nice to see the holiday spirit in these little ones as they were so excited to share the many toys with their siblings.



Learn how to use the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool

The Home Efficiency Analysis Tool helps homeowners develop a prioritized list of projects to save money and energy. Ranked by cost, difficulty, and savings potential, each project includes documentation for guidance, tips and lists of materials.

Access this tool by going to www.jrec.com and clicking Links and read more on Touchstone Energy Cooperative. 

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REBATE PROGRAM CONTINUED

Did your New Year's resolution include saving more money? We can help you do that through our Energy Sense Rebate Program, which is back this year by popular demand. If you purchase new energy efficient appliances or lighting, or if you take other measures to reduce your home energy consumption this year, be sure to check and see if you qualify for one of our energy rebates.

To qualify for one of our rebates, you will need to do the following:

- Purchase and/or install a qualified energy efficient product in 2017.
- We encourage members to submit required documentation ASAP to ensure limited funds are still available. Rebates are in place through December 31, 2017, or until funds have been depleted. Submit your rebate application form(s) and any required documentation listed on rebate forms.

Rebate forms are available at the cooperative's office or online at www.jrec.net. Send your completed forms and documents to P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848.

A few of the rebates available through the Energy Sense Program are listed below:

| Equipment | Specifications | Rebate |
|---|--|--|
| Clothes Washer | Must be ENERGY STAR appliance | \$100 |
| Refrigerator | Must be ENERGY STAR appliance | \$100 |
| Dishwasher | Must be ENERGY STAR appliance | \$50 |
| Dehumidifier | Must be ENERGY STAR appliance | \$25 |
| Room Air Conditioner | Must be ENERGY STAR appliance | \$25 |
| Recycling Freezer Refrigerator Window Air Conditioner | The recycled item must be in working order and be removed from service and fully disposed of following federal, state, and local laws. | \$25 |
| Lighting <i>(Lighting rebates are limited to 50 percent of the cost)</i> | CFL Lamp LED Lamp LED Fixture T5 Fixture T8 Fixture (retrofit only) | \$1/bulb \$3/bulb \$1/400 lumens \$6/lamp/fixture \$4/lamp/fixture |
| Central AC & Ductless Mini Split | SEER 14 or greater or EER 11.5 or greater SEER 15 or greater or EER 12.5 or greater SEER 16 or greater or EER 13.5 or greater | \$40/ton \$60/ton \$80/ton |
| Heat Pump – Air Source & Mini Split | SEER 14 or greater, HSPF 8.2 or greater, or EER 11.5 or greater | \$150/ton |
| Heat Pump – Geothermal | | \$300/ton |
| Home Audit or Assessment | Incentive is \$150 towards cost of a site assessment and up to \$500 (Limited to 50% of the cost) towards cost of recommended measures that are implemented. Audit must be performed by a JREC “approved” partner. | Up to \$650 |
| Water Conservation | Faucet flow restrictors (1.5 GPM or less) Showerhead flow restrictors (2.5 GPM or less) | \$1 each \$5 each |
| Agriculture | Dairy plate cooler/well water pre-cooler | \$500 each |

Please go to www.jrec.net for more information on the above rebates and for a full listing of this program, including renewable energy assessment rebates and grants available. You may also call our office at 715-532-5524 or 715-634-4575 for more information.



USE SPACE HEATERS AND ELECTRIC BLANKETS SAFELY THIS WINTER

Nothing can put chills down your spine quite like winter weather creeping its way through every crack of your home. In order to save money and stay warm, many chose to turn down the heat and plug in space heaters or electric blankets. While these products may be a simple solution from the cold, the Safe Electricity program warns that they can also cause fires if caution is not used.



Safe Electricity offers the following tips for safely using space heaters and electric blankets:

- Read and follow all space heater and electric blanket instructions.
- Check space heaters and electric blankets before use. Cords should not be frayed, brittle, or cracked. The blanket should not have any charred or dark areas.
- One of the biggest causes of fires is one of the most easily avoidable. Many fires start when flammable products are placed too close to heating devices, such as space heaters. Space heaters should be kept at least 3 feet from blankets, clothing, paper, and other flammables.
- Place space heaters out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface—NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
- Look for a space heater that has guards from heating elements and automatically shuts off if it is tipped over or overheating.
- Do not attempt to warm your entire home using space heaters. Space heaters are useful in small areas, such as a study or living room. However, if you need to keep large areas warm, your home heating system will do the job more efficiently.
- Plug space heaters directly to the outlet, and never use an extension cord.
- Only use electric blankets with an automatic shut off designed to prevent the blanket from overheating.
- Pets should never be allowed to sleep on top of electric blankets.
- Electric blanket wires should never be bent or tucked under a mattress.
- Replace old or damaged electric blankets.

- Choose a space heater or electric blanket with a safety certification. You should look for the UL, ETL, or CSA mark on the device. These verify that the product has been tested and is safe to use.

Always remember to turn off space heaters and electric blankets when not in use. Never leave one of these devices on unattended or after going to bed.

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William Schmidt, General Manager

1102 W. Ninth St. North, P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848

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