

OWEN ELECTRIC CONNECTION

February 2023 • Owen Electric • A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Our common bond

These days, there's a lot of talk about the differences that divide us. But what about those things that unite us? Membership in Owen Electric is a fine example of the powerful benefits that come from having a common bond.

The member-owners of Owen Electric share more than affordable electricity. We also benefit from long-held cooperative values that chart a positive course for our member-owned company and those it serves. As one of Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, we value:

- **Integrity.** Members first. Every day. That's the power of membership. As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we deliver electricity to members at the cost of service. This differs from investor-owned utilities, which distribute profits to investors rather than those they serve.
- **Accountability.** This electric co-op belongs to you, the members it serves. Decisions made benefit those in our community because co-op business is conducted by a local board of directors elected by the members. This group, in turn, approves policies and strategic plans that guide your cooperative and provides crucial oversight to ensure the members' best interests are represented.



Each year Owen Electric employees spend countless hours volunteering for community support and charitable organizations, including Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass. Photo: Tim Webb

- **Innovation.** Owen Electric uses state-of-the-art technology and offers cutting-edge programs that meet the needs and expectations of our members.
- **Community.** We are committed to improving the quality of life in the communities where our members live, work and play. It's the reason we donate time, energy and resources to charities, schools and community events and take a leadership role in economic development projects. Sponsoring war veterans for the Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C., and taking an active role in

supporting the Special Olympics Kentucky Summer Games are just two examples of our commitment to community.

These values guide Owen Electric like a compass. They set the course for powering our communities and empowering our members. These values are the bond that makes us stronger, and better, together.

President and CEO
Michael Cobb



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Here to help you manage energy use

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

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 energy use and keep winter bills in check.

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

- 1. 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.
- 2. 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.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Consider your approach to appliance use.** When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, when 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.
- 5. Think outside the box.** 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.



Residential Services Manager Jude Canchola performs a blower door test as a part of an energy audit for consumer-member, Jennifer Haines. In-home energy audits are free for Owen Electric members. 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 residential energy manager 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 owenelectric.com for additional energy-saving tips.

Operate space heaters with care

Every winter, many families rely on portable space heaters for winter-time warmth. While space heaters do provide some additional warmth in the cold winter months, because they're both equally inefficient as heat sources and expensive to run, we recommend not using them unless they're a necessary heat source.

Though they can help keep your space toasty, portable heaters can be dangerous if used carelessly. Owen Electric urges you to follow these safety rules to avoid an electrical fire or other accident.

DON'T leave it unattended. Don't leave a space heater running while you're out of the room, away from home or sleeping. Unplug it when it's not in use.

DO use approved models. Purchase only Underwriter Laboratories (UL) or Electrical Testing Lab (ETL) lab-tested and approved heaters.

DON'T use gas or kerosene indoors. Gas-fueled space heaters not vented to the outside can release harmful gases that can cause illness or even death. Electric space heaters are the safe choice for indoor use because they don't emit carbon monoxide or other pollutants.

DO be mindful of placement. Keep heaters at least 3 or 4 feet away from flammable items such as furniture, blankets, clothing, towels, curtains, mattresses and bedding. Don't place them on throw rugs,

furniture or countertops.

DO plug directly into wall outlets.

To avoid overloading circuits, don't plug heaters into power strips, surge protectors or extension cords.

DON'T forget smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Install interconnected alarms, which will all go off at the same time, inside and outside each bedroom

on every level of your home, and test them monthly.

DO keep kids away. Teach your children about the dangers of touching a heater. If they won't remain a safe distance away, remove the space heater.

Be cautious when using an electric space heater to stay cozy and safe in the cold months.

SPACE HEATER CALCULATOR



$$\text{Heater's wattage} \div 1,000^* \times \text{Hours used per month} \times \text{kWh rate (.08362)} = \text{Monthly cost}$$

Most space heaters are 1,500 watts. If you're operating a space heater 8 hours a day, and your electricity rate is approximately \$0.08 per kWh, then:
 $1,500 \text{ watts} \div 1,000 = 1.5 \text{ kw} \times 240 \text{ hours/month} = 360 \text{ kWh} \times \$0.08/\text{kWh} = \$28.80/\text{month}$

*Dividing by 1,000 converts watts to kilowatts

Generally, it is best to run a space heater when you need to heat just one or two rooms, or if you need temporary heat in a normally unheated area like a garage or shed.

If you have a particularly cold-sensitive person in the home, it can be more efficient to use a space heater in the room they most often occupy rather than overheating the whole house.

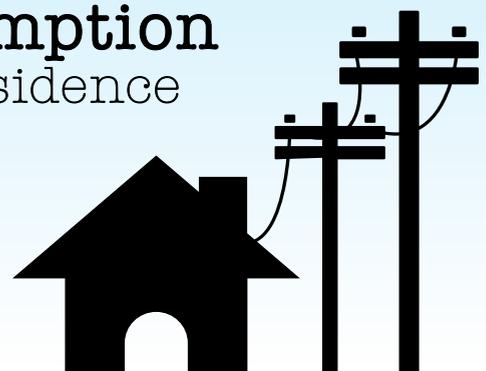
However, be mindful of the costs that these little heaters can add to your monthly electric bill. Most space

heaters are 1,500 watts. If you're operating one eight hours a day, and your electric rate is approximately .08 cents per kilowatt-hour, here's the math: 1,500 watts divided by 1,000 (to convert watts to kilowatts); then multiplied by 8 hours a day; multiplied by 30 days is 360 kilowatt-hours. Multiply that by the approximate rate, \$0.08 per kWh—that's almost \$29 a month to operate the space heater.

If you have more than one space heater, double or triple the cost by the number of heaters you have.

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, visit www.owenelectric.com/primary-residence-exemption-information.



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www.owenelectric.com

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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The trip of a lifetime

Every year, Owen Electric offers high school juniors the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C., and learn about our country's history.

The Washington Youth Tour is an annual weeklong event in June during which about 1,400 high school juniors from across the country travel to Washington, D.C., to learn more about government, cooperatives and electrification.

During the Washington Youth Tour, delegates will get the opportunity to meet youth from across the country, interact with cooperative leaders and government officials and visit historic landmarks.

The tour's purpose is to provide these outstanding young people with opportunities to better understand the value of electricity, to interact with political leaders and learn how government works, to become more familiar with the historical and political background of the United States and to prepare for their future.



Riley Maddox and Lauryn Cleveland enjoyed the sites in Washington, D.C., along with the fellowship and networking the 2022 Washington Youth Tour offered. Photo: Tim Webb

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 can be picked up at any Owen Electric office, or online at owenelectric.com/washington-youth-tour.

Summary of Owen Electric's bylaws relating to annual election process for directors

Each member shall receive notice and be eligible to vote and participate in the annual meeting. Our process for the election of directors, as defined fully in the Bylaws, is as follows: A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors prior to April 10, 2023. The Nominating Committee shall meet and nominate qualified individuals for directorship on the Owen Electric Board by April 25, 2023 and post these names at the offices of the Cooperative. If a member wishes to be placed on the ballot for the position for which the term is expiring, the member must secure a petition signed by forty (40) members who reside in the same district and then present the signed petition at the OEC President's office at the headquarters location in Owenton by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) on March 31, 2023. To review more information pertaining to the annual meeting, the election process, and the Board of Directors, refer to the complete Owen Electric bylaws found in the December 2022 edition of *Kentucky Living* or call (800) 372-7612 to request a current copy of Owen Electric's bylaws.