

# WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

## Summer tips for staying cool and saving energy



**focus on energy™**

*The power is within you.*

As temperatures rise, so can energy costs. So what can you do to keep your cool and still save energy this summer? The following tips can help.

Maintain your air conditioner. Schedule yearly maintenance to keep your central air conditioner running at peak efficiency and reduce operating costs. Change the filter regularly and check the refrigerant charge as well as indoor and outdoor air coils.

Turn up the thermostat. Set your thermostat between 73 and 78 degrees when you are home and higher (or off) when you are away. Every one-degree increase in temperature is equivalent to a three-percent savings in your cooling costs.

Use a ceiling fan. Ceiling fans aid air conditioners by providing additional cooling and better circulation. Set the fan to rotate counter-clockwise in summer to push air downward and create a cooling breeze.

If it's dry and cool at night, open your windows and let the outdoors do the air conditioning for you. In the morning, before the heat of the day, close windows and blinds to keep the cool air inside and reduce solar heat gain.

Limit indoor cooking on warm days, or just fire up the grill. Use smaller appliances for smaller meals, such as a toaster oven or microwave, instead of the oven.

Run the dishwasher at night or early in the morning when tem-

peratures are cooler—and only with a full load of dishes.

Look for the STAR. ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances, electronics and lighting save energy and money compared to standard devices.

For more summer energy saving tips, call Focus on Energy at 800.762.7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com) today.

***“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children”.***  
***Native American proverb***

## USDA Rural Development

We've been asked by the fine folks at USDA Rural Development to let you know of a program they are offering to help low-income homeowners make needed repairs. Frank Frassetto, state director of the USDA Rural Development, reminds Wisconsin's rural citizens that now is a good time to evaluate the condition of their homes and take action to make needed repairs to avoid potential hazards.

“Did the winter months reveal some hazards or repairs that your house needs to survive another Wisconsin winter? “Do you need a new roof or insulation?” Frassetto asks. “Rural Development is able to help with low-interest loans for eligible families to make needed repairs they otherwise could not afford.”

These 1 percent interest loans are available now to low-income rural residents who own and

occupy a dwelling in need of repair or modernization. Examples of projects that might be eligible include repair or replacement of storm doors, windows, steps, furnaces, water heaters, roofs, insulation, electrical, plumbing, septic and water systems; and adding accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Interested parties are encouraged to contact USDA by calling 715-346-1313 ext. 4.



## Tree Maintenance

### Tree Crew Locations for June-

**Grant County-** Patch Grove, Millville and Wyalusing Townships

**Crawford County-** Clayton Township

**Lafayette County-** Lamont, Fayette, Shullsburg, White Oak Springs, Monticello, Gratiot, and Seymour Townships



## Attention Dairy Farms

SREC is introducing Marathon Water Heaters for Ag applications. These 105 gallon units are specifically designed for dairy applications and have an Energy Factor of 0.91. 2.5 inches of insulation is used on the Marathon water heater which reduces the overall stand-by loss. The outer shell of the water heater is made from polyethylene so the outer layer and bottom will never rust. This is significant when you understand that most water

heaters are placed in wet environments such as milk houses. The inner tank system is non-metallic which does not rust or corrode. These Marathon water heater tanks in dairy applications have a warranty of 10 years and parts are covered for 3 years. Lastly, Marathon water heaters have a thermostat system within the tank to allow the entire tank to be heated to a set level versus having a temperature gradient within the tank. (i.e. the top of the water heater is set to 170 degrees while the bottom is at 140 degrees).



Call or stop by today to check out the remarkable incentives on this water heater!

## Protect Your Older Home from Electrical Hazards

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), half of all homes in the United States were built before the advent of automatic coffeemakers or garage door openers, and one-third were built before hair dryers or electric can openers. Add to that computers, cell phones, and other electrical devices, and you have a great many residences with potential electric wiring problems.

Research from ESFI shows that faulty or overloaded wiring accounts for an estimated 67,800 fires, 500 deaths, and more than 2,000 injuries each year, and a whopping \$868 million in property damage. By educating yourself about common hazards in older homes and installing lifesaving electrical safety devices, these risks can be reduced greatly.

### The lifesaving technology available includes:

- AFCIs—an outlet that recognizes fire hazards and immediately shuts off power.

- GFCIs—an outlet that senses when water comes into contact and cuts out to prevent electrocution.
- Tamper-Resistant Outlets—designed to protect children from inserting small objects into them.
- In addition to installing the technology above, here are some additional safety tips:
- Make sure functioning smoke alarms are installed on every floor and in every sleeping area.
- Look for telltale signs of electrical problems such as dimming lights, frequent circuit breaker trips, or blown fuses.
- Limit use of extension cords, particularly cords used to power room air conditioners.
- Use lightbulbs that are the proper wattage for a fixture; higher wattage bulbs can degrade wires.

Source: *ESFI; Consumer Product Safety Commission*

## ***Environmental Update- Technology is Key in Keeping the Lights On***

**R**ight now, there are a lot of “what-ifs” surrounding electric power. As a nation, we need to add more generating resources to meet growing electric consumption.

As your provider of safe, affordable, and reliable power, it’s our job to make prudent, long-term energy decisions that will benefit you and the communities we serve for decades to come. But today those decisions are mixed up with politics like never before. Every question of supplying power is being impacted by the debate surrounding how best to meet climate change goals. Policy limiting carbon dioxide emissions is becoming more likely, although specifics are still up in the air.

Massive investments in new technology will be required –and soon – to find a balance in meeting both our energy and climate change goals. The Electric Power Research Institute estimates it will take a research investment of \$1.4 billion a year from now until 2030 to develop new technology such as carbon capture and storage for our power plants.

Once we add this advanced technology to the equation, we can develop power plants that burn coal and isolate carbon dioxide emissions. The gas can then be compressed and pumped for permanent storage deep underground. Many experts believe that with the right financial commitment from the federal government, cost-effective carbon capture and storage technology could become commercially available around 2020.

But this is just one potential piece of the puzzle, and until our elected officials agree to increase the necessary funding, uncertainty remains.

At Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, we are dedicated to keeping you supplied with reliable and affordable electricity in an environmentally sound way. But with growing demand for electricity and pressure mounting in Congress to address climate change, it’s time for us to get involved and ask our elected officials some tough questions.

To develop the technology needed to keep the lights on and rates affordable, the federal government

must exercise committed leadership and provide funding on the scale of the Apollo moon program or Manhattan atomic bomb project. Without it, and without a sound, responsible sustainable energy policy, we risk returning to a time when electric service was a privilege enjoyed only by the wealthy.

As electric coop consumers you can help prevent that from happening. Please contact your elected officials today, and ask this question...

***“What are you doing to fully fund the research and development required to make emissions-free electric plants an affordable reality?”***

Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, along with electric cooperatives across the country, engaged in a grassroots campaign called “Our Energy, Our Future” to start a dialogue with lawmakers about critical questions such as technology’s role in our energy future. Please visit [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) to contact your elected officials and add your voice to the campaign.

## Tips for Purchasing CFLs

Look for the ENERGY STAR label which guarantees the CFL bulb has met certain energy-efficiency guidelines.



Match the right CFL type to the right kind of fixture

to help ensure that it will perform properly and last longer. Replace bulbs where lights typically burn the most hours (hallway, living room, kitchen, porch lights). Some CFL bulbs have trouble operating in enclosed fixtures; therefore CFLs work best in open fixtures that allow air flow. Check the CFL's packaging for any restrictions in use. For example, fixtures that are connected to a dimmer, light sensor or three-way switch require CFLs that are suited to those applications. For recessed fixtures, it is better to use a reflector CFL than a spiral, since the design of the reflector evenly distributes the light down to your task area. To get the bulb with the right amount of light, choose one that offers the same lumen rating as the bulb you are replacing. The higher the lumen rating, the greater the light output.



## Tortilla Casserole

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2lbs hamburger                 | 2 cans cream of chicken soup  |
| 1 large onion                  | 1 pkg flour tortillas         |
| 1 pkg. taco seasoning          | 1 can water (can omit this)   |
| 1 pint sour cream              | 1 small green chilies, option |
| 2 cups shredded Cheddar Cheese | 1 cup black olives, sliced    |

Brown hamburger and onion; add taco seasonings. Mix soup, sour cream and water. Heat in microwave until warm. Layer in a 9X13 pan: half tortillas, half meat mixture and half soup mixture and continue layering until gone, ending with soup mixture, cheese and olives. Bake 30 minutes at 350degrees.



## Power Your Mind – Learn who is bringing you power

### Linda Bendorf- Director of Office Services

#### Family-

- **Husband** - Randy
- **Children** - Jesi, Scott
- **Grandkids** - Mackenzie, Alex, Taylor, Conner

#### Hobbies-

- Various crafts, crocheting, cross stitching, sewing
- Volunteer work with church, Lancaster Association of Churches, food pantry
- Working in the yard



#### Why did you choose to become employed at SREC?

I was recently married and just moved to Wisconsin. I was working in Livingston and looking for a job closer to Lancaster. The job sounded like something I would enjoy. My job is very challenging with the ever changing technology needed to provide the best service to our members.

#### What do you enjoy most about SREC?

I really enjoy working with the great staff we have here at SREC. Every day brings new opportunities by working together to keep improving our cooperative



Watt's Happening is published monthly as an information service to the member-owners of Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative.

Any questions or comments can be directed to Watt's Happening, c/o Megan Graney, Editor, Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, 231 North Sheridan, Lancaster, WI 53813 or telephone (608) 723-2121 or toll free Lancaster 800-236-2141, Darlington 800-236-6656, and Gays Mills 888-735-4314.

[www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop)

Richard E. Kolb. . . . . CEO  
Megan Graney. . . . . Editor

Our board of directors consists of Tom Bennett, Don Walters, Sandy Davidson, Norman Gordon, Gerald Koeller, David Stute, Merlin Kvigne, Larry Butson, and Ellen Conley.



printed on recycled paper