

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Enlightener

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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LIGHTBULB WINNERS

Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:

- Larry Romme
- Hector Saenz
- Dale Schell
- Danielle Sparks
- Walter Reardon
- Victor Robles

Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!

NONDISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Is Your HVAC System Ready for Winter?

Here's what to check this fall

As cold weather approaches, fall is a good time to ensure your heating and cooling system is ready for winter. A few simple maintenance steps can improve comfort, reduce energy use, and help prevent a breakdown when you need heat the most.

SCHEDULE A PROFESSIONAL INSPECTION

- Have your heating system inspected by a qualified HVAC professional each year, preferably before winter weather arrives. A professional can check for worn parts, airflow issues, safe operation, and other problems that may not be obvious to a homeowner.
- Ensure the inspection includes checking for proper ventilation and signs of carbon monoxide risks if your home has a gas, propane or oil furnace.

CHANGE OR CLEAN AIR FILTERS

- Check your air filter regularly and replace or clean it as needed — usually every one to three months. A dirty filter can block airflow, make your system work harder and affect indoor air quality.
- Consider filter changes more often for homes with pets, allergies, heavy system use or significant dust.

CHECK AIRFLOW THROUGHOUT THE HOME

- Ensure all registers and vents are clean and not blocked by furniture, rugs, curtains or other items.
- Vacuum vents to remove dust and keep air moving freely. If you notice excessive dust around vents, uneven heating, or weak airflow, it may be time to have a professional check your system and ductwork.

Continued on page 12C ►



SAFETY TIP

Frayed wires, damaged plugs and overloaded outlets can spark a fire. Check cords and plugs regularly and replace worn items. Never run cords under rugs, or furniture, and unplug small appliances when not in use.



SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION UP TO DATE

Please keep your contact information including phone number, email address and mailing address up to date.

Keeping your information up to date helps us keep you in the know about the business and operations of your electric cooperative.

Contact our offices at 800-794-2353 if you need to update the contact information on your account.

We appreciate your help in gathering this information.



NAME



ADDRESS



EMAIL



PHONE

Searching for a career with purpose?

Consider an electric co-op career.

- Build a career.
- Serve your community.
- Shape the future of energy.

Careers in Energy Week | Oct. 19-23



KINDS OF CO-OPS

Cooperatives come in many forms — from electric utilities and credit unions to farm supply stores and housing co-ops — but all cooperatives are built with a common purpose: to meet the needs of the members they serve.

Co-ops strengthen local communities, keep decisions close to home and invest in long-term success.

October is National Co-op Month.

WORKER

Membership: Workers who share profits and decision-making

Ex: EQUAL EXCHANGE

PRODUCER

Membership: Product processors and marketers

Ex: LAND O' LAKES

CONSUMER

Membership: Customers who buy goods and services

Ex: REI

FINANCIAL

Membership: Banking, insurance, lending customers

Ex: CREDIT UNION OF AMERICA

RETAIL

Membership: Businesses seeking bulk purchasing and shared marketing

Ex: ACE HARDWARE

UTILITY

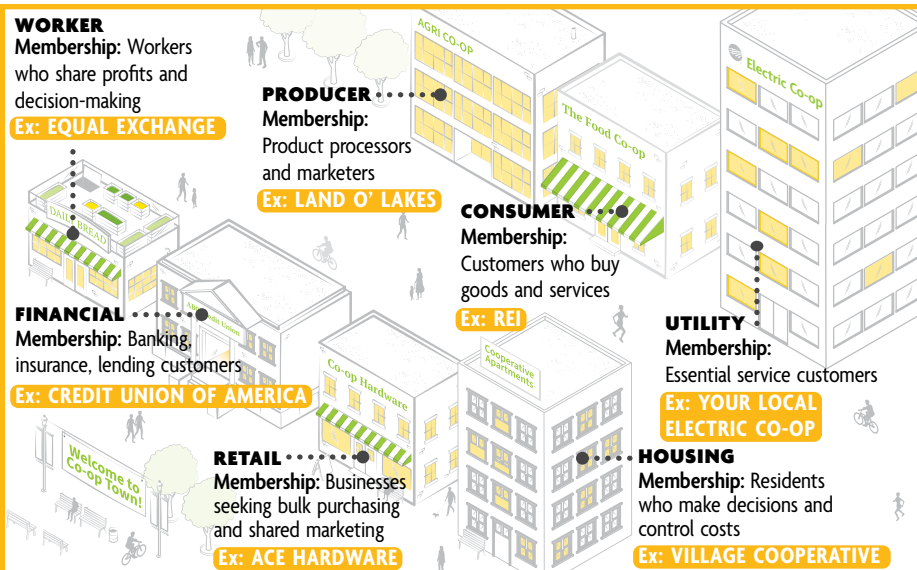
Membership: Essential service customers

Ex: YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC CO-OP

HOUSING

Membership: Residents who make decisions and control costs

Ex: VILLAGE COOPERATIVE



Is Your HVAC System Ready for Winter?

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- Keep most of the registers open throughout your home. Closing vents in unused rooms may seem like a way to save energy, but it can disrupt airflow and make your system work harder.

REDUCE HEAT LOSS

- Look for drafts around windows and doors and seal gaps with weatherstripping or caulk.
- Check insulation in attics, basements and crawl spaces. Proper insulation can help keep warm air inside and reduce strain on your heating system.

PREPARE OUTDOOR HVAC EQUIPMENT

- Remove leaves, branches, grass clippings and other debris around outdoor HVAC equipment. Trim shrubs and vegetation to maintain at least 2 feet of clearance around the unit.
- Check gutters and downspouts to ensure water drains away from HVAC equipment.
- Check your furnace's outdoor air intake and exhaust pipes. Snow, ice or debris can block airflow, keep your furnace from operating properly and increase the risk of carbon monoxide buildup.
- Keep outdoor heat pumps clear of snow, ice and debris during the winter. Do not cover a heat pump while it is operating, because it needs airflow to work properly.

ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT FOR ENERGY SAVINGS

- Install or program a smart thermostat to match your household schedule. Lowering the temperature when you are asleep or away from home can help save energy without compromising comfort.
- Review the settings on your smart or programmable thermostat before winter begins. You could set the fan to "auto" during mild fall weather to circulate air efficiently without unnecessary energy use.

KNOW WHEN IT MAY BE TIME FOR A REPLACEMENT

Heating systems more than 10 years old may operate less efficiently than newer models. Planning ahead can help you avoid an emergency replacement during extreme cold. Check with your utility for rebates on energy-efficient replacements.

- Watch for signs such as increasing energy bills, uneven heating, frequent repairs, unusual noises or a system that takes too long to heat your home.
- When it is time to replace your system, consider Energy Star-labeled equipment for long-term energy savings and efficiency. These include high-efficiency furnaces, air-source heat pumps or geothermal heat pumps, depending on your home, climate and budget.



SAVE ENERGY THIS *Fall and Winter*

FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE TIPS TO REDUCE ENERGY USE AND KEEP YOU WARM THIS SEASON:

- Seal gaps around windows and doors with caulk or weatherstripping.
- Close curtains and blinds at night to keep the cold out.
- Open window coverings on sunny days to let the sun in.
- Clean or replace furnace filters.
- Run ceiling fans clockwise to push warm air down.
- Check insulation in your attic, attic hatch and crawl space.
- Use a smart thermostat to lower temperatures when asleep or away.
- Close the fireplace flue when not in use.
- Schedule a home energy audit to find and fix energy wasters.

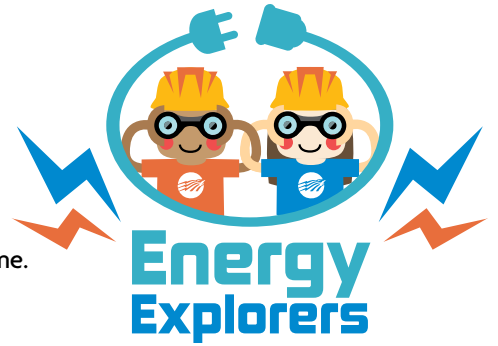
SOURCE: WWW.SAFELECTRICITY.ORG

Co-op Month Quiz

October is National Co-op Month

Did you know there are many different kinds of cooperatives?

A cooperative, or co-op, is a business that's owned by the people who use it. Some co-ops help people buy groceries, some help farmers sell their crops and some — like your electric co-op — bring power to your home. Read each clue below and guess the type of cooperative you think it is.



ANSWER CHOICES:

WORKER PRODUCER CONSUMERS UTILITY RETAIL FINANCIAL HOUSING

▶ 1. YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

It keeps the lights on, restores power after storms and is owned by the members it serves.

TYPE: _____

▶ 2. REI

People can become members to shop for outdoor gear, enjoy special benefits, and help support the business.

TYPE: _____

▶ 3. OCEAN SPRAY

Thousands of cranberry and grapefruit farmers work together to grow fruit and produce juice sold across the country.

TYPE: _____

▶ 4. YOUR LOCAL CREDIT UNION

Members save money, open checking accounts, and apply for loans through a financial institution they own together.

TYPE: _____

▶ 5. A GROCERY CO-OP

Local shoppers become members to help support a community grocery store and buy fresh foods.

TYPE: _____

▶ 6. A COOPERATIVE APARTMENT BUILDING

People work together to own and manage the place where they live.

TYPE: _____

▶ 7. A COOPERATIVE BAKERY

The people who bake the bread, decorate the cakes, and serve customers also own the business together.

TYPE: _____

Answer Key:

1. Utility 2. Retail 3. Producer 4. Financial 5. Consumer 6. Housing 7. Worker