



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# POWER FACTS

An informational publication for members of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative concerning electricity and related subjects.

SEPTEMBER 2012

## 10 Easiest Ways to Cut Energy Use in Half

**1. Turn Off the Lights - Save 2%**

Remember to shut off lights when you leave a room. If you have a forgetful family, post reminders on switch-plates or consider motion-detector switches. The best alternative is to replace your bulbs with CFLs or LEDs.

**2. Install Ceiling Fans - Save 19%**

Install Energy Star ceiling fans in the rooms that you use most often. They'll keep you cool in the summer while your AC works less, and in the winter they help circulate warm air that rises. Be sure that fans rotate clockwise in the winter and counterclockwise in the summer.

**3. Show Your Fridge Some Love - Save 4%**

The refrigerator is one of the highest energy consumers in your home, especially if it was made before 1993. Be sure to clean the coils on your fridge every six months to keep it running efficiently. Eliminate a second refrigerator, if you have one.

**4. Wash Clothes in Cold Water, Let Them Air Dry - Save 9%**

Washing clothes in cold water gets them just as clean as hot water, and it cuts your washer's energy use in half. Simply drying your clothes on a rack or hanging them on the line can save around \$100 each year.

- 5. Upgrade Appliances - Save 12+%**  
Appliances use 20% of the energy in your home. Choose the most efficient Energy Star models when it comes time to replace current appliances.



**6. Give Your Water Heater a Blanket - Save 1-3%**

Adding an insulated cover to your hot water heater can reduce heat loss by 24-45%. Also, the recommended temperature setting for your thermostat is 120°, so be sure that your water heater is set properly.

**7. Plug Air Leaks - Save 12%**

Seal air leaks around doors and windows by using caulking or weather-stripping. Also, consider putting up insulating curtains, installing storm windows or plastic window covering to further cut loss of heat.

**8. Use Your Programmable Thermostat - Save 10%**

Most all newer homes have programmable thermostats which allow you to maximize the efficiency of your heating and cooling systems. Program it to turn itself down or off when you're sleeping or are at work or school. Consider investing in one of these thermostats if your home does not already have one.

**9. Air Dry Dishes - Save 3%**

Using your dishwasher instead of washing dishes by hand can save water, but if you use the drying cycle, you are wasting energy consumption and money.

**10. Eliminate "Phantom Load" - Save 5%**

Many electronics still use energy when they are turned off -- for instance that clock on the microwave when it's not in use. Unplug your electronics or plug multiple devices into a power strip. By doing this, you can simply turn off the power strip to save on energy and eliminate a lot of the phantom load.

\*\*Percentages from [www.greenamerica.org](http://www.greenamerica.org)\*\*

## Call 811 Before You Dig

Did you know that State laws require you to call Miss Utility 48 hours before digging? Yes, anytime you want to plant a tree, add on to your home, dig footings for a porch, add a small fish pool as landscaping, or any of those other projects around the yard that require digging, you must call **811** in advance. Why?



Electric power lines, natural gas lines and other utility services could be near the surface of your yard. Damage to underground lines can not only be costly for you but cause personal injury or service interruptions as well. **811** is a free service that alerts participating utilities of your plans to dig so that they can come out to your property and mark the locations of buried lines. Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative cares about your safety, so be sure to call **811** before you dig and help those projects go a lot smoother!!

**First Day of  
Autumn**

--

**September  
22nd**

## Let's Wave the Flag for America's Workers



It's time to celebrate Labor Day and tip our hats to the nation's hard working labor force.

As we enjoy another festive Labor Day with friends and family, let's take a moment to recognize the folks who keep America working from coast to coast.

We especially wish to recognize our member-owners whose active involvement and concerns have helped us serve our community better.

So take a moment to reflect upon the meaning of this holiday. And then have a happy and joyful day.



## Valuable Discounts for Our Members

In July, our members were all mailed a new Co-op Connections Card which offers numerous discounts locally and nationally on products, services, prescriptions, vision, dental, imaging scans, hearing aids and even chiropractic visits. This card is absolutely free and available to all of our members. If you did not receive yours or you have misplaced it, please let us know.

Keep an eye out in your community for local businesses displaying the Co-op Connections Card or log on to our website at [www.meckelec.org](http://www.meckelec.org) to see all of the local businesses that participate in this savings program. Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative wants to help our members save money any way we can so if your favorite places of business are not yet participants, contact Brian Mosier at 434-372-6180 so that we can contact them to explain the benefits of our program.