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A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

November 2008

Cloudcroft, N.M. 575-682-2521

Alto, N.M. 575-336-4550

Carrizozo, N.M. 575-648-2352

Planned Outage to be Held November 2

OCEC is going to have an outage occur on it's system on November 2 at 4 AM in order for it's power provider to update some equipment in their switching station. The areas affected will be Capitan, Ruidoso Downs, Hondo, Carrizozo, San Patricio, Glencoe, Parts of Mescalero, Nogal, and Riverside. The outage is planned to take up to 2 hours.

Thank you for your cooperation during this necessary time of repairs.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

(This month's recipe was submitted by Wanda Felten)

Hamburger Soup

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 16 ounce can tomatoes, cut up
- 2 med. Onions, chopped
- 2 med. Carrots, sliced or chopped
- 1/3 cp pearl barley
- 1/4 cup catsup
- 1 Tablespoon instant beef bouillon Granules
- 2 teaspoons salt or seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon dried basil, crushed
- 1 bay leaf

In a large saucepan, cook ground beef till browned. Drain off fat. Stir in remaining ingredients and 5 cups of water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour or longer. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove bay leaf. Serves 6.

Consumer's Guide to Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Insulation and Air Sealing

You can reduce your home's heating and cooling costs through proper insulation and air sealing techniques. These techniques will also make your home more comfortable.

Any air sealing efforts will complement your insulation efforts, and vice versa. Proper moisture control and ventilation strategies will improve the effectiveness of air sealing and insulation, and vice versa.

Therefore, a home's energy efficiency depends on a balance between all of these elements:

Air sealing

Insulation

Moisture control

Ventilation.

A proper balance between all of these elements will also result in a more comfortable, healthier home environment.

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Air Leakage

Air leakage, or infiltration, occurs when outside air enters a house uncontrollably through cracks and openings. Properly air sealing such cracks and openings in your home can significantly reduce heating and cooling costs, improve building durability, and create a healthier indoor environment.

It is unwise to rely on air leakage for ventilation because it can't be controlled. During cold or windy weather, too much air may enter the house. When it's warmer and less windy, not enough air may enter. Air infiltration also can contribute to problems with moisture control. Moldy and dusty air can enter a leaky house through such areas as attics or foundations. This air in the house could cause health problems.

The recommended strategy in both new and old homes is to reduce air leakage as much as possible and to provide controlled ventilation as needed.

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Insulation

Properly insulating your home will not only help reduce your heating and cooling costs but also make your home more comfortable.

How Insulation Works

You need insulation in your home to provide resistance to heat flow. The more heat flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In the winter, this heat flow moves directly from all heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements, and even to the outdoors. Heat flow can also move indirectly through interior ceilings, walls, and floors—wherever there is a difference in temperature. During the cooling season, heat flows from the outdoors to the interior of a house.

To maintain comfort, the heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system and the heat gained in the summer must be removed by your cooling system. Properly insulating your home will decrease this heat flow by providing an effective resistance to the flow of heat.

An insulation's resistance to heat flow is measured or rated in terms of its thermal resistance or R-value.

Adding Insulation to an Existing Home

Unless your home was specially constructed for energy efficiency, you can usually reduce

your energy bills by adding more insulation. Many older homes have less insulation than homes built today, but adding insulation to a newer home may also pay for itself within a few years.

To determine whether you should add insulation, you first need to find out how much insulation you already have in your home and where.

A qualified home energy auditor will include an insulation check as a routine part of a whole-house energy audit. An energy audit will also help identify areas of your home that are in need of air sealing. (Before you insulate, you should make sure that your home is properly air sealed.)

If you don't want an energy audit, you need to find out the following:

- Where your home is, isn't, and/or should be insulated
- What type of insulation you have
- The R-value and the thickness or depth (inches) of the insulation you have.

If you live in a newer house, you can probably find out this information from the builder. If you live in an older house, you'll need to inspect the insulation yourself if you don't want an energy audit.

Inspecting and Evaluating Your Insulation

Check the attic, walls and floors adjacent to an unheated space, like a garage or basement.

The structural elements are usually exposed in these areas, which makes it easy to see what type of insulation you have and to measure its depth or thickness (inches).

- Inspect the exterior walls using an electrical outlet:
 1. Turn off the power to the outlet.
 2. Remove the outlet cover and shine a flashlight into the crack around the outlet box. You should be able to see if there is insulation in the wall and possibly how thick it is.
 3. Pull out a small amount of insulation if needed to help determine the type of insulation.
 4. Check outlets on the first and upper floors, if any, and in old and new parts of a house. Just because you find insulation in one wall doesn't mean that it's everywhere in the house.

Inspect and measure the thickness (inches) of any insulation in unfinished basement ceilings and walls, or above crawl spaces. If the crawl space isn't ventilated, it may have insulation in the perimeter wall. If your house is relatively new, it may have been built with insulation outside the basement or foundation walls. If so, the insulation in these spaces won't be visible. The builder or the original homeowner might be able to tell you if exterior insulation was used.

OCEC will be providing LED Christmas Lights this year in strings of 25 C9 Lights. They come in colors of Pure White, Multi-color, or Red. Displays with pricing information are in the lobbies of each OCEC office. LED lights save 90 % energy over conventional lights and provide brilliant light. Stop by any office and look at the display.