

Energy Partners

A monthly look at the happenings of and related to:



New-Mac Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 
The power of human connections

BRRRR!!!

Degree-days tell the story of winter's chill

Have you ever looked at weather data and noticed the term “degree-days”? Actually in winter time, you will find the listing “heating degree-days” (HDD), and in summer, it’s “cooling degree-days” (CDD).

Well, if there was ever a winter to pay attention to that statistic and understand it, for New-Mac Electric customers, this is that winter.

Degree-days are a measurement indicating how much the outdoor temperature will affect space heating or cooling based on a standard temperature of 65 degrees. Heating degree-days are calculated in the winter by averaging the high and low

temperatures for a calendar day, then subtracting the result from 65. Cooling degree-days, in the summer, are figured by averaging the high and low temperatures for a calendar day, then subtracting 65 from the average of the high and low temperatures.

Basically, the higher the degree-days number, the more our heating units are working in the winter and our cooling units in the summer.

Well, according to the numbers, our heating units have worked *a lot* this winter. Perhaps, you’ve already realized this, but this has been one of the coldest winters in decades. In fact, New-Mac keeps records of the

daily high and low temperatures for Neosho, as supplied by the Neosho National Fish Hatchery, and based on those temps, this past January had the

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New-Mac linemen perform a pole change-out during one of the many snowy days this winter. Snow has lingered on the ground for much of the season.

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Energy Partners is a monthly publication of New-Mac Electric for the purpose of informing members of the programs, services and happenings of, and related to, the cooperative.

Voter precinct changed in McDonald County

The Richwood, Elkhorn or Center voter precincts have been combined in McDonald County. The new voting location for the affected voters will be at the Longview Fire Station.

Assistance is available

If you are having a problem paying your New-Mac account, please call us to make arrangements. Please don't disregard paying your bill. There are programs and options (such as budget billing) designed to assist you. So, please give us a call at 451-1515 or (800) 322-3849.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM & EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
 Jasper County417/781-0352
 McDonald County..417/845-6011
 Newton County.....417/451-2206

Please don't lock us out

Even though automatically read meters make monthly visits to each location unnecessary, New-Mac still needs access to each meter for periodic checks and outages. So, make sure the co-op can get to your meter, and any existing lock arrangements with New-Mac need to be maintained.

Help yourself to 'Rural Missouri'

Copies of the latest *Rural Missouri* magazine are always available, free of charge, at either New-Mac office.

New water heater offers big savings



Doug Rye
says ...

For years I have been touting the importance of having an efficient water heater. The reason is simple: Water heaters use significant amounts of energy, second only to the energy used to heat and cool a home.

Until now, the most efficient water heater on the market was the Marathon and I have sung this product's praises for many years. Many electric cooperatives have sold the Marathon for years and continue to do so. It is a top-notch product.

Now, General Electric is offering yet another excellent water heater – the General Electric Hybrid Water Heater. This revolutionary product uses 62 percent less energy than standard electric models and exceeds Energy Star standards with an incredible Energy Factor of 2.35 or 235 percent efficiency.

This unit costs around \$1,200 (after tax credit), but it will save around \$320 a year based upon a three-person household. Do the math and you will see there isn't a

long payback.

The Hybrid uses advanced heat pump technology and onboard intelligence in conjunction with traditional electric elements. The heat pump is the main way the water is heated, but the traditional elements will activate if the water is used up faster than the heat pump mode can replace it. Other features include an eHeat mode to maximize savings. Then there is the High Demand mode for when you have guests who need lots of hot water. When you leave for vacation, you can set the heater to turn off while you are gone and then turn back on the day before your return home. This is one "smart" water heater.

Although the Hybrid is very different from standard water heaters, it is easy to install. It fits into a similar footprint as a 50-gallon water heater and uses existing water and electrical connections.

I realize this water heater is more costly upfront than the Marathon and certainly more than a standard one. But, the good news is that it qualifies for the federal tax credit of 30 percent on the purchase and installation price (for more details visit www.energystar.gov).

See you next month.

Doug Rye, a licensed architect living in Arkansas and the popular host of the "Home Remedies" radio show (as heard on KBTN 1420 AM & KQYX 1450 AM), works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To order Doug's video, call Doug at 1-888-Doug-Rye. More energy-efficiency tips can also be found at www.ecark.org.



Those attending the HBA's Home Show last month got a chance to see this hybrid water heater in person. If you missed it, you can still see it by visiting the New-Mac booth at the Neosho Area Business & Industry Review and the McDonald County Business Expo. Show details can be found on the next page.

Be leery of “magic” heaters

When outside temperatures drop, we turn up the heat in our homes. However, when heating costs seem to be rising, many start looking for a more cost-effective way to heat. Nowadays, there's a number of “magic” space heaters out on the market that claim to be able to slash your electric bill by up to 50 percent, or that you can heat your home for pennies a day. What is not said about these heaters, many of which marketed as using quartz infrared technology, is how many pennies it will take. Be cautious of such claims and investigate fully before purchasing an expensive space heater that may prove to be not an energy saver at all.

There are no “magic” space heaters. To achieve the savings these space heater advertisements claim, you must turn the temperature in your house down to between 50 and 60 degrees and move the heater with you from room to room. While that one room may be warm, you sacrifice convenience and comfort in the rest of your home.

In addition, electric plug-in space heaters are not more efficient than other electric heating sources, and all electric space heaters are equally efficient. An electric space heater rated at 1,500 watts will put out the same amount of heat regardless what you pay for it. Often, you would be better off to take the money you would spend on an expensive heater and put it toward weatherization improvements to your home, such as adding insulation and caulking.

Before you purchase an electric plug-in space heater that claims to lower your heating bill, consider the operating costs. The cost to operate depends on the type of heater and the size of room you are heating. If the room is big or drafty and a heater is using 1,500 watts for 24 hours a day, then that “pennies a day” claim translates into over 300 copper-colored coins per day – more than \$90 dollars a month. Plus, only one room is being heated.

If you're looking for cost effective measures, consider:

- Install a programmable thermostat. Turn it down when you are gone for the day and when you are sleeping.
- Add insulation, caulk and weather-stripping.
- Strategically place fans at low speed to pull warm air from the rest of the house into the cooler space.
- Change your furnace filter regularly. A dirty filter forces the furnace to work harder, decreasing its efficiency and increasing heating costs.
- Have your ductwork checked. Ducts may have come loose from the main trunk and could be feeding warm air into the attic or crawl space instead of the living areas of your home.
- Install a ground-source or air-source heat pump that will heat your home in the winter and cool your home in the summer.

Copper theft affects you

New-Mac asks customers to be on the look-out

New-Mac Electric Cooperative does not take copper theft lightly. Nor should you.

In recent years, the rise in the price of scrap metal has brought on a rash of copper thefts across the nation. It has also brought about a rash of deaths, power outages, expensive repairs and criminal prosecutions that should weigh heavily on the mind of anyone contemplating or observing such a despicable act.

Numerous deaths and injuries have been reported across the country of would-be thieves attempting to cut copper wiring away from electrical systems. Thieves have even gone as far as climbing power poles and scaling substation fences, putting themselves in imminent danger.

Copper theft affects every co-op member. Just a few dollars worth of stolen copper can bring about hundreds of dollars in repairs, and unfortunately, most times when stolen copper is recovered, it is in a useless condition, having been cut into pieces.

New-Mac Electric has made great efforts to deter copper theft and even helped bring about legislation that now means harsher penalties on copper thieves.

If you observe suspicious activity, such as unmarked vehicles near substations or around utility equipment, call New-Mac right away at 451-1515 or 800-322-3849.

*Thanks for visiting us at the
Home Builders Association of
Southwest Missouri's Home Show!*

Now, don't miss us at the:

**Neosho Area
Business & Industry Review**

*March 12-13 at Neosho High School
Friday (5-8 p.m.), Saturday (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)*

&

McDonald County Business Expo

*March 27 at McDonald County High School
Saturday (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)*

Energy Partners'
Recipe of the Month:

**FERN'S
BANANA BREAD**

Submitted by New-Mac member: **Mary Fort**

butter or shortening	1/3 cup chocolate chips + 1 Tbsp.
2 1/2 cups baking mix	1/3 cup pecans + 1 Tbsp.
1 cup sugar	1/3 cup vegetable oil
1 tsp. cinnamon	1 tsp. vanilla
3 large bananas, mashed	

Preheat oven to 350°. Generously grease a 9x5x3 loaf pan. Place all ingredients into pan. Mix well. Place in oven and bake until toothpick inserted in center is clean (about an hour). Does not stick.

Send your recipe, along with your name and customer number, to: Recipes, c/o New-Mac Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 310, Neosho, MO 64850; or recipes@new-mac.com. If your recipe is selected, New-Mac will apply a \$15 credit to your bill.



New-Mac lineman Jeremiah Taylor prepares a new pole to be set. Working in the snow has been a common occurrence this winter.

○ Degree-days:

2009-2010 winter one of area's coldest

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highest heating degree-days total since before the co-op started its recordkeeping in 1989. The most recent December HDD total had only been surpassed twice during that same time period, and that was in 1989 and 2000.

Those interested in tracking the HDD totals for the area can do so by visiting the website of the National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office in Springfield, Mo., at www.crh.noaa.gov/sgf/?n=climate_index or by clicking on the link at www.newmac.com. From this page, visitors can select a data station, month and year, then pull up detailed weather information, including a column reserved for HDD or CDD.

As cold as December and January were, February appears to have been just as extreme. As of the time of press of this publication, based on the National Weather Service's figures, February 2010's total for heating degree-days was on pace to be the highest recorded since 1989.

So what does all of this information mean? Well, for many (if not most) New-Mac customers, the most recent bills have been the highest winter bills they have ever received, if not the highest of any season. When you consider that space conditioning (heating or cooling) accounts for the largest percentage of a home's energy bill, coupled with the fact that this winter is perhaps the coldest since the 1980s, it's logical that our heating units have contributed significantly toward our utility bills.

Systemwide, New-Mac posted its three highest totals ever for electricity demand this winter during that bitter snap in early January with overnight temperatures below zero. But considering heating units were having to operate on the "emergency heat" setting and people were using extra space heaters to keep pipes from freezing or to thaw them out, the increased usage also stands to reason with the frigid temps.

Remember, the next time you are curious as to how much of a factor the weather has been on your utility bill, just check the degree-days for the month. It works the same, winter or summer, the higher the total, the greater the effect on our heating or cooling units.

The good news is spring is just around the corner.



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Or visit us on the Web at
www.newmac.com.

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Services Provided to Members

Call our consumer services department for information on the following services:

Autowithdrawal Payment
Levelized Billing
Rental Light
Meeting rooms available at both locations
Credit Card Acceptance
Safety Programs (upon request)
Surge Protection
Green Power

Questions? Comments?

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