



Co-op News

from

Wyrulec Company

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 
The power of human connections

March 2010

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From your manager



Miller

Annual meeting preparations underway

We are busy preparing for the annual meeting, the doors for which will open at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, at the Rendezvous Center in Torrington. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting will start at 7:00 p.m.

This is the most important meeting of the year for your cooperative and your participation is necessary to help us plan accurately for the future.

Most businesses are challenged by the current economy. Wyrulec is no exception, but we have some advantages that other companies don't share. One of those advantages is the cooperative business model itself.

The cooperative business model offers control to member/owners. Your management and staff fully appreciate the importance of an informed and active membership. We do our best to ensure that you know about and understand the opportunities your cooperative provides to members in all the communities we serve.

Stable electricity rates, reliable electricity service, and responsive customer service are our priorities. Beyond that, however, we offer energy efficiency information and advice, leadership and educational programs for young people, scholarships, and access to non-local power industry professionals.

Another advantage Wyrulec enjoys is our access to you. We don't have to hire the services of call centers to discover how you feel about your electricity rates. *Shelley R. Miller* We don't have to pay for expensive surveys several times a year in order to accurately gauge your interest in energy efficiency or your understanding of the costs that go into calculating an electricity rate.

These and many other topics, however, are easy to discuss during our annual meeting, and any other time throughout the year. We hope you'll bring the whole family to the annual meeting on March 30 and enjoy a delicious roast beef dinner, energy demonstrations, door prizes, and enlightening speakers.

Energy efficiency seminar

The seminar we hosted February 9th in Torrington was well attended. Speakers were very informative and able to communicate their knowledge in a concise and entertaining way. Vendors were very pleased by how interested attendees were in solving specific energy-consumption challenges. There were many questions before and after the speakers and during breaks. This is always an indication of how engaged the audience is in the topic presented.

We, at Wyrulec Company, are pleased that this seminar was such a great success. We plan to hold another seminar in the future. In the meantime, if you couldn't attend, don't hesitate to stop by the office. We are always willing to help you save energy. Call me anytime at the office or I can be reached at 307-575-2435.



Keep out the cold with weather stripping

No mistaking it: winter has been here awhile. Any drafts around doors and windows that went unnoticed earlier in the season are now downright uncomfortable—and adding to your energy bills.

Never too late to weather strip

Weather stripping offers a relatively quick fix for drafty doors. To determine if a door leading out of your house needs new weather stripping, look for daylight. If even a sliver of daylight remains visible between the door and its frame or the floor, add weather stripping.

Next, shut the door or window on a piece of paper. If you can pull the paper out without tearing it, you're losing energy.

More than one type to choose from

There are a variety of weather stripping materials available, each good for fitting different types of door and window frames. Most are made of rubber, foam, metal, vinyl, or a combination of materials. To determine the right item for the job, check the area: if any old, worn material

has been previously installed, take a sample to your local hardware store or a contractor. If no material exists as a guide, make detailed notes about the type of gap and how the door or window is installed.

Once you have the proper materials for the job, follow the directions on the package. *Timothy S. Downare* Installation techniques range from simple to technical, depending on the type of material being used.

A few basic guidelines

- * Weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces in temperatures above 20°F.
- * Measure the area to be weather stripped twice before you cut anything.
- * Apply weather stripping snugly against both surfaces. The material should compress when the window or door is shut.

When weather-stripping doors

- ▲ Choose the appropriate door sweeps and thresholds.

- ▲ Weather strip the entire door jamb.
- ▲ Apply one continuous strip along each side.
- ▲ Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners.
- ▲ Use a thickness that causes the weather stripping to tightly press between the door and the door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

Time to do the windows

- * Apply weather stripping between the sash and frame.
- * The weather stripping shouldn't interfere with the operation of the window.

Weather Stripping Basics

While you should always consult specific instructions on weather stripping packages, here are some basic facts to keep in mind.

- 1** Weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces in temperatures above 20°F.
- 2** Measure the area to be weather stripped twice before you cut anything.
- 3** Apply weather stripping snugly against both surfaces. The material should compress when the window or door is shut.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



[Energy] Star-crossed consumers

By MEGAN MCKOY

Lots of folks in Wyoming are cutting down energy use, improving their home's insulation, turning lights off, or exchanging traditional lightbulbs for more efficient lighting options. So when consumers shop for new appliances it's common to focus on finding a product with an Energy Star rating.

But how do appliances get this rating? And why don't all appliances have them? The answer may surprise you.

Program isn't all that old

Computers were the first products to receive an efficiency rating from Energy Star, a program launched in 1992 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Dept. of Energy. Since then, more than 60 product categories have been added. Energy Star-rated products deliver the same or better performance as comparable models, and use less energy.

"We're recognizing the top performers when it comes to energy efficiency," explains Katharine Kaplan, Energy Star program manager. She notes the initiative works closely with people in a wide variety of areas, including industry experts, governments, non-profit organizations, and utilities. "We agree on a fair way to test products. Manufacturers test products using that procedure, submit the data to us, and we say, 'These are the top performers. This is how much energy you can use to be considered a leader by Energy Star.' Generally, that means you're in the top 25 percent."

Savings throughout the country

For example, qualified refrigerators must be at least 15 percent more efficient than the minimum federal efficiency standard. Energy Star-rated TVs consume 3 watts or less when switched off, compared to a stan-

What's an Energy Factor?



An Energy Factor [EF], a mandatory evaluation done on all water heaters regardless of fuel source (natural gas, electricity, oil, etc.), indicates a water heater's overall energy efficiency based on the amount of hot water produced per unit of fuel consumed daily. This includes:

- **Recovery efficiency:** How efficiently heat from the energy source is transferred to the water.
- **Standby losses:** The percentage of heat loss per hour from stored water compared to heat content of the water.
- **Cycling losses:** The loss of heat as water circulates through a tank and/or inlet and outlet pipes.

The higher the EF, the more efficient the water heater. But keep in mind higher EF values don't always mean lower annual operating costs, especially when comparing fuel sources.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

dard TV, which consumes almost 6 watts on average. By pushing for the manufacturing of more efficient products, Energy Star estimates the rating system saved businesses, organizations, and consumers \$19 billion in 2008 alone.

Consumers are taking advantage of the program. A survey by the Consortium for Energy Efficiency—a group including members like the Tennessee Valley Authority and Bonneville Power Administration—discovered 76 percent of American households recognize the Energy Star brand. *James M. Pontarolo* Of these consumers, 73 percent purchased an Energy Star-labeled product within the last year.

Energy Star means difference is not small


Not all products are rated. The program gauges the average energy efficiency of different appliance technologies and evaluates whether there's potential for increased efficiency—generally at least 25 percent higher than minimum standards. The most efficient electric resistance water heaters on the market have an Energy Factor of 0.95, about 5 percent more efficient than the minimum federal standard. *Clara J. Rosas* Since there's little room for improvement, Energy Star does not have a category for the product.

"The technology doesn't qualify for the Energy Star program—not because it's not efficient, but because it's

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Smart Grid: before and after

"Smart grid" isn't easily defined: it means many things to many people. Electric co-ops advocate smart grid technology that benefits consumers by making electricity move more efficiently and affordably. Data exchange and two-way communications are key.



= Information & Communication

Without "smarts," the electric grid does a great job of getting electricity from a power plant to your home, although information is limited. Electric co-ops must get electricity use data by manually reading meters. That information is then passed back to consumers in a monthly bill. All system upkeep is done manually, meaning co-op staff must travel to maintain all parts of the grid.



With smart grid technology, information and communications are wide open. You can monitor electric use information from your home, and your co-op can do the same remotely. The grid itself can be monitored electronically, making outages easier to pinpoint and repair. Smart grid encompasses information exchange, automation, system visibility, control, and (most importantly) the ability to save consumers money. *Monty L. Hopkins*

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
Graphics by Funnelinc.com

[Energy] Star-crossed

Continued from previous page
already as efficient as possible," remarks Steve Koep, a regional manager for REEM/Marathon Water Heaters. "When it comes to purchasing an electric water heater, consumers should consider durability and energy factor [EF], a mandatory evaluation done on all water heaters regardless of fuel source. EF takes into account fuel use, standby energy loss, and insulation under simulated actual conditions."

Global matters

Energy Star remains a driving force in the United States and in other countries as well: Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the European Union. Federal energy efficiency tax credits for appliances and home heating and air systems typically require qualifying products to be Energy Star-rated. To learn more about the program, visit www.energystar.gov.

Sources:
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REEM/Marathon Water Heaters
"Energy Star Appliances May Not All Be Efficient Audit Finds, New York Times, Oct. 19, 2009
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Climate Protection Partnerships Division
National Awareness of ENERGY STAR for 2008: Analysis of 2008 CEE Household Survey. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2009.

Don't miss a word

Each month, we will be hiding the names of five members, one from each district, in this newsletter. If you see your name this month, please call and we'll give you a \$25 bill credit.

❁ No need to stand around in the dark ❁

We have CFLs in stock that are 100-watt replacements. They will fit into any light fixture rated over 23 watts (anywhere a 60- to 100-watt incandescent bulb is now). They operate at 23 watts but provide light equal to a 100-watt incandescent. They are \$1.60 each. We have plenty.