



Energy-Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for an easy way to manage home energy use? Smart plugs are inexpensive and offer convenient solutions for scheduling and controlling your favorite electronic devices.

With smart plugs, you can easily manage your coffee maker, lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. Smart plugs can help you manage devices through a smart phone app, your home assistant or voice control. By conveniently powering off or scheduling devices, you can save energy (and money!).

Source: energystar.gov

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Youth Tour Delegates Preparing for Washington, D.C., Trip



This year's Cooperative Youth Tour delegates, who will represent A&N Electric Cooperative, are preparing for their Washington, D.C., trip next month. These students will tour the nation's capital, while learning about the electric cooperatives that serve their local, rural communities. This year's A&N Electric Cooperative Youth Tour delegates are:

- Katie Arnold (Broadwater Academy)
- Glenn Ballon (Home School)
- Uriah Hope (Arcadia High School)
- Lukas Thomas (Tangier Combined School)

Every June, as many as 1,800 high school students from across the country spend a week in the nation's capital as part of the Cooperative Youth Tour. The students are sponsored by electric cooperatives — cooperatives that are committed to educating America's rural youth about our country and the role electric cooperatives play in developing strong rural communities.

This year's local Washington Youth Tour representatives will take part in:

- A sunset Potomac Riverboat cruise
- A tour of Arlington National Cemetery
- Guided monument tours
- Area museum visits
- An electric cooperative tour
- A Capitol tour, including a meeting with local

U.S. Rep. Jen Kiggans

Each year the cooperative holds an essay contest to determine its Youth Tour delegates. Essays are graded anonymously by an independent judge who selects a winner to represent each participating high school. The essay contest is open to all high school and home school juniors living in the cooperative's service area. A student from each area high school was eligible to attend the Youth Tour. Essay guidelines are shared with each school and the contest is advertised through a number of cooperative communication channels.



Arbor Day Foundation Awards Recognition to A&N Electric Cooperative as 2024 Tree Line USA Utility

A&N Electric Cooperative earns Tree Line USA recognition for its commitment to urban forestry in its community

A&N Electric Cooperative was named a 2024 Tree Line USA by the Arbor Day Foundation to recognize its dedication to proper forest management in the provider's service area.

This is the fifth consecutive Tree Line USA designation for the cooperative.

Tree Line USA, a partnership between the Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters, recognizes public and private utilities for pursuing best practices that protect and cultivate America's urban tree canopy. In addition, Tree Line USA promotes delivering safe and reliable electricity while maintaining healthy community forests.

"Trees are essential to creating more urban green spaces in communities across the United States," says Dan Lambe, chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation. "In addition, they provide important benefits to residents, including clean air, clean water, and vital tree shade. Service providers like A&N Electric Cooperative demonstrate how easily trees and utilities can co-exist for the benefit of communities and residents."

By joining the Tree Line USA program, service providers benefit from lowering line clearance costs due to proper pruning. As a result of those properly pruned and maintained trees, the members benefit from increased reliability of service because those trees will have healthy root systems that decay less, have

less structural weakness, and ultimately result in fewer downed lines during storms.

A&N Electric Cooperative achieved the Tree Line USA recognition by meeting five program standards: quality tree care, annual worker training, tree planting and public education, a formal tree-based energy conservation, and a sponsorship of or participation in Arbor Day celebration.

More information about Tree Line USA can be found at arborday.org/TreeLineUSA.



ABOUT THE ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

Founded in 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation is the world's largest membership nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees. With a focus in communities and forests of greatest need, the Foundation — alongside its more than 1 million members, supporters and valued partners — has helped to plant nearly 500 million trees in more than 50 countries. Guided by its mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees, the Arbor Day Foundation is committed to unlocking the power of trees to help solve critical issues facing people and the planet. Learn more about the impact of the Arbor Day Foundation at arborday.org.



Solar Toolkit Available

A&N Electric Cooperative has a web tool to help you estimate the cost of a residential solar installation.

The Residential Solar Tool Kit can be found anec.com under the "Renewable Energy" tab.

Completing the residential solar assessment's short questionnaire will generate an estimate of your solar-generation potential, ongoing utility costs and estimated payback period for a rooftop solar system.

Before making a decision, please contact us. As your trusted energy provider, we can help you make smart energy investments.

Update Your Contact Info



UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT PHONE NUMBER

If a co-op member has changed phone numbers associated with their account but has not informed the cooperative, their ability to report an outage may be affected. The system A&N Electric Cooperative uses to predict outages utilizes member phone records to help locate issues with the cooperative's electrical distribution system. Out-of-date phone numbers listed on member accounts can impact that member's ability to report an outage, meaning longer response times in some cases. If your phone number has changed, use our "Contact Us" feature at anec.com or call 757-787-9750, option 3 to update that information.

ENSURE YOUR EMAIL IS ON FILE

Make sure you have a valid email address associated with your electric service account. The cooperative contacts current and former members through email for a variety of reasons, including unclaimed capital credits. Co-op members are urged to update their email address to ensure they continue to receive important electric service information. If your email address has changed or was not originally associated with your account, use our "Contact Us" feature at anec.com or call 757-787-9750, option 3 to update that information.

SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITION CERTIFICATION

If you have medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, please let us know about it. The cooperative will attempt to give these members advance notice of any planned or extended outages. This does not guarantee that your electric service will not be interrupted. If you have this type of equipment, complete the Serious Medical Condition Certification Form, with the assistance of your physician, and return it to the cooperative. The form can be found on the cooperative's website (anec.com/serious-medical-condition-certification) or at the Tasley office. An updated form is required when the anticipated length of time the serious medical condition will last ends, or yearly, whichever occurs first. The possibility does exist that members who fill out the certification may be without electric service for an extended period when there is major damage to the electrical system. In preparation for this type of situation, you may want to obtain an alternate power source such as a generator or be prepared to relocate until power can be restored.



Summer Rates Begin in June

Summer rates will go into effect next month and will run through the end of September.

These rates are different than the non-summer rates co-op members experience, beginning in October and running through May.

Summer electricity use drives the wholesale cost of electricity. A&N Electric Cooperative's highest peak demands for electricity are during the summer and have helped determine the cost of electricity year-round.

Cooperative members pay more for the electricity they use in the four "summer" months (June through September), while a lower rate has already been established in the eight "non-summer" months (October through May).

The cooperative's voluntary Beat the Peak program, which encourages members to conserve or limit energy use during peak times, is an important tool to help control wholesale power costs.

The cooperative pays a monthly demand charge based on peak hourly use; this accounts for a large percentage of the cost of electricity for our members.

Recent changes to how demand charges are calculated have increased the importance of peak demand energy reduction, particularly for Beat the Peak periods in summer months.

When members cut back on their electricity use during a Beat the Peak period, it helps the cooperative reduce the amount of wholesale power purchased at peak times. This will help hold down the cost for our members.

Peak periods occur when the demand for electricity is the highest. Usually, these are periods when it is very hot or extremely cold outside. During these times, members are asked to use energy wisely and follow these guidelines:

- During the summer months, keep your home as warm as comfortably possible while maintaining a healthy environment. Raising your thermostat setting a few degrees can help.
- Postpone the use of major appliances, such as stoves, clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers.
- Postpone charging an electric vehicle.
- Delay using hot water during peak periods.
- Turn off all unnecessary lights.



May is Electrical Safety Month

A&N Electric Cooperative personnel demonstrate electric safety on a pad-mounted transformer for a group of local first responders recently.



A&N Electric Cooperative Safety Coordinator Curtis Taylor speaks to a 4-H group about electric safety during a day camp.

May is recognized as Electrical Safety Month, and safety is a top priority at A&N Electric Cooperative. Our concern for safety extends beyond our employees. We care deeply about the safety of our members and we encourage you to be safety conscious.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes.

To promote safety education in our local communities, we speak with local civic organizations, school and are available at many community events throughout the year.

We provide electrical safety content in *Cooperative Living* magazine, and we encourage the public to contact us if they see a downed power line or any other type of dangerous electrical situation.

Here are three examples of electric safety hazards from the Electrical Safety Foundation:

OVERHEAD POWER LINE SAFETY

Always look up; be aware of overhead power lines. Contact with overhead power lines accounts for 46% of all electrical fatalities and 57% of those overhead power line fatalities were in non-electrical occupations, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation.

Always assume all lines are live and dangerous. Keep yourself and your equipment at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines and do not touch anything that is in contact with overhead power lines. It is good practice to carry equipment, including ladders, horizontally to avoid contact with power lines.

If you see a downed line, stay at least 35 feet away from it and contact the cooperative or call 911 as soon as possible.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, 69% of all electrical fatalities involved non-electrical occupations.

Be aware of potential electrical hazards in the workplace. Avoid electrical rooms and other potentially hazardous areas. Know when to say when. If you feel unsafe performing a job, say something.

All electrical work should be completed by qualified workers with proper training and GFCI protection should be installed where electricity and water may come in contact.

PROTECT YOUR ELECTRIC BIKE AND ELECTRIC SCOOTER

Lithium-ion batteries power many portable consumer electronics, electric vehicles, and even store power in energy storage systems. In normal applications, the batteries are safe, but if damaged or overheated, they can cause fires.

- Only use manufacturer-provided or authorized batteries and charging equipment. All equipment should be certified by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory.
- Remove the battery or charging device from power once charging is complete to avoid overheating
- Keep batteries and charge them at room temperature, as issues can occur below 32 degrees or above 105 degrees
- Keep batteries and devices from heat sources or anything that can catch fire
- Do not store batteries in vehicles or direct sunlight
- All maintenance on batteries or e-mobility devices should be completed by a qualified professional
- Discontinue using devices or batteries that have an unusual odor, change in color, too much heat, change in shape, are leaking, smoking, or not keeping a charge.

Grow Your Summer Energy Savings

by Maura Giles | Contributing Writer

One of my favorite things about summer is the opportunity for fresh, homegrown food, whether it's shopping at the local farmers' market or sharing the abundance of garden tomatoes with a neighbor. It's amazing how just a few seeds, some fertilizer and water can turn into a bounty.

When I think about energy efficiency, I think about that bounty of food, and how with just a few simple actions, you can use less electricity and reap the rewards of energy savings.

You don't need to be a farmer or botanist to know that plants need water — just like you don't have to be a lineworker or engineer to know that adjusting the thermostat or turning off lights can reduce your monthly electric bill. In fact, if you read A&N Electric Cooperative's publications regularly and follow us on Facebook, you know there are a lot of things you can do at home to save electricity and money.

Summer months bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. But why? Cooling your home accounts for a large portion of your monthly energy use, and the hotter it gets, the harder (and longer) your air conditioner works to keep you cool.

There are several ways you can manage energy use at home, and we're providing a few tips that can help grow your summer energy savings.

But I'd also like to share a few ways we're here to help you save — not only during the dog days of summer but throughout the year.

5 WAYS TO SAVE THIS SUMMER

When summer temperatures rise, so do our energy bills. Here are a few ways you can reduce energy use and grow your summer savings.

1. Raise your thermostat.

The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temp, the more you'll save.

2. Install window coverings

like blinds or light-blocking curtains to prevent indoor heat gain during the day.

One of the great things about being part of ANEC is that we're locally owned by you, our members. So instead of making profits, we can focus on helping our community. That's why we've developed incentives and programs to help you keep your money in your wallet.

Save money with these easy incentives:

• **Free Energy Audits** – Our certified energy advisors can determine the overall efficiency of your home and help you with ways to improve it.

• **Take Control of Your Use** – Use SmartHub to track your energy use. You can even get alerts when your use spikes so you can make changes in real time.

• **Ways to Pay** – If you're having a difficult time paying the higher bills that come with increased use in the summer, contact us to learn about our budget billing program.

Most people don't know everything about electricity, and that's why we're here to help you. There are no investors making profits here. Just knowledgeable people with local jobs working for our neighbors to ensure there is electricity available when you need it. Contact us, and we can work with you to find more ways to save energy — and money.

Maura Giles writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

3. **Seal leaks with caulk and weatherstripping** around windows and exterior doors. Air leaks force your air conditioner to work harder and run longer than necessary.

4. **Run ceiling fans** for additional cooling but turn them off when you leave the room.

5. **Lower your water heater thermostat** to 120 degrees to reduce standby heat loss.



Source: Dept. of Energy

HABITAT HIGHLIGHTS

Life After Death

by Mark Belknap | Director of Vegetation and Environmental Management

Dead trees, wildlife and forestry

professionals call them snags or deadwood. To the untrained eye they may appear unsightly and a hazard to be removed, but their role in our ecosystem is a thing of beauty. Let's look at why they are so vitally important to the health of our forest.

Deadwood may appear lifeless on the outside but on the inside life lives on abundantly. Every dead tree is a carbon sink and a potential home for wildlife. As a tree starts to die and decay it begins to attract many types of insects. These insects provide food to many species of bats and woodpeckers. In their search for food and nesting sites, the woodpeckers create holes. That is why they are known as primary cavity nesters.

Secondary cavity nesters like wood ducks, chickadees, bluebirds and nuthatches often come later to use these same cavities created by the woodpeckers.

Mammals like bats, flying squirrels, gray squirrels, white-footed mice and raccoons use cavities in snags as well.

Even after a snag falls to the ground it continues to provide a home to a myriad of amphibians and reptiles. Eventually, as it further decays, it nourishes and replenishes the soil for future life. It's all part of a larger grand plan.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

When a tree dies next to a power line it can become a potential outage if it were to fall and break the wires or pole. When you see a dead or dying tree within falling distance of the right-of-way, give us a call at 757-787-9750.



Mark Belknap



We'll send out an arborist or tree crew to determine if it's going to be a problem. If it is, we can remove the top and reduce the height of the tree to reduce the danger.

At that point, you can decide to cut it down the rest of the way or maybe you just decide to leave it and provide a home to future wildlife on your property.

So, is there life after death? Absolutely, and it lives on in abundance.

Mark Belknap is the director of vegetation and environmental management at A&N Electric Cooperative. He has degrees in wildlife management and forest resource management from WVU. He is a wildlife biologist, certified arborist, certified arborist utility specialist, licensed professional forester, and habitat chair for the newly formed Coastal Virginia Chapter of Quail Forever.

Memorial Day Office Closure

The cooperative's Tasley office will be closed in observance of Memorial Day on Monday, May 27. If you experience an outage or electrical emergency during this time, please report it using our SmartHub app by calling 757-787-9750, or by texting "OUT" to 855-940-4016.

Outage Alerts Available Through SmartHub

A&N Electric Cooperative members have the option to sign up for outage notifications through SmartHub.

The notifications can be through email or text.

The current notifications available to members are that their power is out and that their power has been restored. Members have the option to sign up to receive one or both of the alerts.

To begin receiving the notifications, a member will need an existing SmartHub account.

Once in the SmartHub menus they would need to register the phone number (for text alerts) or email address they would like to use to receive the alerts.

Step-by-step instructions are listed on the cooperative's website at anec.com under the "Outage Tools" section on the main menu.



Source: Consumer Reports

Making the Switch to

ELECTRIC LAWN EQUIPMENT

Considering electric equipment to maintain your outdoor space? Check out the benefits of electric and considerations before making the switch.



Benefits of Electric Equipment

- Battery-powered equipment produces zero emissions
- No hassle and mess from gasoline and oil
- Quieter and more reliable than gas-powered equipment
- Require less energy to do the same amount of work as gas-powered tools

Considerations Before Going Electric

- Purchasing from a single brand can streamline charging
- Consider the size of your property and battery run time
- Backup batteries may be needed for larger properties
- Electric equipment is pricier up front