



Top five energy users in your home

A starting point for savings



While most homeowners would like to be more energy efficient and save money, often it feels overwhelming because many people don't know where to start. How can the average family use less energy, lower their utility bill and still meet their daily energy needs? To help jumpstart your effort, it is useful to know what the top energy users are in your home. With this knowledge, you can choose a path that works best for your family.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Agency, the top five energy users in U.S. homes are:

1. Space cooling
2. Space heating
3. Water heating
4. Lighting
5. Refrigeration

Adjust the temperature.

Together, home heating and cooling use the most energy and take the biggest bite out of your energy budget. On the bright side, there are ways you

can achieve at least 10 percent savings by taking a few simple low-cost or no-cost steps.

- During cold weather, set your thermostat to 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- During warm weather, the recommended indoor temperature is 78 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Cleaning the filters of your HVAC system can cut costs from five to 15 percent.
- Clean the coils around your electric baseboard heater to maintain maximum efficiency.
- Caulk and weather-strip around windows and doors to prevent heat from escaping to the outdoors.

No matter what the climate or time of year, proper use of a programmable thermostat can save you 10 percent on your monthly utility bill.

Shine the light on savings.

Take a fresh look at the lighting in your home. If you still

use incandescent lighting, your light bulbs are operating at only 25 percent energy efficiency. Replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified LEDs can save you \$75 per year. Another easy way to save is to always turn lights off in rooms that are not being used.

Water heating efficiency

Just as it is energy-wise to insulate your roof, wall or floor, it also pays to wrap your hot water heater with an insulating blanket. This is all the more critical if you have an older unit. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. For additional efficiency and savings, insulate exposed hot water lines and drain one to two gallons of water from the bottom of your tank annually to prevent sediment build-up.

Put cold hard cash back in your wallet.

If your refrigerator was purchased before 2001, chances are it uses 40 percent more energy than a new Energy Star

(mini) Home Energy Audit

Clip this list and check each area of your home to see if you're using energy efficiently. Every nook and cranny holds potential inefficiencies, so it pays to be thorough! Visit www.energysavers.gov for more information on what's listed below.



INSULATION and DUCTWORK



Attic

- Insulation spread evenly
- Insulation in good condition
- Attic vents are unblocked by insulation
- Attic access doors properly insulated and sealed

R-Value indicates an insulation's resistance to heat flow (the higher the better). Insulation should meet R-values recommended for your specific climate.

Walls and floors

- Minimum R-value of 19 for perimeter walls
- Minimum R-value of 25 for under-floor insulation

Basement

- Ductwork insulated and sealed
- Hot water pipes insulated
- Water heater insulated, if in unconditioned space

HEATING and COOLING



- Air supply vents are unblocked by furniture or curtains
- Return air registers are unblocked by furniture
- Return air handler filters are clean
- HVAC system has had annual maintenance check-up
- Programmable thermostat installed and programmed

AIR INFILTRATION



Windows and Doors

- Windows close and lock properly
- Window gaskets in good condition
- Window trim sealed and painted
- Doors properly weather stripped
- Doors close and latch properly

Exterior Penetrations

Plumbing and wire openings sealed:

- Kitchen cabinets
- Bathroom cabinets
- Utility room
- Fireplace damper sealed tightly

APPLIANCES and LIGHTING



- Refrigerator condenser coils clean
- Refrigerator door gasket tight
- Unused refrigerators and freezers unplugged
- Water heater set to 120 degrees or below
- Dishwasher energy-saving feature turned on
- Washing machine loads run with cold water when possible



Well Pump

- Operating properly
- Good pressure
- No leaks

Lighting

- Use LED lightbulbs
- Outdoor lighting automatically triggered by motion or dark

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

model. If you are considering an appliance update, a new Energy Star refrigerator uses at least 15 percent less energy than non-qualified models and 20 percent less energy than required by current federal standards. Regardless of the age of your fridge, there are additional steps you can take to save energy and money. For example, don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends temperatures of 35 – 38 degrees Fahrenheit for the fresh food compartment and 0 degrees Fahrenheit for separate freezers (used for long-term storage).

By understanding how your home uses energy, you can determine the best ways to modify energy use and keep more money in your wallet. For additional ways to save, contact Custer Public Power District's energy experts at 308-872-2451. ♦

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.





NATIONAL FARM SAFETY & HEALTH WEEK

EVERY FARMER COUNTS

SEPTEMBER 20-26, 2020



#1 HARVEST SAFETY TIP

Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.



#2 HARVEST SAFETY TIP

Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.



#3 HARVEST SAFETY TIP

Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.



#4 HARVEST SAFETY TIP

If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab, without touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety.

Happy Labor Day

“Genius begins great works; labor alone finishes them.”

~Joseph Joubert~



Custer Public Power District's office and service centers will be closed Monday, September 7, in observance of Labor Day.

Southern Cheese Straws

Featured in the New York Times/Southern Flavors Sure To Delight
December 4, 2012 By Kim Severson



Tara Donne for The New York Times.
Food Styling: Liza Jernow

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ pound sharp orange Cheddar, room temperature
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, room temperature

PREPARATION

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Grate cheese.

In a food processor, pulse dry ingredients until combined, then add cheese and butter. Process until dough becomes smooth and has the texture of Play-Doh. Alternately, make the dough in a stand mixer by creaming cheese and butter until smooth. Then combine dry ingredients in a bowl and combine with butter mixture at low speed until smooth.

Shape the dough into a log about a quarter-size in diameter, wrap with plastic wrap or parchment and allow to rest for 20 minutes. Or store in the refrigerator until ready to bake.

Bring dough to room temperature and slice. Repeat with remaining dough. Dough may also be hand-rolled into long ropes and cut to size, or shaped into a straw shape.

Bake for about 13 minutes or until the edges just begin to brown. Store between sheets of parchment or waxed paper in an airtight container. Will keep for up to three weeks.

These are perfect to make ahead and freeze, just roll them into a couple of logs leave wrapped in plastic wrap and place in freezer bag. When you are ready for them pull them from the freezer, let mine sit at room temperature for about 30 minutes then slice and bake. They go perfect with dips and soups on a fall football game night!



CUSTER CURRENTS

Newsletter of the

Custer Public Power District
Broken Bow, NE - Phone 872-2451
www.custerpower.com

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McPherson, Logan and parts of Sherman, Garfield,
Brown, Cherry, Lincoln, and Dawson Counties

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Board Meetings

The regular monthly meeting of the Custer Public Power District Board of Directors is on the last Thursday of each month, beginning at 9:00 a.m.(CDT) in the main office in Broken Bow on Hwy. 2.

An agenda for each regular meeting of the board is available for public inspection during business hours.

In the event of matters of an emergency nature or conflicts with other meeting dates, the Board of Directors will set changes. Any change in the monthly meeting date will be posted in the legal notice at the main headquarters building at Broken Bow and at each of the District's area service centers located in Callaway, Sargent, Stapleton and Thedford, Nebraska.

