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

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October 2008

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH

Each October, cooperatives all across America celebrate the role, accomplishments and contributions of our nation's cooperatives. Observing National Coop Month gives electric coops yet another reason to tell our members that they are part of something special.

At a time of increasing national concern about the economy, especially rising energy costs, we also must communicate the cooperative difference to decision makers at all levels whose actions affect our members and the communities in which they live and work. The cooperative difference defines who we are and what we can achieve: looking out for our members' best interests.

For more information of National Cooperative Month, visit <http://www.coopmonth.coop>. This year's content includes the updated "A Day in the Life" publication with new intriguing cooperative member scenarios, as well as other great tools to help educated consumers the impact cooperatives have in their everyday lives.

Energy Efficiency Proper Insulation

One of simplest ways to reduce your home's heating and cooling costs-and improve comfort-involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides 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 winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements, and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls, and floors-wherever there is a difference in temperature.

During the summer cooling season, the reverse takes place. Heat flows from the outdoors to the interior of a house.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. In summer, heat gained must be removed by your cooling system. Proper insulation, though, decreases heat flow.

Heat flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-

value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of a multilayered installation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

Insulation effectiveness also depends on how and where it's installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it's important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.

For more information, visit <http://www.eere.energy.gov>

If Your Power Goes Off

- First go to your main electrical panel to see if a breaker has tripped.
- If a problem is not in main panel, call a neighbor to see if other homes in the area have the same problem.
- If the problem is not within your homes wiring, then call OCEC

If after hours: 1-800-548-4660. Give us your name and physical address, phone number, account.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH CELEBRATE YOUR COOP

Recipes Needed

Have you wished that you knew how Granny Virginia made that delicious Fried Cherry Pie last year at Thanksgiving or how the neighbor made his barbecue sauce at the last cookout.

We are compiling a cookbook full of recipes from our members and employees of Otero County Electric Cooperative.

You will get credit in the cookbook for your recipe because I will be putting your name in the book along with your recipe. The books will be made available to all members when completed. Please mail or email your recipes to:

Clint Gardner
Mgr. of Member Services
Otero County Electric Coop.
P.O. Box 1135
Alto, New Mexico 88312
or
clintg@ote-coop.com

Send more than one if you'd like. We welcome all recipes and need as many as we can get to make it a successful cookbook. There will be a reminder each month in your Power-Gram.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

(This month's recipe was submitted by Jean Ray of High Rolls, NM).

MARINADED GRILLED SALMON

Fresh Salmon Fillet

Sauce:

4 ½ TBS. Olive Oil

3 TBS. White Wine Vinegar

1 ½ TSP. Dijon Mustard

Combine marinade ingredients and brush on salmon fillet, sprinkle with hickory salt and freshly chopped basil. Grill on pre-heated (350) grill until white bubbles appear on Salmon. (Do not turn over) or bake in oven 350.

Don't Get Burned by Energy Scams

By Christine Grammes

The devices could not be simpler—a small gray box that plugs into an electrical outlet in the home. The accompanying advertising insisted that these products, costing up to \$300, could shrink electric bills by 10 percent and reduce energy consumption by 25 percent. In times of rising energy prices, who wouldn't want to try them?

In May 2008, the Texas Office of Attorney General took legal action against the firm offering what it called the Xpower Energy Saver or Mega Power Saver, which sell for \$200 and \$300, respectively. A lab at the University of Texas at Austin tested the units and concluded that they could not live up to their promises.

In addition, the lab revealed that the products are,

in reality, ordinary capacitors. Capacitors are regularly used by electricians, and they can be purchased for less than \$20.

Electric cooperatives warn consumers to beware of such claims.

"When energy prices go up, people get flooded with ads about gadgets and gizmos that claim to save money," comments Heidi Smith, director of public relations at Tideland Electric Membership Corporation in Pantego, N.C. "We urge people to check with their local electric cooperative first before they buy these products."

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) also warns consumers to be careful about marketers or home-improvement contractors aggressively trying to sell energy-saving products. According to the agency, consumers should look carefully and check independent information—such as from state or local consumer protection offices like the Better Business Bureau—about companies selling such items.

"Don't fall for high-pressure sales pitches from contractors or door-to-door sales people," says the FTC.

Smith reminds consumers of the role that electric co-ops can play in helping them to lower energy costs.

"Your electric cooperative is your advocate," she concludes. "We are here to help you make sense of energy-savings claims and also help you find real ways to save on your electric bill, such as through free energy audits."