

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER / CEO

Green gift-giving guide

New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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Rick L. Eichelberger
General Manager & CEO

WONDERING WHAT to buy for the person who has everything? How about a gift for an environment-friendly family member or friend? This holiday season, New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative urges you to consider giving the gift of energy efficiency.

This doesn't mean you have to go out and replace your aunt's refrigerator or

your grandma's washer and dryer — though you may be their favorite if you do. Giving the gift of energy efficiency can be as simple as filling their stockings or creating a gift basket with some of these helpful products.

LED lightbulbs are the easiest way to increase efficiency in your home. From indoor bulbs for your lamps, recessed lighting and hanging fixtures to outdoor lighting, such as flood lamps and even decorative lighting strands — there's an LED bulb for everyone.

Recently I added LED lighting to most of the indoor living area of my house. I am particularly pleased with the variety of color tones available and the dimming capability. The LED lighting available today is very close to what we all were used to in the incandescent lighting we had for years.

LED lighting used to be deemed as prohibitively expensive, but prices have gone down significantly in recent years. Here are some top-rated options for energy-efficient lighting that makes everything bright:


- ▶ GE Reveal – a 60-watt equivalent bulb that will run you around \$18;

- ▶ Cree TW Series – a 60-watt equivalent bulb that will run you between \$9 and \$16; and
- ▶ Sylvania's Ultra HD – a floodlight-style bulb that will run you between \$22 and \$35.

Water-saving showerheads are also a great gift option. On average, Americans consume over 3 billion gallons of water daily. Switching to a water-saving showerhead could save a family of three up to \$631 per year in costs and could reduce water consumption by over 2,600 gallons per year. Lack of water pressure can be a concern when giving this gift, so here are a few examples of showerheads that save water, but not at the expense of water pressure:

- ▶ Glacier Bay 1-Spray Hand Shower – This will run you around \$13;
- ▶ The Delta 1-Spray Water-Saving Showerhead – This will run you around \$16; and
- ▶ The Delta Arias 5-Spray Showerhead – This will run you around \$37.

Providing your family and friends with energy-efficiency tips along with a gift is also a great option. For example, did you know that one of the best ways to save energy in your home is to turn off all of your electronic devices? Try a TrickleStar Motion Sensor Power Strip, which costs around \$30.

Supplement your gift with caulking supplies or weather strips, and before you know it, you will have the perfect energy-saving gift. All of these products are available online and at many hardware stores, so get to shopping. From all of us here at New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, have a happy, energy-efficient holiday! 

Don't take the merry out of your Christmas

TRADITIONS are a very important part of Christmas. Many of us get together with family and friends to enjoy these traditions. But remember as you celebrate Christmas to put safety at the top of your list. We all like to see the sparkle and twinkle of Christmas lights strung around the inside and outside of our homes, but no one wants to see the flashing lights of a fire truck or ambulance — the result of a holiday accident that could have been prevented.

Unfortunately, trees and lights can be danger-filled decorations. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, Christmas trees start an average of 260 house fires each season, resulting in more than \$16.4 million in property damage. Another 150 house fires are sparked by Christmas lights and decorative lighting, costing \$8.9 million in damage.

Remember while you are stringing your lights up around your house that approximately 5,800 people visit the emergency room each year due to falls while decorating. More than half of these injuries are caused by falls from ladders or roofs.

When you're decorating, take these precautions to ensure the safety of you, your family and guests:

Trees

Real or artificial, short or tall, Christmas

trees are often the culprit for danger.

Include these safety guidelines in your decorating routine:

- ▶ Make sure an artificial tree is labeled "fire resistant." Be aware that "fire resistant" does not mean "fire proof." Exercise caution when it comes to your tree.
- ▶ Make sure a live tree is fresh and green. Dry, brittle limbs and shedding needles are a breeding ground for sparks. Water a live tree regularly to prevent it from drying out.
- ▶ Place any type of tree away from heat sources such as fireplaces, vents and radiators.

Lights

Festive lights give homes a magical glow both inside and out. When decorating this season, a few simple safety tips can keep your spirits bright:

- ▶ Do not overload electrical outlets. Most lights are designed to connect no more than three strands. Inspect the wires periodically to make sure they are intact and not warm to the touch.
- ▶ Never leave lights on overnight or when no one is home.
- ▶ Only use lights that have been approved by an independent testing laboratory.
- ▶ Replace any strands that show signs of

damage, such as bare or frayed wires, broken bulbs, or loose connections.

Faulty lights can send an electrical charge through a tree and electrocute anyone who comes in contact with a branch.

Extension cords

Without extension cords, your decorations won't look as good. These cords provide electricity to light your Christmas lights, window candles or other lighted decorations. One thought on many people's minds is hiding the useful, but ugly, cords. Keep in mind these safety tips when using extension cords:

- ▶ Check that all electrical items, including extension cords, are certified by a nationally recognized independent testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Intertek (ETL) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA).
- ▶ Do not place power cords and extension cords in high traffic areas or under carpets, rugs, or furniture.
- ▶ Never nail or staple cords to the wall or baseboard because that can damage the wire insulation.
- ▶ Make sure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use — indoor or outdoor — and meet or exceed the power needs of the item being used. ⚡



Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)


The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program — better known as LIHEAP — is a grant program that helps low-income families pay their heating and utility bills. This program opened on Nov. 3, 2014, for cash and crisis grants. The programs are scheduled to close on April 3, 2015. You may apply for cash or crisis grants or both. Grants include the following:

- ▶ Cash Grants — This grant is sent directly to the utility company or fuel provider. You do not have to be out of fuel or have a disconnection notice to apply for this grant.
- ▶ Crisis Grant — This money will be sent directly to your fuel provider or utility company. To be eligible for this grant, you need to have an emergency situation. Examples of an emergency include: broken heating equipment or leaking lines, lack of fuel, termination of utility service, or danger of being without fuel and electric service.

If you received LIHEAP last year, you should have already received an application. If this is the first time you have applied, you can get an application by:

- ▶ Contacting your local assistance office

by phone or in person:

- Bedford County 814-623-6127 or toll-free at 800-542-8584;
- Fulton County 717-485-3151 or toll-free at 800-222-8563;
- Huntingdon County 814-643-1170 or toll-free at 800-237-7674;
- ▶ Calling the LIHEAP Client Helpline at 1-866-857-7095; or
- ▶ Applying online at www.compass.state.pa.us 

Co-op calendar

December 25 – Co-op closed to celebrate Christmas

December 26 – Billing Due Date

January 1 – Co-op closed to celebrate New Year's



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Be merry and bright, but don't let your holiday lights shine all night. Save money on your electric bill by installing a light timer for your decked out home. It can help lower your electric bill and reduce energy consumption. Use a manual timer plugged into an electrical outlet to automatically turn lights on and off as scheduled.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



Say Merry Christmas with a Gift of Lights



It won't be long before we are hearing "Merry Christmas!" Instead of worrying about what to get those hard-to-buy-for people, why not purchase an Electric Gift Certificate from New Enterprise REC? You can purchase a gift certificate in any value. You may either mail your coupon and payment, stop by the office, or call us and pay over the phone with a check, Visa, or MasterCard.

New Enterprise REC Gift Certificate

Recipient's Name: _____

Amount of Gift: _____

Purchaser's Name: _____

Purchaser's Address: _____

Purchaser's Phone Number: _____

How should the certificate(s) be signed: _____

(Mom & Dad, The Jones Family, Joe & Betty, etc.)

(Please circle one)

I wish to remain anonymous

Mail letter to recipient

Mail letter to purchaser

Bundle up for winter storms

BY ABBY BERRY

ARE YOU ready for winter's cold grasp? Snow and ice are inevitable when dealing with winter storms, but being prepared can make a world of difference. New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) recommends the following tips to help you prepare for wintry blasts.

Winterize your home

Winter storms wreak havoc on your home. By winterizing your living space, you'll be prepared for extreme cold and hazardous conditions.

- ▶ Remember to maintain and inspect heating equipment and chimneys every year to ensure they're working safely and properly.
- ▶ Caulk and weather strip doors and windows to make the most of your heating system.
- ▶ Freezing temperatures often cause water pipes to burst. Remember to insulate pipes with insulation or newspapers and plastic. Allow faucets to drip during extreme cold to avoid frozen pipes.
- ▶ Consider installing storm windows for better insulation. You can also cover windows with plastic (from the inside) to keep the cold out.
- ▶ Make sure everyone in your family knows where the home's fire extinguisher is located and how to use it properly. House fires occur more frequently during winter months, as people tend to use alternative heating methods that may not be safe.

Prepare a winter survival kit

Severe winter storms often bring heavy accumulation of ice and snow, which can lead to downed power lines and extended outages. New Enterprise REC crews will work hard to restore power, but having a winter survival kit on hand is a smart idea. Kits should include:

- ▶ **Food:** Store food that does not require cooking, such as canned goods, crackers, dehydrated meats and dried fruit. Keep a large supply of water on hand. Ready.gov recommends five gallons per person.



- ▶ **Medication:** Be sure to refill all prescriptions in the event of a major power outage.
- ▶ **Identification:** Keep all forms of identification handy, such as driver's licenses, photo IDs and Social Security cards. Bank account information and insurance policies are also good to have on hand.
- ▶ **Other items:** First aid kit, blankets, flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

Stay warm and safe

If an outage occurs, you should plan for an alternate heating source. A fireplace, propane space heater or wood-burning stove would be sufficient. Fuel and wood-burning heating sources should always be vented, and make sure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly. Always practice extreme caution when using alternate heating sources.

If you decide to use a portable generator during an outage, make sure it is placed outside the home for proper ventilation. Be careful not to overload the generator. Use appropriate extension cords that can handle the electric load.

Follow these tips, and your family will stay warm in the event of a power outage. For more information on preparing for winter storms, visit www.ready.gov.

KIDZCORNER

Winter fun

Here is a good project for those cold snowy days.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 3/4 cup small-bird birdseed
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 small envelope of Knox gelatin
- twine or string
- cookie cutters, molds or Mason jar lids
- wax paper

WHAT YOU'LL DO

- ▶ Mix together the envelope of gelatin with 1/4 cup of water and bring to a simmer while stirring. Continue stirring until the gelatin is dissolved.
- ▶ Remove from heat and let cool for a minute.
- ▶ Stir in the 3/4 cup birdseed, adding a little more if there is liquid still in the bottom of the pan.
- ▶ Lay your cookie cutters out on wax paper and fill half way with the birdseed mixture.
- ▶ Cut your twine, knot the end and push the knot down into your birdseed.
- ▶ Continue filling with birdseed, covering the end of your twine and knot.
- ▶ Push the birdseed evenly into the cookie cutter until it's full.
- ▶ Allow them to dry overnight, turning them over every now and then.
- ▶ Remove from the cookie cutters and hang them in your trees.
- ▶ Then wait by the window to watch for your first guest.

