

# *the* Messenger

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## How to be Energy Efficient in Humid Climates

Why does a 95°F day in one of the Gulf Coast states feel hotter than the same temperature in the Southwest? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

### **Heat and humidity vs dry heat**

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

### **Heat reduction is priority one**

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be comprised and mold and mildew problems can develop.

### **Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates**

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “sealed tight” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC

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## Capital Credit Certificates Mailed This Month

If you had electric service with North Arkansas Electric in 2015, you should be receiving your Capital Credit Certificate for that service very soon. These certificates are notices only and cannot be cashed or used as credit against electric bills. They are our way of informing our members of the amount assigned to each account in capital credits for the 2015 year.

The cooperative business structure is different from most. Rather than NAEC returning the money earned to an unknown investor or stockholder, cooperative profits, called margins, are assigned to you the owners, who are also users of the cooperative's services. These margins are assigned on a prorated basis according to the amount of service you use during the year in question.

When and how much of your capital credits will be refunded depends on whether the cooperative's financial condition warrants such a refund. The decision to refund capital credits is a complex one because margins or capital credits also represent system equity. This equity is essential to the cooperative's financial strength.

If North Arkansas Electric Cooperative returns too much of the system's equity as capital credits, it could jeopardize its standing with lending agencies. It would also mean the cooperative is refunding capital that is used as funds for plant construction. Without these internally generated funds, the cooperative must increase its borrowing, increasing interest costs and the cost of providing service.

On the other hand, if we kept all margins year after year and built up a high equity level, we could rightfully gain the reputation as acting like a private power company, not giving any evidence of member ownership.

The balance in a properly maintained equity/capital credit program lies somewhere between those two extremes. The board of your cooperative is striving to maintain that proper balance.

Attention High School Juniors:

*Win A Trip To Our Nation's Capital!*

2016 Washington D.C. Youth Tour application deadline is March 30th. For more information contact Leah Rouse at 870.895.6239 or [lwalker@naeci.com](mailto:lwalker@naeci.com)

**Daylight Saving Time Begins**

**Sunday, March 13th**

Roll Your Clocks Forward One Hour

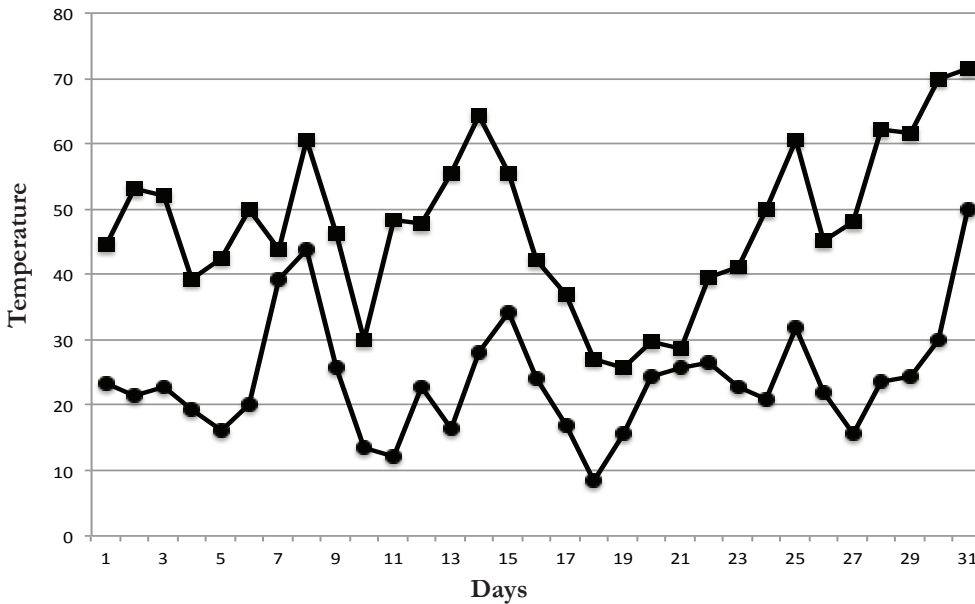


## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much needed break.

# Daily Highs & Lows

## January 2016



**Average Daily High:**

47.53 compared to 46.80 in 2015

**Average Daily Low:**

23.91 compared to 23.96 in 2015

**Total Rainfall Amount:**

1.11" compared to 3.56" in 2015

**Warmest Day:**

Jan 31st, 71.6 degrees at 3:30 p.m.

**Coolest Day:**

Jan 18th, 8.4 degrees at 7:30 a.m.

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system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won't get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is "short cycling," constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all of the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who suffer from allergies, as many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult with NAEC to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) for the capacity requirement, such as Energy Star-rated systems. NAEC can also finance your new HVAC system with approved credit.

### DIY humidity reduction

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a "wind chill" effect, lowering the temperature and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockage. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. If you would like more information about how to save energy, contact the energy experts at NAEC.

## Right-of-Way Locations

### West Tree Service

Dolph, Pineville, and Mitchell areas.

### Asplundh Tree Trim Crews:

Jordan area

## We Want Your Response

North Arkansas Electric Cooperative abides by seven cooperative principles. The first principle of voluntary and open membership describes how cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

As a member-owned cooperative, we want your input. If you have questions, comments or concerns regarding the operation of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative, please send them to Messenger, P.O. Box 1000, Salem, AR 72576, or e-mail us at [info@naeci.com](mailto:info@naeci.com). Names will be withheld upon request, but all letters should be signed. All letters will be considered for publication in the Messenger or Rural Arkansas Magazine.

We appreciate your support these past 76 years and look forward to serving you in the future.



## Operation Round Up 2016 Scholarship Application

now available online at  
[www.naeci.com](http://www.naeci.com)

All graduating seniors  
seeking higher education  
are eligible to apply.

*Deadline to apply is Friday, April 15th.*