

News & Views

Blueprint for a decade

In 2013, the International Co-operative Alliance released the “Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade” designed to promote the cooperative business model as the best way to meet both the economic and social needs of individuals and communities.

The report, available for free at www.ica.coop, describes the five key areas that all co-ops emphasize:

- Participation – member engagement
- Sustainability – how we help our communities prosper
- Identity – making sure people understand and showcase the cooperative

business model

- Legal Framework – making sure laws and

regulations help, not harm our ability to operate for your benefit

- Capital – ensure we have the money we need to finance our operations

The members of Johnson County REMC have a role to play in all these areas, but can be particularly engaged at the “participation” level. You have the

right to active governance through voting privileges at the annual meeting, and in electing or running for our board of directors. This is the governance arm of the cooperative.

Margaret Mead, the cultural anthropologist once said, “Never doubt the ability of a small group of people to change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

As a member of Johnson County REMC you are connected to a network of people who believe in the cooperative principles and values. Stay involved, make your voice heard, and together we can make Co-op Nation stronger than ever.

Johnson County REMC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



The mission of Johnson County REMC is to provide reliable, competitively priced utility services to its customers and the community.

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- 4** Fighting winter chills

Grant funds school's solar water heating



Above: John Gates, Johnson County REMC Energy Advisor discusses the solar tube with the installer.

Right: Solar collectors at Indian Creek High School in Trafalgar.

Indian Creek High School received a solar water heating system from Johnson County

system is both an educational tool and will also have a positive impact on energy efficiency," Aubin said. "This solar water heater installation is an important initiative that allows students and our community to learn more about renewable energy and the value it can provide for the school."

Solar water heating systems harness the sun's energy through solar collectors, and use a heat exchanger and water storage tank. Typical solar technology reduces energy use up to 50 percent by

REMC and our power supplier Hoosier Energy at no cost.

Installation of the system was completed in late September, 2014. Hoosier Energy's solar technology school grant program is installing 17 of the renewable energy systems in Indiana through an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Johnson County REMC is pleased to be a part of the program, according to CEO Chet Aubin. "It's gratifying to bring an energy efficient resource to Indian Creek High School. The renewable energy



supplementing an existing water heating source. The systems have a 25-year service life and can reduce carbon dioxide by up to two tons per year.

Johnson County REMC
publishes
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as a service to
our members.

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Back issues may be
viewed on our website or
obtained from the office.

Energy efficiency tip ... Even when outdoor temperatures are cold, you can capitalize on the sun's warmth by keeping curtains, blinds and shades open during the day. This free source of heat can improve the comfort of your home while giving your furnace a rest.

Space heater safety



While they serve as a cozy source for comfort, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Consider these safety tips:

Materials. Make sure your heater is made of a material that

is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils.

Placement. Keep the space heater on the floor and three feet from flammable materials. And only those units designed for excessive moisture should be used in bathrooms.

Special Features. Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. This important safety feature turns the unit off if it tips over.

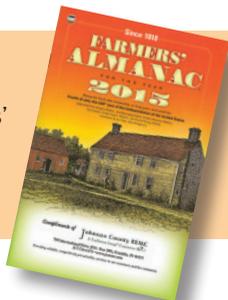
Cords. You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating.

Use. Never leave a heater unattended while in use. Unplug the unit when you are leaving your home or going to bed.

And don't forget cost. A typical 1500-watt space heater used for 10 hours a day will add **\$50 or more** to your monthly bill.

Pick up a copy

Free 2015 copies of the Farmers' Almanac and the Indiana Festival Guide are available at our office, while supplies last.



Save the date

The Johnson County REMC Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2015. Vote in the director election, hear reports from cooperative leadership and enjoy entertainment by crowd favorite, "The Grascals."

ELECTRICAL MYTHS CAN KILL.



MYTH Rubber gloves and rubber shoes protect you from electricity.

TRUTH That's true only if they are 100 percent pure rubber with no holes or tears (the kind that electrical linemen wear). Typical cleaning gloves and shoes are made with rubber mixed with cheaper materials and won't protect you in an electrical encounter.

MYTH

All power lines are insulated.



TRUTH As a rule, power lines aren't insulated. So why don't birds get electrocuted when they perch on a power line? They don't represent a path to the ground. If a bird were to touch two wires at once, or a wire and the ground, it would be electrocuted.



MYTH Power lines outside carry the same 110-volt electricity we use at home.

TRUTH Here in Indiana, most power lines carry 7,200 volts. Some carry up to 19,000 volts. You can't tell the voltage by just looking at it.

**STAY SAFE.
BUST THE
MYTHS.**



Fighting winter chills

Another colder-than-normal winter is predicted for much of the country this year. Be proactive by taking these



steps to help manage your energy 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, too.
- Keep the fireplace damper closed when it is not in use.

the weather, even if you are inside. Extra clothing and blankets help combat the temptation to bump up the thermostat.

- Log on to your Johnson County REMC account to keep up with your use.

Taking the steps above can help manage your energy use and ease the pain of higher than normal electric bills as a result of frigid winter temperatures.

- Caulk around the fireplace hearth, and caulk or weather strip around doors and windows.
- Dress for

“I follow the tips, but my bill is still high”

This is a sentiment we often hear. And while using the tips above can certainly help manage your energy use, your bill may still be higher than normal in winter months. Why?

Weather-related expenses account for nearly half of your bill. Even those with the most efficient furnace will see more use in extreme weather. If you set your thermostat to our recommended

68 degrees, when it is 19 degrees outside, your system has to work harder and cycle on and off more often to make up that 49-degree difference.

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. To learn more, contact our Johnson County REMC Energy Advisor.

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