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Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative

**SEDGWICK COUNTY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

currentnews

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative

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FROM THE MANAGER

We're Here to Serve You

"We're here to serve you." We've all heard this phrase countless times. These words may sound generic, but to us — your local electric cooperative — they mean everything.

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative was created to serve our community. Back in the day, neighbors banded together and formed our co-op for the common good. In our case, it was the only way the community could bring electricity to the area where there was none. In doing so, Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative helped the community thrive. That mission-focused heritage is the golden thread woven throughout our history.

Today, we are continuing to power the community. While our focus has remained steady on providing reliable energy to our members, today's energy landscape and consumer expectations are far different than they were decades ago. That's why we're adapting, to keep pace with changing technol-

ogy, evolving needs, and new expectations.

Serving as your trusted energy adviser means we want to help you save energy (and money) and provide advice and

information on a broad range of energy topics. For example, if you're looking for ways to save energy, check out www.sedgwickcountyelectric.coop for energy-saving tips and ideas to increase the energy efficiency of your home. Energy topics are also located in the centerspread of our *Kansas Country Living* magazine.

If you're considering a rooftop solar installation, our energy advisers would be happy to give you an unbiased view of the pros and cons. Investing in a solar system is a major decision, and it's important to fully understand the costs,

Continued on page 12C ▶



Scott Ayres

HAPPY

★

4TH OF JULY

★ ★ ★

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Our office
will be closed on
Tuesday, July 4,
for the holiday.



Beat the Peak This Summer

As temperatures begin to spike, there are steps you can take to save money on energy bills this summer.

According to the Department of Energy, a typical home uses a whopping 48% of energy expenditures just on the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Although a majority of that figure is spent on heating, Americans still spend \$29 billion every year to power their air conditioners.

Aside from replacing your central air conditioner with a newer, high-efficiency model, there are some things you can do to increase efficiency and reduce your energy bills.

Besides weatherstripping and caulking around windows and doors in your home (always a good idea regardless of the time of year), consider the following:

- ▶ **CLOSE CURTAINS, BLINDS, AND SHADES** during the hottest part of the day. Not only is about one-third of a home's energy lost around windows, but about 76% of sunlight that falls on standard double-pane windows enters the home to become heat, according to www.energy.gov.
- ▶ If you don't already have one, **INSTALL A PROGRAMMABLE OR SMART THERMOSTAT**. You can save up to 10% a year on heating and cooling by adjusting your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting for 8 hours a day, according to www.energy.gov.
- ▶ **CLEAN THE FILTER AND GET YOUR UNIT INSPECTED** by a HVAC professional.
- ▶ **CONSIDER CHANGES TO YOUR LANDSCAPING**. Greenery

that includes shade trees and plants that insulate the foundation can reduce energy costs.

- ▶ **VENTILATE THE ATTIC AND CHECK INSULATION**. Adequately sized vents and an attic fan can help prevent hot air from building up. If your attic has less than 6 to 8 inches of insulation, consider adding more. By addressing air leaks around your home and adding insulation, homeowners can save around 10% annually on energy bills, according to www.energystar.gov.
- ▶ **GET A PRE-SEASON CHECKUP** by a professional HVAC technician, which could help your air conditioner run more efficiently.
- ▶ **MAKE SURE YOUR OUTDOOR CONDENSER UNIT IS CLEAN AND FREE FROM DEBRIS**. Ideally, the unit should be in the shade.
- ▶ **USE YOUR CLOTHES DRYER AND OVEN DURING THE COOLER PARTS OF THE DAY**.
- ▶ **CONSIDER A PROFESSIONAL ENERGY AUDIT** to reveal where your home is inefficient, including air leaks and exposed duct work.

Increased summer electric demand not only affects the monthly budget, but it can also seriously strain your home's electrical system, which can create dangerous shock and fire hazards. Flickering or dimming lights or frequent circuit breaker trips are signs of an overloaded electrical system or faulty wiring that should be checked immediately by a qualified electrician.

Co-op Sponsors Pedal Tractor Pull

Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative will host the Pedal Tractor Pull at the Sedgwick County Fair on Saturday, July 15.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. at the Sedgwick County Fairgrounds, just east of the open-air arena, and the pull begins at 10 a.m.

Children ages 4 to 12 are eligible to participate. There is no entry fee. Participants are required to wear shoes and must have a parent or legal guardian present to register. Top finishers will advance to the tractor pull event at the State Fair in Hutchinson.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

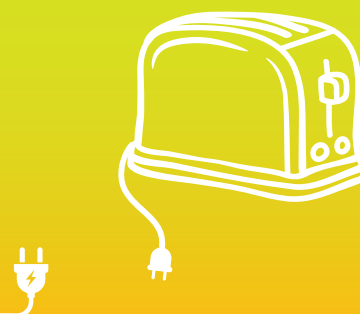
Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling.

You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. (Check out Page 20 in the magazine for no bake recipes this month.) **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



SAFETY TIP

Plug appliances directly into wall sockets instead of power strips. Make sure outlets have ground fault circuit interrupter protection.



Use Energy Wisely

We hear a lot about peak energy demand, but what is it and how does it impact electricity use? As the name implies, peak energy demand occurs when energy consumption is at its highest. In much of the U.S., energy use spikes in summer and winter due to the need to heat and cool indoor spaces.

Although it depends on where you live, summertime energy demand increases when outdoor temperatures soar. In Kansas, peak demand is generally on weekdays between 3-7 p.m., when most individuals are returning home, cooking dinner and preparing for evening activities. In the summer, June through September, Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative asks members to reduce electrical usage from 3-6 p.m. on days the temperature is over 95 degrees. In the winter, there are two high-use times of day: early morning and late afternoon/evening. Weekends and holidays are typically considered off peak.

Changing the time of day you use energy can help lower your energy bills and avoid interruptions or service glitches that can occur during peak demand times. To do this, consider running major appliances during off-peak times; smart devices or appliances that have delay starts can help achieve this goal.

Do your part to use energy wisely when temperatures are high. In the summer months, help decrease demand by doing the following:

- ▶ Turn your thermostat temperature up by 2 degrees or more and program your thermostat to a higher temperature when no one is home.



Cut your energy use in the summer by cooking outside! It's a two-for-one benefit, enjoying the time outside and reducing your electricity use! Plus, who doesn't love food straight off the grill?

- ▶ If you do not have one, consider purchasing a smart thermostat.
 - ▶ Make sure your HVAC system is in good working order. Remember to keep your unit and the area around it clean and clear.
 - ▶ Use bathroom and kitchen fans temporarily to remove heat and humidity. Remember: Fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off before you leave the room.
 - ▶ Use your countertop toaster, air fryer and/or convection oven instead of your oven. Even better, keep the heat outside by cooking food on the grill.
 - ▶ Use major appliances in the early morning or late evening. Delay turning on your dishwasher or clothes washer until you're heading to bed.
 - ▶ Program smart devices to run appliances at off-peak times.
 - ▶ Close window coverings during the hottest part of the day.
 - ▶ Use minimal lighting and try using LED lighting instead of traditional incandescent bulbs.
 - ▶ Turn off and disconnect electronics that are not in use.
 - ▶ Turn off stand-alone dehumidifiers.
- Making small changes to conserve energy can help even out energy use, save money on your utility bill and avoid service interruptions caused by high demand.

We're Here to Serve You

Continued from page 12A ▶

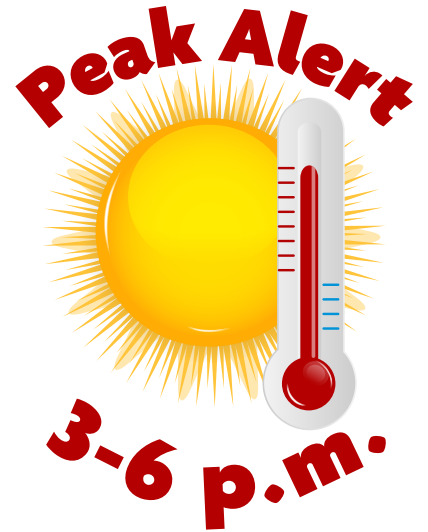
responsibilities, and potential energy savings. Unlike a solar company that has one objective — to sell their products and services — we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. We understand that homeowners must complete their due diligence, and we're here to help you through that process.

In a similar vein, we recognize that many members are considering electric vehicle options. Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative can provide information about EV charging and electrical requirements to our members so you can make informed decisions about EVs. We can provide a candid assessment of residential and business charging requirements for all types of EVs. Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative would like to ask our members to charge their EVs before 3 p.m. or after 8 p.m. to help reduce the cooperative's peak demand. Every kilowatt saved during our peak demand times is a cost saving to each member.

So, the next time you hear Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative use the phrase "we're here to serve you," we hope you know that we mean it. Service is deeply ingrained into who we are. We continue to evolve with the times, and in return, we've found additional ways to serve you and provide more options for you to power your life.

We're here whenever you need us. Connect with us online, in person or through Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's SmartHub app. However you choose to connect, please let us know how we can serve you better.

Listen for Peak Alerts AND SAVE



This month, we are asking members to participate in Sedgwick County Electric Cooperative's Peak Control program. This voluntary program helps you save on your summer energy bills and can also help the co-op hold down wholesale power costs during the eight months of our off-peak period.

A major portion of our annual wholesale power bill is based on power consumed during the 3-6 p.m. demand time frame of the summer months. The price of electricity is at a premium during that three-hour window due to the "high demand" for energy production during those hot, summer hours.

What is Peak Control?

Peak control is a voluntary program in which our members can participate to hold down electricity costs.

How Can I Participate in Peak Control?

You can participate by monitoring your use of electric appliances and equipment that require larger amounts of electricity during peak hours. Any steps you can take to lower your energy use from 3-6 p.m., Monday through Friday will help control costs.

When Should I Participate in Peak Control?

Participate when "Peak Alerts" are issued, typically during the hours of 3-6 p.m. weekdays from June 1 through Sept. 30. Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to receive peak alerts.

The actual peak demand for June, July, August and September is the billing demand for each respective month. Special emphasis is placed during July and August, as the peak electricity demand registered by the co-op during those two months drives the demand billing for the following "off peak" eight months. Be aware of days when temperatures are forecast to be above 95 degrees. These are the type of days when peak demand can occur.

What are the Benefits of Peak Control?

Reducing electric usage between 3-6 p.m. will help reduce our peak load. Each kilowatt shaved or shifted during peak load is a cost savings for cooperative members.

Reduce your demand in June, July, August and September from 3-6 p.m.* and **SAVE.**

Be aware of days when temperatures are forecast to be **above 95 degrees.**

These are the days when peak demand can occur.

*MONDAY-FRIDAY, DOES NOT INCLUDE HOLIDAYS

REDUCE YOUR DEMAND &

SAVE

USE LESS ENERGY JUNE THROUGH SEPTEMBER
ON WEEKDAYS FROM 3-6 P.M.

**TO SAVE OVER THE
NEXT 12 MONTHS**