

the Messenger

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A monthly publication of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative

Connect to help through PERS

With NAEC's Personal Emergency Response System, peace of mind and emergency help always are within reach. PERS connects to your home phone line and can place a call for help with the push of a button. Family, neighbors and medical personnel whom you pre-designate are notified immediately, so they can respond.

The console is designed for tabletop use and features a centrally located emergency button for manual activation. It is equipped for two-way voice communications. In an emergency situation, the console contacts the 24-hour Emergency Monitoring Center. With two-way voice capability, the console also will work as a speaker phone, allowing you and the operator to talk directly with each other until help arrives.

You don't have to be within reach of the console in the event of an emergency. PERS includes a waterproof wireless transmitter that may be worn on a necklace or wristband.

PERS is an affordable home signaling service. The installation fee is \$20, and the monthly fee is \$19.95 plus tax. If you or a loved one are interested in PERS, please contact NAEC at 870-895-3221 or visit an NAEC office in Salem, Mountain Home or Ash Flat.



NAEC's Personal Emergency Response System includes a console with a large emergency button as well as a waterproof wireless transmitter that can be worn as a necklace or wristband.

Easy steps to greater efficiency

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a "typical American family" spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. And, you won't have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

Getting started

According to *Money Magazine*, "improving the envelope" of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not

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Stay safe by calling 811 before digging

From planting shrubs to building a fence, many outdoor projects require digging. Before the shoveling begins, make sure to call 811 so that buried electric, water and other utility lines may be marked. It could prevent serious injury or even save your life.

The 811 "Call Before You Dig" number is a national line that was created to help prevent people from coming into contact with underground utility lines during digging projects. After you call 811 and tell the operator where you want to dig, a professional will be sent to the location to mark the areas where the public utility lines are buried free of charge.

It can take a few business days for a professional to mark your utilities with flags or spray-paint, so make sure to call in advance.

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before ever putting a shovel in the ground.

According to the Common Ground Alliance, an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the U.S. because someone decided to dig without first dialing 811.

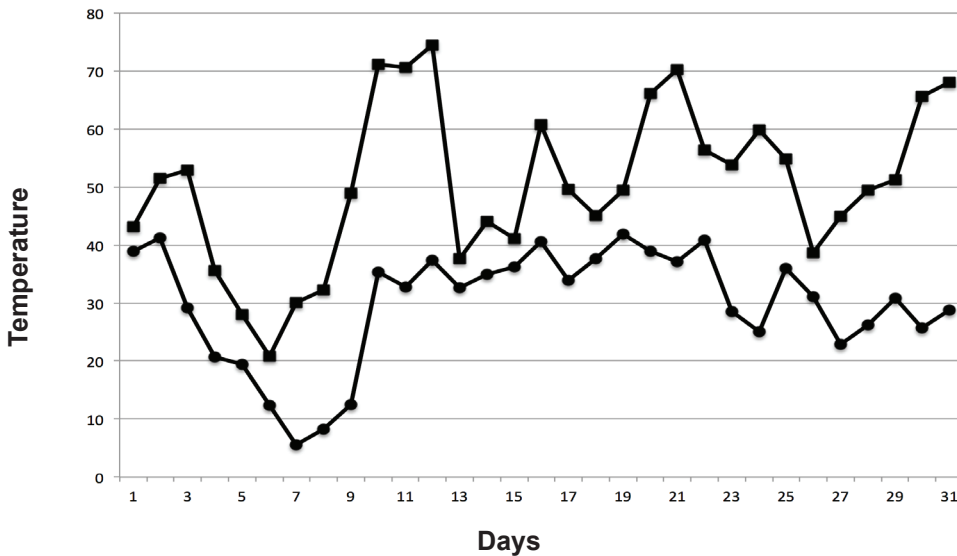
If you accidentally come in contact with an underground utility, do not bury the problem. Your first priority should be evacuating the area for safety and then notifying your utility provider. Do not attempt to fix the problem yourself.

— Safe Electricity



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Daily Highs & Lows — January 2017



Average Daily High:
50.5 compared to 47.5 in 2016

Average Daily Low:
29.8 compared to 23.9 in 2016

Total Rainfall Amount:
1.6" compared to 1.1" in 2016

Warmest Day:
Jan. 12, 74.5 degrees at 11 a.m.

Coollest Day:
Jan. 7, 5.5 degrees at 7:30 a.m.

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close tightly, and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces like the attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. According to the Department of Energy, by replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the Energy Star rating, you can save \$75 each year.

Wrapping up savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent and save about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs, according to the Department of Energy. For about \$30, you can buy pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about an hour. On a safety note, the Department of Energy recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket; a higher temperature could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to

ensure your home's heating, ventilation and air conditioning system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including: reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs; lowered system efficiency; and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly. A simple task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

Taking control of energy savings

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was programmed for the current season and family schedule? This is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine tune the temperature during particular hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules, and internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and make adjustments automatically. Most models come with an override option, so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programming. You only can achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

To learn about more ways to save, call 870-895-3221.

— Anne Prince

Efficiency Tip of the Month



Warmer weather is on the way! Use energy efficient window treatments or coverings, such as blinds, shades and films, to reduce heat gain in your home.

These devices not only improve the look of your home but also reduce energy costs.

— U.S. Department of Energy

Right-of-Way Locations

West Tree Trim Crews:
Lakeview area