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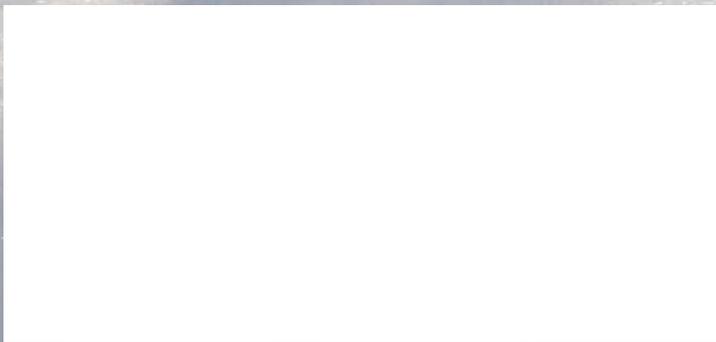
Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* January 2021 NEWS

TRACKING DOWN WINTER FUN

TAYLOR ELECTRIC
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy Partner 





By Kenneth Ceaglske,
President/CEO

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

Welcome to the New Year. I am hoping 2021 gives us at least glimpses of a return to the stability that seems so far ago from 2019.

At the November meeting, the board took the recommendation of the Nominating Committee and appointed Cheri Klussendorf to fill the seat vacated by Jeff Albers. Cheri brings experience from serving on multiple boards in the area, being involved in local activities, and owning a dairy farm east of Medford. Following the bylaws, Cheri will fill the seat until the annual meeting, which we have planned for June 2021. There will be an election to fill the same seat at the 2022 annual meeting, the normal expiration of the term that was for that seat.

There is another seat open on the board due to the passing of Dean Tesch in October. It was decided to leave that seat open until the annual meeting in 2021 and allow for the normal election process to fill the seat. This would have been the natural term limit for Dean and the newly elected director would serve a normal three-year term until 2024. The Nominating Committee will start with the normal nominating process in March or April. Look to the newsletter or *Taylor Report* for when that will be announced.

Since Dean was the chairman of the board, there was an election to fill that position as well. The board chose Brian Hallgren to take over as the chairman. Chuck Zenner contin-

ues as vice chair, and Pat Waldhart is the secretary/treasurer.

This was also a good time to discuss the upcoming 2021 annual meeting. The board supported continuing with a weekday evening in June to allow us the greatest flexibility for an indoor or outdoor meeting in case any restrictions continue to be in place by then or we need to adapt to any other changing situations. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

With the excitement and challenges that COVID threw at us in 2020, as well as with a desire to update and modernize the bylaws for the cooperative, the board has started to look at the potential to allow for voting using methods other than in person in certain situations, as well as plurality vs. majority for determining the winner(s) of an election. Majority can result in multiple rounds of elections if there are more than two candidates to get to the point where one candidate gets 50% +1 vote vs. plurality, where the winner with the most votes wins. This can be less than 50% if there are more than two candidates. This would be similar to many government elections. Stay tuned for more information on this in the coming months as well.



TIME TO DITCH YOUR OLD SPACE HEATER?

If you can't remember when you purchased your space heater, it might be time to replace it. Just like the flip phones of yesteryear have progressed into today's modern cell phone, portable space heaters have come a long way too. Most of today's models have built-in safety features, such as non-exposed coils and sensors that detect overheating or touch, as well as an automatic shut-off feature in case it gets tipped over.

Regardless of whether your space heater is fresh out of the box or several years old, it should be used safely, since most home heating fire deaths (86%) involve using one, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In fact, heating equipment is the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires, right behind cooking.

Along with using a unit that is in good working order, be sure to keep clothing, papers, rugs and other flammable items at least 3 feet away from a space heater. More than half of the heating-related home fires start when items are too close to the heat source, according to the NFPA, including upholstered furniture, clothing, a mattress or bedding.

Safe Electricity and Taylor Electric recommend these additional space heater safety tips:

1. Read all instructions and only use as recommended.
2. Do not leave a space heater unattended.
3. Plug it directly into an outlet; most power strips and extension cords are not equipped to handle the energy spikes caused by a space heater cycling on and off.
4. Unplug any other item from the outlet you are using; also try to use a dedicated circuit to avoid overload.
5. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
6. Turn them off before you leave the room or go to sleep.
7. Do not use a heater in disrepair or with a frayed cord or damaged plug.
8. Place them on flat, level surfaces and never place on furniture, counters or carpet, which can overheat.

Use a space heater with care. For additional safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.



STAYING SAFE AFTER AN ACCIDENT:

Know what to do around utility equipment

With winter here, now is the time to revisit accident safety with the drivers in your home. Do you all know what you should do if your vehicle comes in contact with a pad-mount transformer (or “green box”) or other utility equipment or lines?

First, assess the situation. If your car is not smoking or on fire, stay in your vehicle. That is the safest place for you to be while you wait for help, and the utility to de-energize the power lines. Stepping out of your vehicle while touching it at the same time, or trying to walk or run to

safety, can cause serious burn injuries or death.

If you are in a multiple-car accident, yell to others (from the safety of your car) to warn them not to leave their vehicle. Also warn those who

If you are in an accident involving electrical equipment, stay calm, call 911, stay in your vehicle, and warn others to stay away.

might stop to help to not approach the scene.

Call 911 to report the accident location and clearly state to the dispatcher that electrical equipment or lines are involved.

If you see smoke or fire, try to stay calm. Make a clear jump, without holding on to the vehicle, and hop or shuffle (with your feet together) at least 30 feet from the vehicle. Just like any downed power lines, any damaged utility equipment such as pad-mounted transformers or cabinets that house electrical equipment can send electrical current through the pavement or ground.

Walking across the energized ground or touching an energized vehicle and the ground at the same time, a phenomenon

known as step potential can occur. Step potential is the voltage difference between the two feet of a person near an energized, grounded object. A person on the ground is subjected to the risk of injury during an electrical fault by simply attempting to move away from the grounding point, in this case the car in the accident.

DO NOT go near or touch electrical equipment.

DO NOT move a downed wire or broken piece of equipment with your hand or other object.

Keep in mind that there can still be damage to equipment, even if you

don't see anything. This makes for a very dangerous situation.

This winter, if you are plowing and accidentally clip a transformer or any other electrical equipment, please make sure to report it to your utility. This helps keep everyone safe.

If you are in an accident involving electrical equipment, stay calm, call 911, stay in your vehicle, and warn others to stay away. If your car is on fire, jump clear of the vehicle with both feet together and hop or shuffle at least 30 feet away.

Let's make it a safe winter season here in Wisconsin!



License to Live To learn more about what to do you if you should ever find yourself in an accident involving power equipment, watch the short video “License to Live,” a project sponsored by Wisconsin’s electric cooperatives and developed by electric co-op employees and WECA in conjunction with the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange and Safe Electricity. You can view the video at <https://safeelectricity.org/license-to-live/>.

FIVE WAYS TO STAY COZY THIS WINTER

By Abby Berry

Baby, it's cold outside! When you're feeling chilly at home, there are several budget-friendly ways you can keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat.

Here are five easy ways to stay cozy this winter.

1. Whether you're experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply "run cold," **an electric blanket can deliver quick warmth** like a regular throw or blanket cannot. Electric blankets can include a variety of features, like timers and dual temperature settings (if your cuddle buddy prefers less heat). This winter, consider an electric blanket instead of turning up the heat, and your energy bill will thank you.
2. One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to **keep your feet warm**. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body automatically feels warmer. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.
3. On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and **harness natural warmth from sunlight**. Open all curtains, drapes,

and blinds in your home to let the sunshine in—you'll be able to feel the difference.

4. Another way to make your home cozier is to **use a humidifier**. Cold air doesn't hold water vapor like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer. A favorable level of humidity inside your home can also help clear sinuses, soften skin, and improve sleep.
5. Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, **area rugs can also provide extra insulation and a warm surface for your feet** on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms where you spend the most time. You'll enjoy the new colors and textures of the rug, and the additional warmth will help keep your home comfortable.

These are just a few ways you can stay cozy this winter *without* turning up the thermostat. Don't forget the hot chocolate!

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric co-ops.



Electric blankets deliver quick warmth and include a variety of features like timers and dual temperature settings.

Photo Credit: Abby Berry, NRECA

Adding humidity inside your home can make the air feel a little warmer.

Photo Credit: Abby Berry, NRECA





2021 ENERGY EFFICIENCY CALENDAR FOR KIDS

There are so many ways you can save energy! Saving energy helps reduce your family's monthly bills – and it helps our environment. Change your energy use habits by following the monthly tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy efficient throughout the year.



JANUARY

Turn off ceiling fans when you leave a room.



FEBRUARY

Instead of turning up the heat, put on an extra layer of clothing or stay cozy under a blanket.

MARCH

Turn off lights when you leave a room.



APRIL

Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.

MAY

Decorate your backyard or porch with solar-powered lights.

JUNE

Take short showers instead of baths.



JULY

Dry heavy linens outside on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.

AUGUST

Ask an adult to help you schedule a reminder to change the A/C filter every 60-90 days.

SEPTEMBER

Turn off running water while brushing your teeth.



OCTOBER

Unplug energy vampires, like chargers, gaming consoles and cable/satellite boxes.

NOVEMBER

Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.



DECEMBER

Decorate your home with energy-saving LED holiday lights.

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