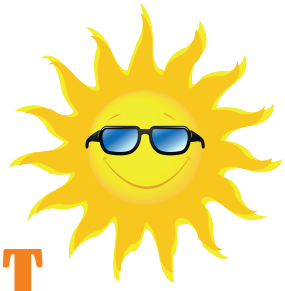
Lyon REC News

AUGUST 2021

Phone : 712-472-2506 or 1-800-658-3976 ~ Website : www.lyonrec.coop
Office Hours : Monday thru Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

KEEP COOL DURING AUGUST HEAT



Unless you keep your thermostat so low that you send your cooling bill through the roof in August, it's a good idea to find some energy-friendly ways to keep your cool during the hottest month of the year. Here are five tips:

1. Take cool showers. If your house isn't cold—and there's no reason it should be, even with the a/c on—ease up on the hot showers. A cool shower will lower your body temperature and get you just as clean.

2. Chill the meal plan. Instead of baking, broiling, boiling, sautéing and frying every night, how about chopping fresh veggies, making colorful salads and satisfying your family's hunger with healthy raw foods that will fill them up and give your stove and oven a break. Cold desserts? That's the easy part.

3. Filter the sun. Install solar screens or window films on east- and west-facing windows so you can keep the heat out while allowing the light to come in.

4. Seal leaks and cracks. You'll find them all over your home—around windows, doors, and electrical and cable outlets. It's easy to caulk and weatherstrip, and it's an activity you can do with your kids as you teach them to use energy responsibly.

5. Schedule a check-up. Even if you skipped your a/c's spring maintenance, go ahead and schedule it now. Your HVAC tech can tell you if your air conditioning unit is running efficiently—and can tweak it so it does. It's important to raise the thermostat a bit during the summer—but also to make sure the cool air that does come into the home gets there efficiently.

Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative
will be closed
September 6, 2021
in observance of Labor Day

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When shopping for new light bulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption. Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

Source: energy.gov

Smart home can make telework easier

Now that offices and stores are beginning to fully open, lots of employees will be moving their offices from their homes back to their normal workplaces. But not every teleworker will get back to business as usual.

According to Brookings, a public policy research organization, now that businesses have invested in the technology and training necessary for their employees to work remotely, many of those telecommuters might choose to stay in their home offices.

If you're one of them, consider upgrading your home with a few "smart" gadgets that can make life easier and save money and energy.

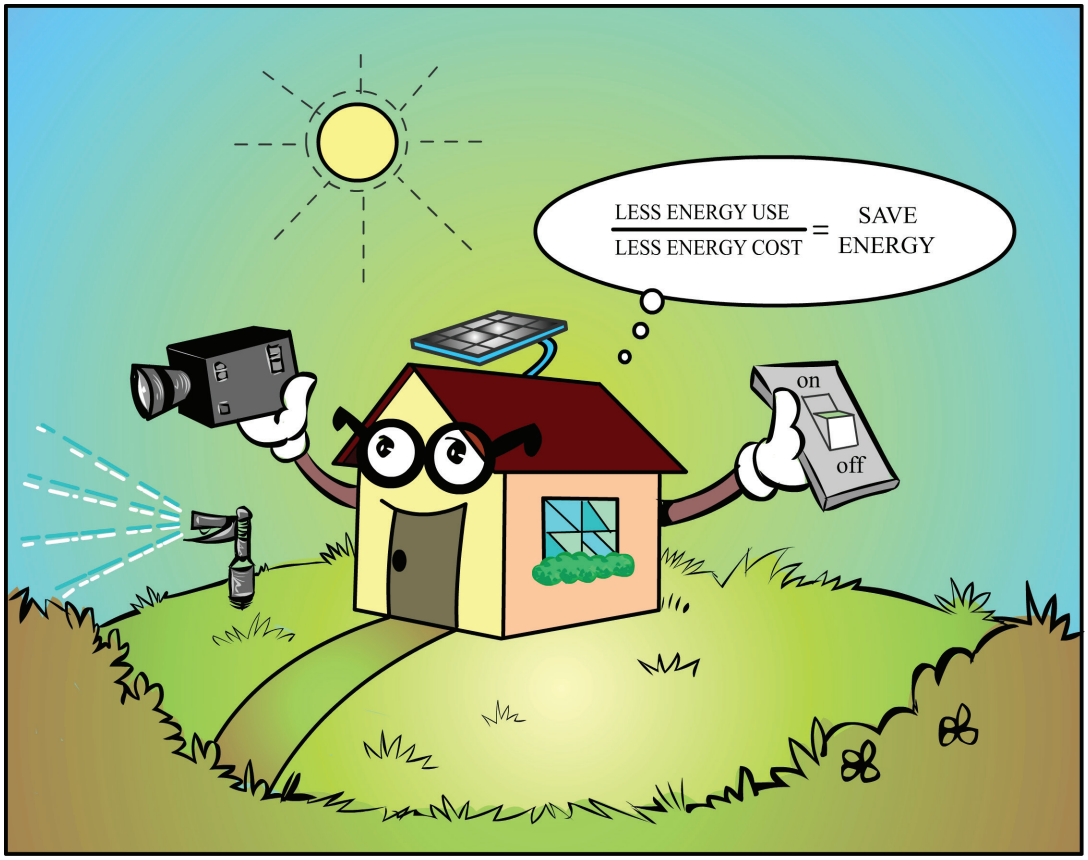
Here are four of the most popular smart home features, according to Hanley Wood, the publisher of Builder magazine:

1. Smart speakers. So-called personal assistants like Alexa, Google Home and Apple's HomePod respond to voice commands by answering questions, turning the lights on and off, reading your schedule, playing your music requests and reminding you to do the chores you have programmed it to track.

2. Smart appliances. A smart refrigerator can let you know when you're low on milk. Smart washers and dryers can remind you when it's time to do the laundry—and allow a repair tech to fix a problem remotely so you don't have to be home to let him in.

3. Smart security. Even if you're on vacation or stuck at work all day, you can see your porch if your doorbell is equipped with a camera. Some devices even let you speak to a person who is standing on your porch.

4. Smart thermostats. Connected to wifi, these easy-to-install thermostats "observe" your family's behavior and set the heat and air conditioning accordingly. Some manufacturers claim a household can save 10% on heating bills and 15% on air conditioning with a thermostat that adjusts itself to raise or lower the temperature when nobody's home.



Make up for high pandemic bills with wise energy use

You Zoomed, you teleworked, you ate dinner at home every night and you stayed in on weekends. And you have your energy bill as proof.

Americans spent 10% more on energy at home from April to July 2020 than they did during those months during pre-pandemic years, according to "Powering Work from Home," a report from the National Bureau of Economic Research. That trend remained fairly steady through the lockdown months.

On the other hand, energy use by businesses and industries plummeted by 16%. And chances are good that your family drove less and therefore spent less on gasoline.

That's about to change. With businesses reopening and teleworkers returning to their offices, energy use could gradually shift back to normal.

That means homeowners have an opportunity to make up for some of the energy-heavy months they spent at home.

This summer, while you're spending more time outdoors and away from home, turn the air conditioner up a few degrees to save a little energy while the house is empty. Draw the blinds on especially hot, sunny days to stop the sun's heat from warming up your rooms. Run appliances that produce heat, like the dishwasher and clothes dryer, after dark.

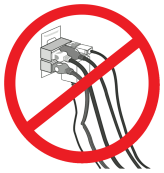
Those small energy-saving steps could help your "back-to-normal" energy bill drop even more once your family returns to its regular routine.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY BASICS FOR BACK TO SCHOOL

As children head back to school, parents can teach them a valuable, potentially life-saving lesson: to respect electricity.

Here are five electrical safety basics every child should know:

1. Mixing water and electricity can harm you. Teach children not to use electrical toys or other devices near water or in the rain.

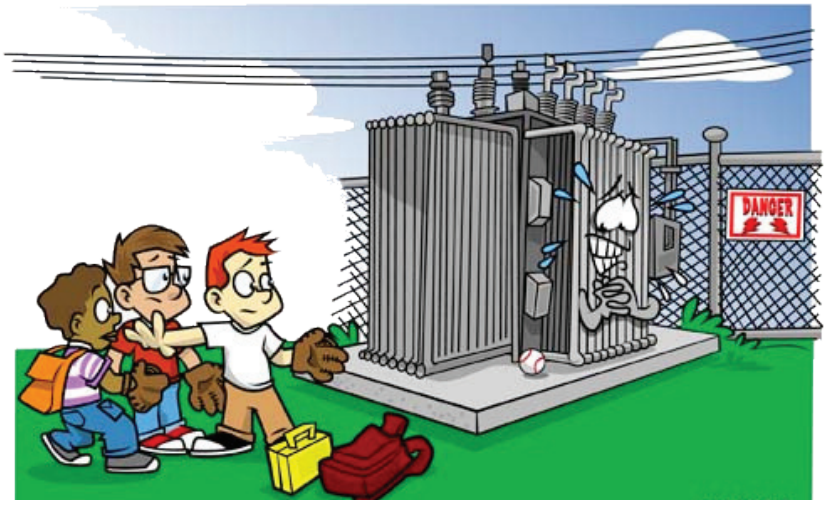


2. Electrical outlets have limits. Plugging multiple devices into a single outlet or power strip can create sparks and even cause a fire if that outlet can't handle the load. Teach kids to plug into surge-protected power strips or to use one device at a time and unplug the rest.

3. When they unplug those devices, they should grab them by the plug, not the cord. Yanking a cord out of an electrical outlet can damage the appliance, the outlet or the plug, leaving the appliance or toy unable to operate safely.

4. Flying kites and climbing trees are never safe activities near power lines. If a tree has a power line running through it—or if it's even within reach of the line—that's not a safe place to play. If a kite gets caught in a power line, the child should not tug on it to get it loose. The string could conduct electricity and seriously hurt the child.

5. Electrical substations are fenced off to keep children and pets out. If a toy or small pet gets inside of the fence, the child should tell a parent or teacher, who can call a trained worker to come and retrieve it.



WORK, PLAY SAFELY AROUND WATER

Few things are more refreshing on a hot day than cool water—in the shower or pool, under a sprinkler or even from a garden hose.

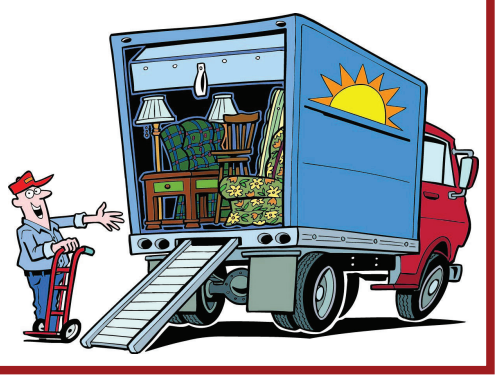
Yet few things are as dangerous around the home as water that comes into contact with electricity. So:

1. Keep electrically powered toys, appliances, outdoor TVs, electric grills—anything with a plug—far from the pool bathtub, sprinkler system, sink and hoses. And keep them out of the rain, even if it's only sprinkling.
2. If an electric toy or appliance lands in water, don't touch it—and teach your children the same. Electricity travels quickly through water, so touching anything electrical that's wet can lead to a shock or worse—electrocution.
3. Have an electrician check the electrical connections to pools, hot tubs, fountains and other outdoor water sources. They should be grounded.
4. If you use extension cords to reach outlets for washers, dishwashers, air conditioners or other appliances in wet spaces, disconnect them. Those appliances should be plugged into grounded outlets, not flimsy extension cords.

Teach everyone in your household where the home's circuit breakers are located and how to switch them off during an emergency.

MOVING?

Remember to notify the Cooperative when you move off of the Lyon Rural Electric service area and inform the new owner of their responsibility to then get signed up for service.



Understanding Power Surges and Blinks

by Abby Berry

Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you've noticed a blinking microwave clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you've likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could result from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what's happening behind the scenes can be quite different.

What's a power surge?

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts—this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative encourages all members to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you're experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

What's a power blink?

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events. In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages.

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage. Regardless of the cause, Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative crews will be on their way to inspect the damage and make necessary repairs after a power outage. And you can help too! Any time you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know by calling 712-472-2506 or 800-658-3976.

JUNE OPERATING STATISTICS

	2020	2021
KWH Purchased	10,639,288	10,570,674
KWH Sold	10,624,050	10,472,859
Percentage of Line Loss (Year to Date)	3.40%	2.74%
Total Demand	18,214 KW	19,078 KW
Average Farm Consumption	2,645 KWH	2,578 KWH
Average Farm Bill	$252.36	$257.71
Income Per Mile	$1,084.40	$1,103.05
Expenses Per Mile	$1,050.72	$1,105.04
Miles Energized	872.86	872.86
Cost of Wholesale (For the Month)	6.04¢	6.33¢

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