

CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,
President / CEO

Co-ops Support Quiet Revolution

If you listen carefully, you can hear a quiet transformation happening. Electric appliances and equipment are becoming more popular than ever among consumers, thanks to technological advancements, increased battery capacity and decreased costs that have made electric devices more accessible to more people. A bonus is that use of electric equipment is quieter and better for the environment.

Taylor Electric Cooperative is constantly evaluating these advancements and maintaining our electric distribution equipment to ensure we can serve your electricity needs.

Inside the home, consumers and home-builders alike are turning to electric appliances to increase energy efficiency and savings. Whether a traditional electric stove or an induction stovetop, both are significantly more efficient than a gas oven. That's because conventional residential cooktops typically use gas or resistance heating elements to transfer energy with efficiencies of about 32% and 75% respectively, according to Energy Star.

More tools and equipment with small gas-powered motors are being replaced with electric ones that include plug-in batteries. In the past few years, technology in battery storage has advanced significantly. Handheld tools with plug-in batteries can hold a charge longer and offer the user the same versatility and similar functionality as gas-powered tools. And consumers can now purchase a wider array of specialty tools that plug in, such as power inverters, air inflators and battery chargers.

The number of electric products available today is taking off, and Taylor EC is ready to power all your gadgets with safe, reliable and

affordable electricity.

Almost anything that burns gasoline or diesel fuel has an electric alternative, and more national brands are offering a wider selection of electric-powered items such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers and chain saws. The quality of zero- and low-emissions lawn equipment is also improving.

Electric equipment requires less maintenance, and often the biggest task is keeping it charged. In addition, electric equipment is quieter, so if you want to listen to music or your favorite podcast while performing outdoor work, you can.

Another benefit of using electric appliances and equipment is that by virtue of being plugged into the grid, the environmental performance of electric devices improves over time. In essence, electricity is becoming cleaner through increased renewable energy generation, so equipment that uses electricity will have a diminishing environmental impact over time.

Through this quiet transformation, Taylor EC is at the ready to serve you.



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Check on Your Neighbors

NOT EVERYONE CAN afford central air conditioning for their homes, and not everyone can tolerate the summer heat well enough to leave their air-conditioned homes for necessities like groceries.

Extreme heat kills more Americans each year than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes and floods combined, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. So keep an eye out this summer for neighbors who might be living without air conditioning or who are elderly or have medical conditions.

Medical experts say the following symptoms could mean your neighbor is suffering from heat-related illness: confusion, fatigue or weakness, and mail piling up outdoors when they're at home.

Anyone can suffer from heatstroke if they get too hot or from dehydration if they don't drink enough water, but elderly and sick neighbors are at higher risk.

If you can:

- ▶ Call or visit an at-risk neighbor twice a day.
- ▶ Invite the neighbor to stay with you in your air-conditioned home on the hottest days and even overnight if you have room.
- ▶ Remind your neighbor to drink plenty of water. Bring pitchers of cold water, lemonade and caffeine-free iced tea as gifts.
- ▶ Offer to go grocery shopping for your neighbor or to drive them to the store so there's no need to wait outside for transportation.
- ▶ Find indoor events and community- or church-sponsored activities that neighbors could participate in as a way to stay cool during the day.
- ▶ Give and set up a portable fan that can help alleviate warm temperatures indoors.
- ▶ Find out if your at-risk neighbor has pets. If so, tend to the animals as well by filling water bowls frequently and making sure plenty of pet food is on hand.

Research shows that just about 17% of us check on neighbors during the summer. Make your family one that increases that statistic. ■

Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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5 Tips for Better Indoor Air Quality

WE SPEND A LOT of time inside. In fact, the average person spends 90% of their life indoors, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Fortunately, those spaces are becoming more energy efficient. Homes today are better insulated and sealed, which is good for energy bills but not so good for indoor air quality.

The thought of breathing in pollutants can be troubling, but the truth is, indoor air pollution is common and unavoidable. The good news is that there are ways to easily improve the air quality of your home—some of which might make your AC run more efficiently, too.

Here are five tips to help you breathe a little easier.

Change your air filter at least every three months. Clogged, dirty filters reduce airflow and the efficiency of your air conditioning system. When a filter becomes clogged, the excess dirt and dust are sent through your air ducts, introducing allergens and other unwanted particles into your living space. This is one of the easiest ways to promote better indoor air quality and energy efficiency.

Regularly vacuum carpets and rugs, especially if you have furry friends. The cleaner the home, the healthier the home.

Vacuuming carpets and area rugs once a week can greatly reduce the accumulation of pet dander and dust inside your home.

Use vents to remove cooking fumes. Those exhaust fans aren't just for when you burn the bacon. Fans help expel fumes emitted while cooking and send unwanted moisture and odors outdoors.

Get a handle on humidity. Summer months typically bring more humidity than we'd like. Moisture in the air can carry bacteria and other unwanted particles that you eventually inhale. Dehumidifiers work to remove that moisture from the air, reducing bacteria, mold and other allergens in your home and helping your air conditioner run more efficiently.

Incorporate air-purifying plants into your living space. There are several varieties of indoor plants that can help cleanse your home of dust and germs found in various home products and furniture. Remember to review care conditions and potential toxicity for pets and think about placement for any new plants you add to your home. ■

Stay Cool During August Heat

UNLESS YOU KEEP your thermostat so low that you send your cooling bill through the roof in August, it's a good idea to find some energy-friendly ways to keep your cool during the hottest month of the year.

Here are five tips:

Take cool showers. If your house isn't cold—and there's no reason it should be, even with the air conditioner on—ease up on the hot showers. A cool shower will lower your body temperature and get you just as clean.

Chill the meal plan. Instead of baking, broiling, boiling, sautéing or frying every night, opt for chopping fresh veggies, making colorful salads and satisfying your family's hunger with healthy raw foods that will fill them up and give your stove and oven a break. Cold desserts? That's the easy part. You can't go wrong with sorbet or ice cream straight from the freezer.

Filter the sun. Install solar screens or window films on east- and west-facing windows so you can keep the heat out while still allowing light in.

Seal leaks and cracks. You'll find them all over your home—around windows, doors, and electrical and cable outlets. It's easy to caulk and weatherstrip, and it's an activity you can do with your kids as you teach them to use energy responsibly.

Schedule a checkup. Even if you skipped your air conditioner's spring maintenance, go ahead and schedule it now. Your HVAC tech can tell you if your air conditioning unit is running efficiently—and can tweak it so it does. It's important to raise the thermostat a bit during the summer—but also to make sure the cool air that does come into the home gets there efficiently.

Bonus tip: Set your thermostat 1 degree warmer to save 3%–5% on your air conditioning costs. ■



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Choose the Right Outdoor Lights

OUTDOOR LIGHTING can enhance summertime ambiance in your yard and can play an important role in home security. Choosing the right lights and positioning them well can also help you achieve your energy efficiency goals.

Outdoor solar lights use solar cells and batteries to power LEDs. Varieties include floodlights, lamp post lights, string lights and staked lights. They're easy to install and usually don't require any wiring.

The appearance of solar lights can range from bright white to warm red. Lights with warm tones don't interfere with humans' circadian rhythms or a view of the night sky as much as bright white lights do.

Placing solar lights in areas that get sunshine during the day helps ensure they stay lit when you need them.

If you're installing outdoor lights for home security, solar lights might not be the right choice.

Outdoor floodlights with motion sensors activate only in response to movement, which saves energy. Or you can use floodlights with timers so they shut off during the day.

Whenever you replace an old halogen, fluorescent or incandescent light in an outdoor fixture, put in an energy-efficient LED rated for outdoor use. ■



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