

# OWEN ELECTRIC CONNECTION

January 2023 • Owen Electric • A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## Bundle up and save

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all the fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: High winter bills are never fun. Owen Electric is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

- **Mind the thermostat.** This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.
- **Button up your home.** The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weatherstripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy.

If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

- **Use window coverings wisely.** Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.
- **Consider your approach to appliance use.** When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of your home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.
- **Consider simple fixes.** If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home. If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.



Mini-members Gage and Cole Haines snuggle up with blankets in the afternoons. Mom and dad can keep the thermostat a little lower, helping to conserve energy and save money on their monthly electric bill. Photo: Whitney Duvall

If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call at (800) 372-7612 or take advantage of our free home energy audits. Owen Electric's energy expert can help identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use and recommend next steps for savings.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at [www.owenelectric.com](http://www.owenelectric.com) for additional energy-saving tips.

President and CEO  
Michael Cobb



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# It's youth tour time!

Photos by Tim Webb

The Washington Youth Tour application period is in full swing, and the February 3 deadline is just around the corner. We're happy to hear back from Jessa Luxon Thomas, a 2019 youth tour participant who embraced the trip and the opportunities that accompanied it. While visiting Washington, D.C., Jessa was selected as the Youth Leadership Council representative, which yielded the opportunity for her to represent Kentucky at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting and attend additional leadership training alongside Youth Leadership Council representatives from other states.

Last year, Jessa was invited back on the 2022 Youth Tour to serve as a "blue shirt," participating in youth day and greeting the Kentucky delegates as they arrived in Washington, D.C. She would also spend a day touring with and getting to know some of students who were attending.

## Jessa writes:

In 2019, my mother read about the Washington Youth Tour in the *Kentucky Living* magazine. Months before, I had expressed an interest in politics and a curiosity to learn more. I have always wanted to make a positive difference for people and the more I learned about government, the more I could see a huge opportunity to do just that.

As that was my junior year in high school, it was perfect timing. I was able to participate in the Kentucky Youth Tour and then the Washington Youth Tour, and I was selected as the Kentucky Youth Leadership Delegate.

When COVID-19 hit, I turned to my job and started working as many hours as I could. My family moved up to Mason, Ohio, and I chose to stay where my heart was: northern Kentucky.

Having been friends in high school, my now-husband stepped back into my life, and we eventually got engaged and

bought a house. To my delight, we now get our electricity from Owen Electric, making us members of the very co-op that sent me on my youth tour journey.

When I saw the opportunity to return to youth tour as a blue shirt, I couldn't help but remember the chaperones from 2019 youth tour telling me they wanted me to apply. Now that I am a blue shirt, I have been able to help students from across the country have the same encouraging trip I was able to experience.

In November 2022, the other blue shirts and I spent time helping current Youth Leadership Council delegates connect with their co-ops, write speeches in preparation for the national convention and understand more about co-ops.

This has been one of my favorite journeys I have had the honor of traveling. I have met the most amazing people, and I am honored to continue to represent Kentucky with NRECA and support future generations of youth tour delegates.



Jessa Luxon Thomas served as a delegate for Owen Electric on the 2019 Washington Youth Tour. While there, she was selected as the Youth Leadership Council representative for the state of Kentucky.

The application process is open to any high school junior whose primary residence is in Owen Electric's service territory. Applications are due February 3, 2023. Applications are available at [www.owenelectric.com/washington-youth-tour](http://www.owenelectric.com/washington-youth-tour).

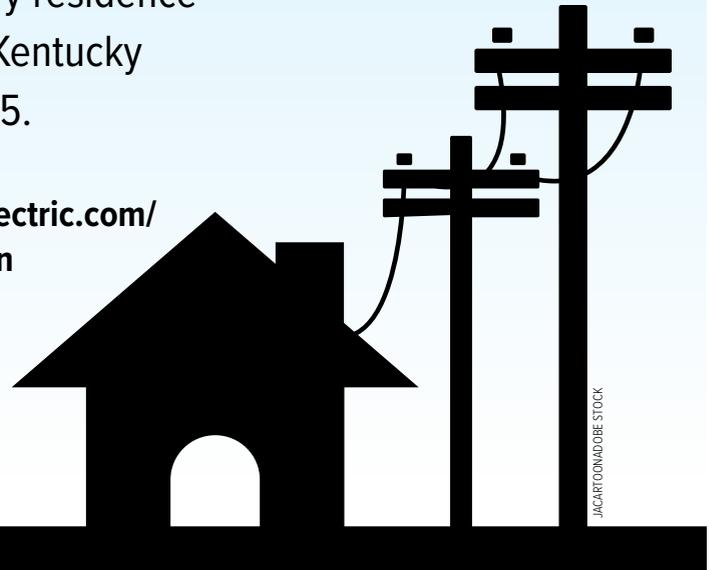


In 2022, Jessa returned to Washington, D.C., as a "blue shirt," helping chaperone and mentor youth tour delegates during their weeklong experience.

# Claim the sales tax exemption on utilities at your primary residence

To find out how to claim your primary residence state sales tax exemption from the Kentucky Department of Revenue, see page 15.

Learn more information at: [www.owenelectric.com/primary-residence-exemption-information](http://www.owenelectric.com/primary-residence-exemption-information)



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## Reptile Program



Conservation Clubhouse Biologist Drew Stevens shares some native reptiles and amphibians with Walton-Verona Elementary students. This hands-on program combines education about some of Kentucky's most prominent slippery and scaly creatures with electrical conservation and safety. Photos: Whitney Duvall

## Safety program at Kentucky-American Water plant



Manager of Safety Rodney Kincaid speaks to employees about power line hazards at Kentucky-American Water's Owen County plant. Photo: Christina Perkins