



Energy Efficiency  
*Tip of the Month*

Is your hot water tank warm to the touch? Consider insulating it to save 7 to 16 percent annually on water heating costs. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Source: energy.gov



# Members to See a Reduction in their Electric Bills in 2019

## Due to a Negative PCA

**What is "PCA"** - As you monitor your electric usage on your monthly bill - which we encourage each member to view their bill statement either printed or digitally. You may be wondering what the (PCA) is and why it appears on your electric bill each month, you're not alone. Many co-op members wonder the same thing.

When the cooperative sets the rates, it is based on the cooperative's expenses. The cost of purchasing power is the largest expense, and it is about 60 to 65 percent of total expenses. The purchased power cost also fluctuates from year to year. PCA, or Power Cost Adjustment, merely, is the increase or decrease in what it costs your cooperative in buying wholesale power from the generation power plant and paying for the transmission services to all our substations.

When the cost of wholesale power and transmission services increases, this cost is shared among all members of the co-op in the form of the power cost adjustment. When the price of wholesale power and transmission prices drop, we are happy to pass the savings on to you the members as well.



**GREAT NEWS for 2019** - members will see a PCA credit for every kWh of electricity consumed on their billing statement. The PCA rate is set every January.

**Our co-op policy is to charge what it costs the co-op.** Any increase or decrease in the cost of purchased power from our power supplier and transmission co-op will be passed through to the members in the form of positive or negative PCA. This year the PCA is negative or a bill credit, other times it may be positive or a charge. These prices fluctuate in the same manner as bread, milk, and nearly every other product. Many factors affect the cost of wholesale power including, environmental costs, the price of coal, natural gas, and other generation methods. Transmission cost, the charges to deliver coal or gas to the power plants also play a role.



This year, the average member can notice their bills reduced by a credit of \$4 to \$5 per month.

# Using Electric Heat During the Winter

## What You Need to Know

Many of LREC's members heat and cool their homes with a central air conditioning (electric resistance heat) or an air source heat pump. We encourage you to understand your heating and cooling system and the cost to operate.

If you have a heat pump in your home, you will have an “**Emergency or Aux Heat**” switch on your thermostat.



A heat pump is a central air conditioning system that can also heat your home during the winter if the temperature does not drop too low outside. It primarily “pumps” heat into your home during the cold weather months and “pumps” heat out during the summer months.

When used properly, a heat pump can be a very efficient and economic investment for your home. However, a heat pump will struggle when the weather gets unusually cold, below 32° F and the emergency/aux heat will have to switch on. Have you ever noticed the emergency/aux heat setting on your thermostat? It can be easy to miss, and you can even turn it on accidentally.

It is critical to understand that when using the emergency/aux heat function on your thermostat for heating, it eliminates the energy efficiency of the heat pump.

It can lead to much higher energy usage and higher bills — electric resistance heating strips run around 22,000 to 24,000 watts. A typical space heater runs 1,500 watts. To give you an idea of what is happening when your emergency resistance electric heat kicks on, it is similar to running 15 space heaters on high. Roughly costing \$1.92 an hour at our \$.08 a kWh rate.

Heat pumps are designed to be more efficient than electric resistance heating most of the year. However, once the temperature falls below 32° F, a heat pump will need to utilize a backup heat source.



## Temperature and Maintenance

Now that you know to avoid the emergency/aux heat setting, here are a few more tips to help you get the most out of your heat pump or central air conditioning system 191201.

-  Change your filter regularly — monthly is best.
-  Get your system tuned up once a year and make sure it is running correctly. It will get less efficient over time without proper maintenance.
-  Set the thermostat to the lowest temperature comfortable for your family. You can easily save energy in the winter by setting the thermostat to 68°F while you're awake and setting it lower while you are asleep or away from home.

If you have any questions about using your heat pump or the electric resistance heat, please call us at [918-772-2526](tel:918-772-2526), and an energy efficiency expert will be happy to speak with you.

# Consider The Operating Cost

Before you purchase and start using **electric plug-in space heaters** around your home, be sure to consider the added operating costs. Use the formula provided to calculate operating costs of an electric space heater or any electrical appliance.

## Operating costs

Watts ÷ 1,000 x LREC's kilowatt-hour rate 0.08(kWh). For example, one 1,500-watts space heater running one hour would equal .12 cents an hour. Now consider how many hours a day you use the space heater x 30 day billing cycle.

Space Heater 1,500 watts ÷ 1,000 = 1.5 x \$0.08  
LREC's kWh rate = .12 cents an hour to operate.

Almost all space heaters on the market, regardless of their packaging or price, are 1,500 watts heaters. When plugged in, those heaters put out the same amount of heat and consume the same amount of energy whether they cost \$10 or \$400. Using a space heater as your home's primary heating source would be comparable to trying to heat your home with a 1,500 watts hair dryer.

LREC recommends taking the money you would spend on a space heater and putting it toward weatherization improvements on your home, such as insulation or sealing air leaks. Weatherizing your home helps keep your heated air from escaping during the cold winter months and improves the comfort of your home. Plus, unlike space heaters, weatherization improvements provide added value, in the long run, saving you energy and money.



## Attention Parents of our Future Leaders



## Youth Tour and Leadership Summit 2019

If you are a high school junior, you could be a winner of the Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. for a week during June. It's FREE, it's exciting, and it's fun! LREC will sponsor three students from area high schools. Sponsorship covers; flight, room, and board, tour admissions, meals and MORE! You'll join some 1,300 high school juniors from across the United States to learn more about government, rural electrification, leadership, and electric cooperatives. Contact your school counselor or LREC's JuaNita Keener, Youth Tour Coordinator 918-772-6940 for more information on the chance to win the trip of a lifetime.

# GENERATOR *Safety*

**Avoid deadly backfeed and keep linemen safe.**

Learn how to **safely connect to your portable generator** at:  
[www.lrecok.coop/safety](http://www.lrecok.coop/safety)

**Safe Electricity.org**

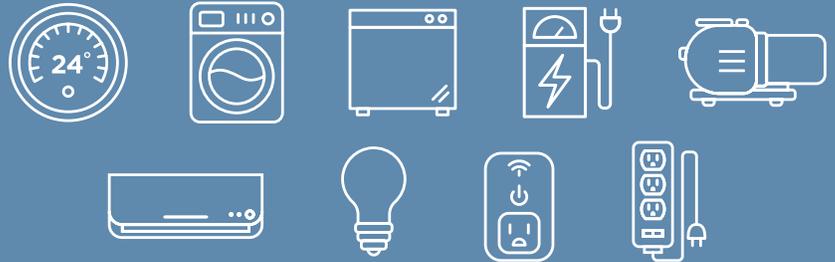


# Get Smart About Energy Savings

“Smart” devices and appliances save time and offer convenience - but not all save energy. Below shows how several popular smart home technologies stack up when it comes to energy savings.

## Smart Energy Savers

Thermostats - Washing machines  
 Dryers - Dishwashers - EV charging  
 stations - Pool pumps - Air conditioners,  
 Light bulbs - Power strips



## Just Smart

Virtual assistants (Alexa, Google Home, Etc)  
 Smart locks - Smart alarms - Smart video security cameras



**High-Speed Internet.  
 Reliable Home Phone.  
 Simple TV.**



**FIR REAL**

When you connect to Lake Region's new fiber-to-the-home services. 918-772-2526

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### Hidden Account Number

Look for your account number hidden in this issue of the *Powerline Press*. If you find your number, Lake Region Electric will credit your next bill.

To claim your credit, notify LREC's Hulbert office by phone or mail during the month of publication.

The amount increases by \$10 with each issue your prize goes unclaimed to a maximum of \$50.

For more information, call 800-364-LREC or 918-772-2526

**Cooperative bylaws** are available upon request at Lake Region Electric Cooperative's office in Hulbert.