




A Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# SPOT LIGHT



JOEMC Member Newsletter December 2017

• WE WISH YOU A •  
**MERRY  
CHRISTMAS**  
• HAPPY HOLIDAYS •



JOEMC Offices Will Be CLOSED  
MONDAY, JANUARY 1 - New Year's Day & Monday, JANUARY 15 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



## KEEPING YOU SAFE

### Santa's on his way and so is winter: Prepare now for the cold.

While many of us dream of a white Christmas, winter weather can also present challenges especially snow, ice or just frigid air. Get ready for winter weather, and stay cozier inside this season, by following a few simple tips:

#### BEFORE A WINTER STORM HITS

- Go to [joemc.com](http://joemc.com) for the latest regarding outages and other storm impacts.
- Create an emergency supply kit with essentials like blankets, a flashlight, batteries, food, water, medications, and first aid items.
- Make a family communications plan that details what you'll do in case of an emergency.
- Make sure your cell phone is charged.
- Bring pets indoors and move other animals or livestock to sheltered areas.
- Fill up your car with gas. Since gas stations often rely on electricity to power their pumps, a power outage may leave you stranded without gas.
- Trees can be a major cause of outages during storms, and so we work year-round to trim tree limbs and manage vegetation that grows around our power lines. If you see limbs near power lines close to your home, please call our office so we can address the issue.

#### DURING AND AFTER A WINTER STORM

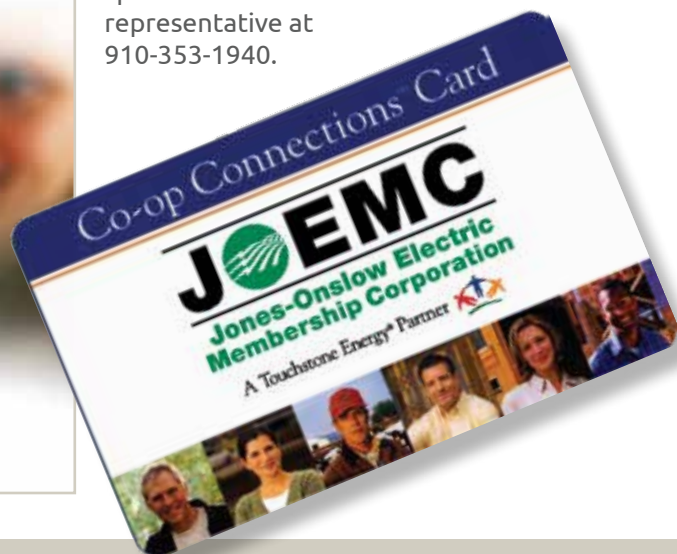
- Prevent your pipes from freezing by turning your faucets on just enough so they can drip.
- If using a space heater or heat lamp, be sure to place it on a solid surface at least three feet away from anything combustible. Always turn off space heaters before leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Never leave a fireplace unattended unless its embers are completely extinguished. Also consider using a glass or metal fire screen to catch sparks and rolling logs, and never store flammable liquids near sources of heat.
- Know how to use your generator. Generators should be placed in an open and ventilated area. They should never be operated inside a home—including spaces like the basement and garage—due to the danger of inhaling carbon monoxide fumes.
- If there is a downed power line nearby, leave the area immediately and notify your cooperative or call 911. If others are around, let them know they need to stay away.
- Report any power outages to JOEMC's automated outage report line by calling 910-353-7117 or 800-681-4146. ▼

## SAVE MONEY

**MORE SAVINGS,  
MORE DECORATING.**

The one card that does it all.  
[Connections.coop](http://Connections.coop)

The Co-op Connections® Card is free to JOEMC members. Go to [joemc.com](http://joemc.com) to learn more or speak to a customer service representative at 910-353-1940.



## Holiday Gift Ideas That Make an Impact

Interested in going green with your gift giving this year? Or not sure what to get for that hard-to-buy-for person on your list? Here are some holiday gift ideas that will keep on giving by helping you save energy and money throughout the year:

• **SMART THERMOSTATS** These Wi-Fi enabled thermostats help you reduce your heating and cooling costs by automatically adjusting the temperature by a few degrees at certain times. They also offer the convenience of controlling your thermostat anytime from your smartphone or computer.

• **ENERGY STAR ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES** If a new home appliance is on your holiday wish list, consider asking Santa for one with the ENERGY STAR label. JOEMC offers rebates on energy efficient appliances, heat pumps and water heaters. Visit [joemc.com](http://joemc.com) for details.

• **TABLETS** The switch from desktop computers to laptops provide huge energy savings and the switch to tablets will save even more. Tablets cost under \$2 a year to charge and are more than 25 times cheaper to power than the average desktop. (Tip courtesy of Alliance to Save Energy)

• **SOLAR-POWERED GADGETS** The number of solar-powered gizmos has exploded in recent years. You can find solar-powered lights, cellphones and battery chargers, and solar backpacks. And what better way to teach kids about renewable energy than buying them a solar-powered toy? ▼



### 12 Days of Energy Efficiency

1. Deck your tree out with LED Lights. They use 70% less energy than traditional bulbs.
2. Close your fireplace damper when a fire is not burning.
3. Hire a trained professional to inspect your home's heating system.
4. Turn down your thermostat when hosting holiday parties. The extra visitors and cooking will warm your home.
5. Install a programmable thermostat for a new year of energy savings.
6. Use a timer to turn off holiday lights during the night while you are sleeping.
7. Buy energy efficient electronics and appliances, and look for the Energy Star label.
8. Caulk or weatherstrip to seal air leaks around doors and windows.
9. Open curtains or blinds during the day to allow sunlight to heat your home; close them at night.
10. Rechargeable batteries and chargers save energy and they make great stocking stuffers.
11. Use the oven light to check your dishes rather than opening the oven door.
12. Enlist a professional to conduct an energy audit of your home.

To find additional tips visit [joemc.com](http://joemc.com). ►

# KEEPING YOU INFORMED

## Wrapped in Value...

One of the most exciting times of year has to be the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas. And as a child I remember that anticipation as we counted down the days to the morning of December 25th.



While the holiday season is full of excitement, we sometimes miss the magic as we juggle hefty shopping lists, parties and wrapping up work projects before the end of the year. These commitments can add stress—not joy—to the holiday season. However, JOEMC wants you to think of your electric cooperative as an early holiday gift, wrapped with layers of value.

As a member there are several money-saving perks that are available to you this time of year. First, did you know that we offer rebates/credits on purchases of Energy Star appliances and Energy Star-rated HVAC equipment including heat pump water heaters? Investing in these energy efficiency items will earn you rebates/credits ranging from \$25 to \$350 as well as save you money down the road in energy consumption.

Did you know you can save at local and national businesses with your Co-op Connections Card? You might even find coupons for the secret ingredients of your famous green bean casserole at [joemc.com](http://joemc.com) (look under THE COOPERATIVE tab at the top of the page) or [connections.coop](http://connections.coop).

Family visiting over the holidays? Every kilowatt-hour saved counts and that's where our energy efficiency experts can help, offering tips on how to manage your electricity use and even suggesting more efficient holiday lighting options. Go to our website and look under the ENERGY CENTER tab for online calculators, downloadable information and other resources.

In addition to helping you save money we can help you save time as well. Too busy to stop by our office? You don't need to take time out of your packed holiday schedule to visit one of our offices to pay your bill. Instead, pay over the phone using our automated system, use your smartphone to pay via our website (it's mobile friendly), or stop by one of the new remote kiosks located at the Realo Drugstores at the Gateway Shopping Center in Surf City and the Wal-mart Shopping Center on the southwest side of Jacksonville.

Try to avoid, the best you can, getting caught in the hustle and bustle of the busy holiday season. And, after all the gifts are wrapped and meals prepared, take time to look into the faces of those around you—they are your purpose. The rest of the holiday scramble is just details and JOEMC can help you take care of a few of those.

From our family to yours, enjoy this time of year...I hope you have a blessed holiday season!

Jeffery T. Clark | CEO



## Smoky Sausage & Grits Casserole

### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ pounds smoked sausage, chopped
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups uncooked quick-cooking grits
- 2 (8-oz.) blocks sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 cup milk
- 1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°. Brown sausage in a large skillet over medium-high heat, stirring often, until cooked; drain on paper towels. Bring salt and 4 ½ cups water to a boil in a large Dutch oven over high heat. Whisk in grits, and return to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium, and simmer 5 minutes or until thickened, whisking occasionally. Remove from heat; add cheese, stirring until completely melted. Stir in milk and next 4 ingredients. Stir in sausage. Spoon mixture into a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Bake at 350° for 50 minutes to 1 hour or until golden and cooked through. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

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