

SPOTLIGHT

JONES-ONSLow EMC—POWERING HOMES SINCE 1939



FEBRUARY 2021

Ways to Lower Your Electric Bills This Winter

Winter is here, and we have seen frigid temperatures in our area. With these colder temperatures come increased electricity bills. While your winter bills might not be as high as your summer ones, it can still cost you some extra money that you could be saving.

Luckily, there are some things you can do this winter to help reduce your monthly bill and stay comfortable.



Dim your lights. We are prone to spending more on lighting in our homes in the winter. Since days are shorter, lights are getting turned on earlier for tasks like reading and cooking. Make it a point to turn the lights off every time you are not using a room. Or make the switch to LED light bulbs to reduce your energy usage. Another simple solution is to use task lighting at night; consider using a desk lamp or side table lamps instead of overhead lighting.

Upgrade your thermostat. Upgrading your thermostat will let you customize your heating schedule to save money. You can save up to 10% on your heating bill just by setting your thermostat down a couple of degrees.

Insulate your home. If your home is typically cold, check your insulation. You may need to replace some or all. Investment in insulation in your home will pay off in your monthly electric bill for years to come.

Let the sunshine in. Take advantage of the world's best furnace—the sun! Open your curtains and blinds in the daytime and let the sun warm your home.

These are just a few ways you can avoid a high electric bill this winter. To find more helpful tips and resources, visit joemc.com.

Annual Meeting to Go Virtual

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, due to the on-going Covid-19 pandemic, the JOEMC Board of Directors has made the difficult decision to alter how our annual meeting will occur this March.

We won't be hosting the traditional in-person event this year. Instead, to maintain business continuity and still hold our annual meeting, the business meeting portion of the event will be "virtual."

Members will be able to watch the business meeting the morning of Friday, March 26, at 10 a.m., on Facebook and our website, joemc.com.

Starting in late February or early March, members will receive information in the mail that includes everything needed to register for the event.

Members returning the registration information to the co-op will be entered into the annual meeting prize giveaways, including 150 \$100 Visa gift cards. One lucky registered member will also win a recently retired fleet vehicle (in "as is" condition). All prize winners will be announced during the business meeting on March 26.

NC Youth Tour Going Virtual in Summer 2021

We encourage high school juniors to apply for this unique leadership opportunity.

Each year, Jones-Onslow EMC joins with other electric cooperatives across the state and nation to sponsor the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. This annual trip allows exceptional high school students to experience the sites of Washington, D.C., meet with elected officials, and learn more about how they can make a difference as young leaders.

Due to COVID-19 concerns, students will not be traveling to Washington D.C. for the 2021 Youth Tour, but instead, they will attend it virtually this June to ensure all involved stay safe. Youth tourists will still be able to participate in a rewarding experience that brings them together

with other young leaders from across the country to learn more about their government and electric cooperatives, network with their peers, and strengthen their leadership skills. As in years past, tourists will also be eligible to apply for several college scholarships.

While 2021 will look a little different, JOEMC is proud to continue the Youth Tour's long-standing tradition. We encourage high school juniors to apply for this unique leadership opportunity.

Want to apply or have a student in your family that is interested? A representative from Jones-Onslow

will be sending out information to local high schools during February to promote the contest. You may also call Paula Redick, JOEMC Youth Tour coordinator, at (910) 353-1940 for more information or visit joemc.com/cooperative/community-programs/youth-tour/.



MEMBERSERVICES

Secure Payment Options for Our Members

We have established new pay by phone procedures.

Jones-Onslow is committed to the safety of our members and the protection of member's private information. That is why we have established new pay by phone procedures. In the future, when you call our offices to make your monthly payment with a bank card, one of our customer service representatives will direct you to our secure automated phone system. The automated system ensures that you are in control of your bank card information.

Paying over the phone is just one of the many ways to make a payment. Members can also utilize online bill pay, remote payment kiosks, bank draft, and more. To learn more about payment options, click on the customer-service tab when you visit joemc.com.

SAFETYFIRST

Four Tips for Winter Safety

It's no surprise that the winter months bring an increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because consumers use additional electrical devices and appliances during the coldest months, like space heaters, electric blankets, and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction, which results in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries, and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

1 Don't overload outlets. Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections--plug appliances directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

2 Never leave space heaters unattended. If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure to place heaters at least three feet away from flammable items. Space heaters can take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system. Check out JOEMC's Home Energy Calculators by visiting joemc.com/energy-center/home-energy-calculators and see what your space heater is costing you to run.

3 Inspect heating pads and electric blankets. These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than ten years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads - look for dark, charred, or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Please do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.



4 Use portable generators safely. Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator to your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug-in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows, and vents. For more on generator safety, visit joemc.com/customer-service/safety/generator-safety.

Super easy and fun treat to make and gift to your valentine. Beautiful, edible, salty-sweet treats everyone loves!



CHOCOLATE COVERED PRETZEL RODS

Prep Time 10 mins
Total Time 20 mins

Ingredients

- 16 oz pretzel rods
- 12 oz chocolate chips semisweet, (dark or white chocolate), or candy melts
- Sprinkles

Instructions

1. Line two large baking sheets with wax or parchment paper.
2. Set up your workstation with all the sprinkles you are going to use. Place about ½ cup of colored melting candy (for the drizzle) in heavy-duty zip-top bags.
3. Use a double boiler and melt chocolate chips. Stir occasionally until fully melted.
4. Dip the pretzel rods into melted chocolate and cover as much of the pretzel as you want.
5. Place on prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with sprinkles. If using candy melts, microwave melts in zip-top bags for about 20-25 seconds, squish the candy around until melted and smooth. Cut a tiny cut corner from each of the bags and drizzle.
6. Let set. Store in an air-tight container.

Making the Electricity You Use Do More



Jones-Onslow EMC
CEO Jeffery T. Clark

The dead of winter brings colder temperatures, resulting in higher energy bills. Even though we are in the business of selling energy and meeting your electricity needs, we do not want you to waste money and pay more than you should. Taking time to do some of the little things correctly can add up to significant savings on your electric bill and leave extra money in your pocket.

Energy efficiency remains a key part of our efforts to keep your power costs down. Best of all, energy efficiency—simply making the electricity you use to do more—saves you money.

I encourage you to visit the Energy Center section of joemc.com. There are several online tools available (including home energy calculators, an energy audit section, and a video library), as well as simple energy-saving ideas you can implement in your home to help reduce your energy use.

You can also set up a high or excessive usage notification that will email you when your energy usage goes above a specified amount.

We also have energy use advisors on staff—who have performed hundreds of energy audits over the years—to assist you with operating your homes and businesses as efficiently as possible. They can provide some great advice

on making smarter energy choices and can assist you with improving the energy-efficiency of your home.

Our mobile app and online member portal provide you full access to your account with many convenient energy management tools at your fingertips. The Energy Usage Monitoring tool charts your electricity use monthly or daily and even provides weather information so you can see how the weather affects usage.

You can also set up a high or excessive usage notification that will email you when your energy usage goes above a specified amount. This notification can be very valuable in helping identify an appliance malfunction, potentially saving you hundreds of dollars in wasted energy.

Finding ways to help you save energy dollars is important to us. Valuable tools like the Energy Center on joemc.com, usage monitoring and notifications, and energy audits are just a few of the ways JOEMC is looking out for you.

To learn about other ways to make your home more energy-efficient visit joemc.com or call our office at (910) 353-1940 to talk to one of our energy use advisors.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

Source:
www.energy.gov



www.joemc.com