June 2010

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

Otero County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Power-Gram

For Outages Please call: 1-800-548-4660

Visit us at www.ocec-inc.com

Cloudcroft, N.M. 575-682-2521 Alto, N.M. 575-336-4550 Carrizozo, N.M. 575-648-2352

World's most expensive dirt

■ Dust dollars off your energy bill by regularly changing air filters

The most expensive dirt in the world may lurk in your home's heating and cooling system. If neglected, dust collecting the equipment's air filter could increase your energy bills hundreds of dollars every year and result in costly repair or replacement costs.

Dirty filters cause a system to work harder and break down faster. That's because unfiltered dust and grime work into critical parts, creating friction that causes unnecessary wear and, eventually, failure.

As you move around your home you drive dust into the air from carpets, drapes, and furniture. Pets generate dust particles by shedding, grooming, and tracking in dirt from outside.

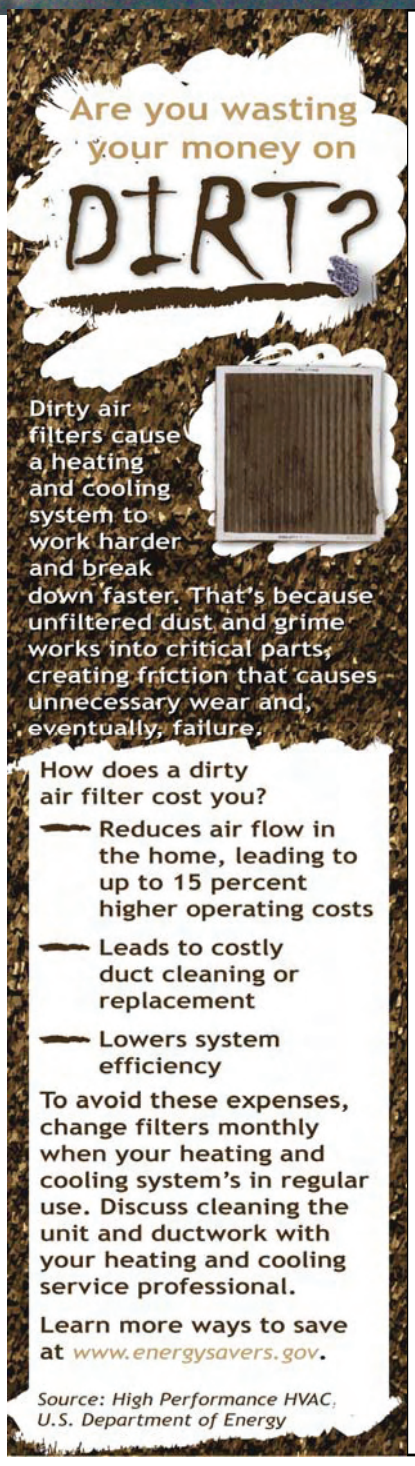
Regardless of where it comes from, dust trapped in a heating and cooling system air filter leads to several problems, including:

- Reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs.
- Costly duct cleaning or replacement.
- Lowered system efficiency.

Every time a system with a dirty filter kicks on, the day of reckoning—total replacement—draws closer. To avoid this expense, change filters monthly when a system's in regular use. Discuss cleaning the unit and ductwork with your heating and cooling service professional.

While most types of filters must be replaced, a few filters are reusable. They're available in a variety of types and efficiencies, rated by a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV). MERV, a method developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, tests filter effectiveness. The higher the MERV number, the higher the filter's effectiveness at keeping dust out of your system.

To learn more about how to save energy around your home, visit www.TogetherWeSave.com.



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

INFORMATION YOU CAN FIND AT OUR WEB-SITE WWW.OCEC-INC.COM

- Make a payment with your credit card, debit card, or pay by e-check.
- Check your balance, payment history, consumption history and a detailed copy of your billing information.
- Online Energy Audit
- Kids Corner for educational purposes.
- Regulatory Information
- Existing Rates
- Products and Services offered by OCEC.
- Job Opportunities
- Net Metering Information
- Contacts at OCEC
- Energy Calculator

ENERGY EFFICIENCY - TIP OF THE MONTH

During summer months when air conditioners work hardest, do energy-intensive tasks such as laundry and dish washing during off-peak energy demand hours, usually in the early morning or later evening.

INFORMATION REQUESTED BY COOPERATIVE

When you as a member of Otero County Electric Cooperative, Inc. perform some type of improvements around your home or property and you add electrical load, please notify OCEC to notify us so we can be assured that the equipment we have at your location is sized properly. Failure to do so may result in damage to your equipment and also the cooperative's equipment. So to avoid unnecessary outages or damages to equipment, please contact OCEC when you add a load a your location.

10 Hot Tips for Green Summer Cooking

Keep your cool this summer when preparing meals. You can save money and reduce your carbon footprint with these 10 easy tips for going green when cooking summer meals (and year round, for that matter).

Cook outdoors when possible to reduce the load on your air conditioner. Try a solar cooker or oven. Solar cookers and ovens are by far the most energy-efficient cooking appliances. They require no fuel, reduce unwanted summer heat in your home by taking cooking outside, and can accommodate any food a slow cooker can. Some solar ovens can reach 500 degrees. To learn more, visit www.solarcooking.org.

Toaster ovens, convection ovens, and slow cookers get the job done with less energy than conventional stovetops or ovens, especially when preparing smaller meals.

Use as small a pan, as little water, and as little pre-heating time as possible.

Bake in glass or ceramic ovenware instead of metal. You can turn the temperature down by 25 degrees, and foods will cook in the same amount of time.

Avoid thawing food in the microwave. Thawing food in the fridge is far more energy efficient, contributes to the fridge's cooling, and is safer than thawing food on the countertop or in the sink.

Don't open the door and peek in the oven. Use the oven window instead!

Clean burner pans (the pans under the burners that catch grease) regularly. They'll more effectively reflect heat to the cookware. Dirty burner pans absorb heat and reduce efficiency.

Use flat-bottom cookware that rests evenly on the surface of electric coil burners, solid-disk elements, or radiant elements under smooth-top ceramic glass.

Use residual heat. Turn the stove or oven off before cooking is done to allow cooking to continue while reducing energy use. An electric burner element can be turned off two minutes before removing the cookware, since it remains hot. Ovens can be turned off 20 minutes before cooking's done.

Consider substituting one or more stovetop burners with an induction cooker. The typical efficiency of an induction cooker is 84 percent, gas stovetops are 40 percent efficient, according the U.S. Department of Energy. What's more, induction cookers (which require magnetic cookware such as cast iron or enameled steel) produce as much heat as gas and are less costly to operate than a conventional electric burner. Visit www.theinductionsite.com to learn more.

OTERO COUNTY ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.
P.O. BOX 227
CLOUDCROFT, NEW MEXICO 88317

- Office hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. If service is interrupted, check your fuses and circuit breakers. If all your service is off, check with your neighbors.
- Report promptly if you think the trouble is on Otero County Electric Cooperative, Incorporated lines.
- When problem Is on consumers side of the meter, the consumer will be charged for a false call for service.
- Please examine this bill carefully as it will be considered correct if we are not notified within 30 days.
- The statement enclosed does not include payments made after billing date.
- If you desire information on the use of electricity for any job, large or small, do not hesitate to call your Cooperative, come by the office, or write for information at any time.
- FOR EMERGENCIES OR POWER OUTAGES CALL (800) 548-4660.