

**LYON-COFFEY  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

# EVENTS



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### Contact Information

#### Headquarters:

P.O. Box 229  
1013 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Burlington, KS 66839  
620-364-2116

#### District Office:

P.O. Box 964  
2501 W 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Emporia, KS 66801  
620-342-0553

## FROM THE MANAGER

# Wise Investments in Energy Efficiency

How should we respond to the economic uncertainty that we are experiencing today? While the factors surrounding the latest round of economic turbulence are different, economic upheaval is not new.

In times such as this people have looked for practical solutions. Today it's no different. Many of us are putting money into something we feel comfortable with: our homes. Making a few upgrades around the house generally pays big dividends. When boosting energy efficiency is one of them, the decision becomes relatively easy to make.

For any energy efficiency work made at your residence during the coming year, the federal government will foot 30 percent of the bill! Through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act—better known as the stimulus bill—the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) offers a personal tax credit of up to \$1,500 for energy efficiency improvements made to existing homes during 2009 and 2010.

The credit covers 30 percent of the cost of adding insulation materials and exterior doors, windows, and roofs designed to help reduce a home's heat loss or gain. It also includes efficient central air conditioners, air-source heat pumps, hot water heaters, and biomass stoves (i.e. pellet and corn stoves).

For weatherization-related work the credit covers only the cost of materials. With heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems as well as biomass stoves installation costs also count toward the credit.

So how does the math work out? Say you spend \$1,000 on new insulation. You would get a tax credit of \$300. If you spend \$3,000 to purchase a new heating and air conditioning system and have it installed, you'd have a \$900 tax credit to show for it.

To take advantage of the program, a home improvement must have taken place after February 17, 2009, (the day the stimulus bill was signed into law), and products must meet specific energy efficiency criteria.

A few rules of thumb will help you determine those criteria:

- ▶ For exterior windows and skylights, rely on the Energy Star label.
- ▶ For other efficiency upgrades, request what's called a "manufacturer certification statement" that the product or component qualifies for the tax credit. Many manufacturers post these on their Web sites, but be sure to verify that the product does qualify before making a purchase.
- ▶ You can also visit [www.irs.gov/recovery](http://www.irs.gov/recovery) to review guidelines for eligible purchases.



Scott Whittington

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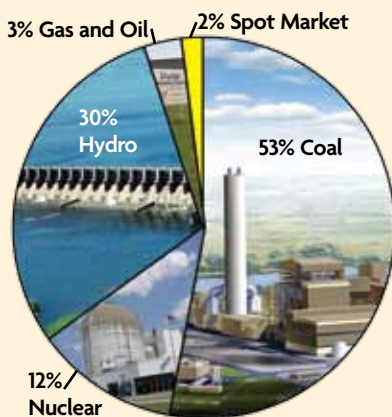
## Wise Investments in Energy Efficiency

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Energy tax credits reduce taxes owed, dollar for dollar, and can be carried forward to following years. While they can help boost any refund you receive, you won't receive a check directly for the credit amount. You can file for energy tax credits using IRS Form 5695. Remember, the total maximum tax credit value is \$1,500 for improvements made in 2009 and 2010.

For suggestions on how you may make your home more energy efficient while taking advantage of these tax credits, please don't hesitate to give us a call. Contact a Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative member services representative at 800-748-7395 with any questions you may have.

## Our Generation Mix



Lyon-Coffey does not generate power. We just distribute it. We buy the power we distribute as low-cost as we can through Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (KEPCo).

KEPCo provides reliable energy at a reasonable cost while being mindful of our environment.

Nuclear power generation was lower in October and November than normal because of the refuel outage at Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation.

# Notice of Rate Hearing

Pursuant to K.S.A. 66-104d, please take notice that the Board of Trustees of Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative, Inc., will meet on January 18, 2010, at 6 p.m. at the cooperative headquarters, 1013 N. 4th Street, Burlington, to discuss and vote on the adoption or modification of any or all of the following rules, regulations, rate schedules, riders, or terms of service:

### 1. The adoption of a net metering rider for member-owned renewable generation.

The Board will consider the adoption of a net metering rider applicable to certain member-owned renewable generation installations installed primarily to offset the member's own energy usage.

The rider would enable members with qualified installations to offset the energy purchased from the cooperative with renewable energy generated by the customer over the length of each billing cycle.

### 2. Modifications to cooperative rules, regulations, and terms of service governing the operation of parallel generation by members.

Under certain terms and conditions set forth in K.S.A. 66-1,184 and the rates, rules and regulations of the cooperative, members may operate generation in parallel with that provided by the cooperative.

The Board of Trustees will consider amendments to the existing rates, rules and regulations to comply with legislative amendments to K.S.A. 66-1,184 and to establish consistency with the terms of other member-owned generation.

The meeting is open to any member that wishes to attend. Lyon-Coffey members have the right to request review by the Kansas Corporation Commission of any rate change approved by the cooperative under the procedure set forth in K.S.A. 66-104d(g).

Any member with questions may contact Scott Whittington, General Manager at 800-748-7395.

## Could Your Home Benefit from an Energy Audit?

An energy audit can help homeowners prioritize energy efficient improvements for their homes, said Bruce Snead, Kansas State University Research and Extension residential energy specialist.

Such audits use building science techniques to evaluate the energy performance of the home, such as blower door tests for air leakage, infrared cameras for heat loss, and energy usage/cost estimating software. The savings for a recently-constructed new house may not be the same as potential savings for an older home, which often can

benefit from air-sealing and insulation.

A standard residential energy audit will cost about \$350, which is usually offset by future savings, according to Snead. The Efficiency Kansas loan program requires an audit

to identify projects that are cost effective. To kick off the new program, the State Energy Office will provide the first 1,000 participants a \$350 rebate to offset the costs of the energy audit.

For more information on this opportunity go to [www.energycan.com](http://www.energycan.com).



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# This Old House—Electrical Issues Can Cause Fire in Older Homes

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation each year, home electrical problems account for an estimated 53,600 fires. These fires cause more than 500 deaths, injure 1,400 people and account for \$1.4 billion in property damage. Many of these fires occur in aging homes.

According to a study conducted by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the frequency of electrically related fires is disproportionately high in homes more than 40 years old.

The lifespan of a home in the United States is continuing to increase. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the average age of a home has jumped from 30 years in 1997 to 35 years in 2005. In addition, with new technology and electronics our use of electricity in our homes is constantly increasing. The result of these trends is that greater demands are being put on older and antiquated home electrical systems.

Electrical problems in older homes can be attributed to a number of factors, including: inadequate and overburdened electrical systems, re-insulated walls and ceilings burying wiring, misuse of extension cords and makeshift circuit extensions, worn-out wiring devices not being replaced, poorly done electrical repairs.

The following are signs of wiring electrical hazards commonly found in aging homes:

- ▶ Circuit breakers that frequently trip or fuses that often need replacement
- ▶ Dim and/or flickering lights
- ▶ Arcs and sparks—flashes of light or



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shower of sparks anywhere in your electrical system

- ▶ Sizzles and buzzes or other unusual sounds from your electric system
- ▶ Overheating—overheated wires giving off an odor of hot insulation; switch plates or receptacle covers are hot to the touch or discolored from heat buildup
- ▶ Electrical shocks—any shock, even a mild tingle, may be warning of an electrical danger
- ▶ Damaged wire insulation—cut, broken or cracked insulation
- ▶ Overrated panel—electrical panels with fuses or circuit breakers rated at higher currents than the capacity of their branch circuits

If you observe any of these signs in your home, call in a licensed electrician to inspect its wiring.

## Want Efficient, Safe Laundry? Leave no Lint Behind

Household chores like laundry seem fairly safe. But hidden problems like lint buildup in a dryer could lead to higher energy bills due to inefficiency and, ultimately, hazardous conditions in your home.

At coin-operated laundries, dryers are key to customer satisfaction. Other amenities pale if clothes don't dry fast enough, so laundry owners remain adamant about maintaining proper air flow through commercial dryers. With 30 to 50 dryers at an average laundry, operators clear trash cans of lint every day from their screens.

The same principle applies at home, although on a smaller scale.

"Cleaning the lint filter after every cycle is one habit we want to encourage," said Jill Notini, communications and marketing director for the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM). "Repetition builds a habit."

AHAM urges consumers to clean the lint filter after each load and occasionally remove the filter and wash it with a nylon brush and hot, soapy water to remove residue. This simple chore not only improves air flow and energy efficiency, but also reduces the chance of a dryer fire.

Manufacturers whose products carry the UL mark are required to ship dryers with safety instructions that specify cleaning the lint screen before or after each load. These instructions also recommend keeping dryer exhaust openings and adjacent surrounding areas free from accumulated lint, dust, and dirt, and having qualified service people periodically clean the dryer's interior and exhaust duct.

Without adequate air circulation, heat flow becomes stymied, clothes take longer to dry, and it costs more to operate the appliance. Like ovens and stoves, dryers apply extreme heat on potentially flammable materials.

This out-of-sight, out-of-mind practice makes it essential that a dryer be maintained on a simple and regular basis.



### Energy Efficiency

### Tip of the Month

Federal tax credits are available for home energy efficiency improvements, including windows, doors, water heaters, and HVAC equipment for existing homes. For details, visit [energystar.gov/taxcredits](http://energystar.gov/taxcredits).

Source: Energy Star



# TURNS OUT, MONEY BURNS WHEN MY WATER HEATER IS SET ABOVE 120 DEGREES.

I didn't even know there was a dial. Now, I'm saving \$73 a year by turning my water heater down to 120°. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).



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[TOGETHERWESAVE.COM](http://TOGETHERWESAVE.COM)