

CEO CORNER



Ryan Bartlett,
President / CEO

The Difference Between Conservation and Efficiency

The terms energy conservation and energy efficiency are often used interchangeably, but they have distinct definitions. I like how the U.S. Energy Information Administration differentiates the two based on behavior and technology.

Energy conservation is a behavior—using less energy. To achieve it, consumers have to change their habits: turn off lights, unplug appliances or opt to use a clothesline instead of a clothes dryer. Conserving energy often means sacrificing something.

While there's great merit in adopting habits that conserve energy, we also have the option to use less energy without having to give up comfort or convenience.

That brings me to the definition of energy efficiency: applying technology to use less energy while getting the same result or service.

Technological advances allow us to automatically perform some actions we used to have to do manually. Because newer appliances are able to do the same tasks with less energy, energy efficiency doesn't necessarily mean going without.

An LED is considered energy-efficient because it uses less electricity to produce the same amount of light as an incandescent bulb. In the same way, Energy Star-rated products are intended to deliver the performance consumers expect while using less energy. Take today's Energy Star-rated refrigerators, for example. They keep food cool with about half as much energy as older models.

Ultimately, energy efficiency may result in energy conservation—or using less energy.

Smart electricity usage is important to Taylor Electric Cooperative because it's beneficial to you, our members.

For one, using less electricity saves you money on your electric bill simply because you consume less. But it also benefits the co-op as a whole because wholesale power costs fluctuate depending on the time of use.

You see, the cost of power increases during peak hours—typically from 3 to 8 p.m. during the summer. This is energy conservation in action: if members try their best to use less power during those hours, the cooperative's total wholesale power cost decreases. Those savings are passed along to you.

In addition, those in the electricity industry, including Taylor EC, are trying to find ways to reduce consumption in case of potential electric generation shortfalls in the future. Maintaining energy-conscious habits and adopting energy-efficient technologies now will help us use electricity more wisely down the road.

I encourage you to apply the principles of energy conservation and energy efficiency together. Just because you install an LED in the light fixture on your front porch doesn't mean you should leave it on 24/7. And even if you have an Energy Star-rated clothes dryer, be a good steward and think twice about running it half-full or during those peak hours.

By combining energy-efficient technology with conservation-minded behavior, you can save electricity and money.

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How Smart Is Your Energy Use?

DURING AN ESPECIALLY hot summer like this one has been, your energy bills may be higher than normal as you run your air conditioning system day and night.

So look for other ways to save energy, and be smart about it by using smart technology. Sure, adding smart appliances and other tech has an upfront cost. But energy efficiency experts calculate that you could save between 5% and 30% on your energy bill if you add at least some smart solutions. Start here.

Smart plugs. A smart plug slips into your regular wall outlet and can be programmed to wirelessly turn on lights, cameras, motion sensors or alarms. You may have used these to turn the lights on and off at home while you're on vacation. Many allow you to operate them remotely. Most help save energy because they use little energy and do not use as much "phantom" power for unused devices as those devices would use if you plugged them in without the smart plug.

Smart outlets. These replace your regular wall outlets and require some wiring. Plugging an appliance into a smart outlet gives you the power to automate it, usually remotely. That means you can schedule appliances, lights and other devices to turn on and off automatically. A smart outlet saves energy much like a smart plug does, and most models also have an energy monitoring feature that will reveal how much electricity an appliance or device uses.

Programmable thermostat. You don't need your house to stay as cool while you're not in it. You can set a programmable thermostat to turn the AC up right after you leave for work every day and turn it back down just before you usually get home. Manufacturers say you can save as much as 10% a year on heating and cooling by adjusting your thermostat by 7–10 degrees for eight hours a day. ■

Taylor Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Abilene office next to first door on the left.

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• Check Express, 906 E. Broadway Ave.,

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Payments credited next business day.

NOTICE

Effective June 1, 2023, all credit/debit card transactions will be assessed a 2.45% convenience fee.

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