



Connections



Staying cool the au naturale way

Going natural is the trendy thing to do: natural foods, natural beauty products, even natural bug repellents. Did you know you can cool your home naturally too? It's called passive cooling, which uses non-mechanical methods to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature.

The most effective method to cool your home is to keep the heat from building up. The primary source of heat buildup is from the sun. Its heat is absorbed by your house through the roof, walls and windows. Secondary sources of heat gain are heat-generating appliances in the home and air leakage.

Specific methods to prevent heat gain include reflecting sunlight away from your house, blocking the heat, shading and reducing heat-generating sources in your home.

Reflecting heat

Dark-colored homes absorb 70-90 percent of the heat radiated by the sun. In contrast, light-colored surfaces effectively reflect most of this heat away.

About a third of unwanted heat comes through the roof.

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Connections connects with national judges; wins award



The Council of Rural Electric Communicators announced that *Connections* won an Award of Excellence in the Best Newspaper/Magazine Category for 2008. Andrea Christoffer, marketing & communications manager, is the editor of the award-winning member magazine. Steve Ruthenbeck, communications specialist, also works on the publication.

“The judges’ descriptions of this year’s entries ranged from extraordinary to impressive,” said Maggie Tilley, administrator of Spotlight on Excellence. “The consistent comment was that consumers are being well-served by communications that inform and to add value.”

Connections competed with electric cooperatives of similar sizes. Electric co-op communicators submitted more than 744 in 19 categories entries for the Spotlight on Excellence program, now in its 21st year.

“This is the ninth year that *Connections* has won an award,” Christoffer stated. “Besides this year’s award, *Connections* won an Award of Excellence, which is equivalent to first place in its category, in 2000, 2001 and 2007. In 1999, 2002, 2003, 2005 and 2006 *Connections* won an Award of Merit or second place. This award again demonstrates the content and quality of our communication to members. *Connections* is recognized among the best throughout the nation for content and design.”



Connecting our co-ops & members to a progressive future



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Check up your central air or heat pump to the tune of a \$25 rebate



The Central Air Conditioner and Heat Pump Tune-Up Program provides a \$25 credit for members who hire a licensed service technician

to perform a tune-up on an existing central air conditioner or heat pump. A properly tuned air conditioner or heat pump will be a more efficient unit and saves you money on your cooling bills.

To receive the credit from your electric cooperative you must complete this form, attach the tune-up checklist completed by the licensed service technician and provide a copy of the technician's tune-up bill. Finally, mail the checklist coupon to your electric cooperative.

This credit is for units over three years of age and have not been tuned up in the last two years. The program does not cover the cost of any necessary repairs that the tune-up may discover.

Cooling system tune-up checklist

Name: _____

Address: _____

Location: _____ Phone: _____

Technician checklist:

- ___ Clean condenser coil
- ___ Check coolant level
- ___ Check coolant pressure
- ___ Check indoor filter
- ___ Check belt and lube motor, if needed
- ___ Test all controls
- ___ Blow out all drain lines
- ___ Perform a visual inspection of the entire cooling system
- ___ Educate the member on proper system operation
- ___ List air conditioner or heat pump's brand, model and serial number: _____
- ___ List the approximate age of unit: _____
- ___ List EER rating and BTU rating: _____



Technician's name and signature:

Mail with copy of technician's bill to the co-op to receive \$25 credit, which will be applied to your electric bill.

Keep your AC or heat pump maintained...



1. Make sure your cooling unit is properly drained. If too much water remains in the system or too much escapes, then your cooling unit is not running at peak efficiency. Check hose connections for leaks or cracks and make sure the condensate tube is able to drain without impediment.
2. Change the furnace filter every 4 to 6 weeks.
3. Wash off the outside air compressor (make sure it is off).
4. Keep grass, leaves and other debris away from the compressor so it has a free flow of air.

The show must go on even when the show is bouncing down the stairs



It's summer and the kids are looking for something to do. Are they movie buffs, but prone to breaking things? Maybe you're looking forward to vacation, but not looking forward to a long road trip with bored kids in the backseat. If so, the Kid-Touch Portable DVD Player from Fisher Price is for you.

Unlike other portable DVD players, this one is rough, tough and easy enough for any kid to use. Designed with special Kid-Tough features, this durable



If you've got kids that are always on the move, let them watch movies on the Kid-Tough Portable DVD Player. It's made to take abuse and ensure the show will go on.

device will survive drop after drop. It has a 3.2" color TFT screen, four

rechargeable AA batteries (with a two-hour life), battery charger/wall power unit, sturdy dual-rail DVD drive and a digital anti-skip buffer. Other features include dual-grip handles, kid-friendly DVD door and controls, CD-playback capability, handle for portability, kick stand legs for hands-free viewing, video-out jack and head-phone jack.

The Kid-Tough Portable DVD Player costs \$180 and can be found in stores and online at Amazon.com.

Lights, camera, action for active youngster movie buffs! 📺

Don't let electricity 'ground' your water fun



Summer brings to mind a cool dip in the pool or a refreshing day at the lake, but be careful!

Follow these safety tips.

- Do not put electrical appliances within five feet of a swimming pool.
- Any electrical outlets within 20 feet of a pool should be equipped with a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI).
- Pools and decks should be built at least five feet away from underground electrical lines and 25 feet away from overhead electrical lines.
- Use battery operated, rather than electrical, appliances near pools.
- If a swimmer is electrocuted or shocked, don't dive in yourself or you could be electrocuted. Turn off the power and use a fiberglass shepherd's hook to pull the victim out of the water.



- Never swim during a storm.
- When you leave the pool, don't change the radio station or touch any electrical appliances until you are dry — never touch any electrical appliances when you are wet or standing in water. If children wish to play with sprinklers or hoses, emphasize that they should be set up well away from any electrical outlets or appliances.
- Always check the location of nearby power lines before boating or

fishing. Maintain a distance of at least 10 feet between your boat and nearby power lines to be safe.

- If your boat comes in contact with a power line, never jump into the water — it could be energized. Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line.

• Be sure dockside outlets have GFCI protection and check cords that are plugged into them to make sure there is no broken casing or exposed wires.

• Check for the location of power lines before fishing. Make sure you are casting the line away from power lines to avoid potential contact.

For more tips on electrical safety visit www.safeelectricity.org 📺

— Information courtesy of safeelectricity.org

Federated Focus

Even Pay bills adjusted

If you participate in the Even Pay program (so you pay the same amount monthly on your electric bill), your June 1st bill most likely changed. The Billing Department reviews twice a year (May and October) all Even Pay accounts to see if the averaged amount was meeting the actual use. Check for your new amount on the June 1st bill. The new amount is based on your actual kilowatt-hours used for the past year. If you want to join Even Pay, call us at 847-3520, 728-8366 or 1-800-321-3520 or use billing@federatedrea.coop.

Nominating Committee meets

Federated's Nominating Committee will select director and nominating committee candidates. The first meeting is August 4. The membership will vote on these candidates at the Annual Meeting December 5, which will be at the Five Lakes Elementary School, Fairmont.

The director positions slated for election involve Districts 5 and 6, while the Nominating Committee is the District-At-Large. Trust Board director candidates are also for Districts 5 and 6. All positions are four-year terms.

If you would like to nominate a member for a position, call Federated at 847-3520, 728-8366 or 1-800-321-3520. Otherwise, e-mail info@federatedrea.coop.

The nominations will be posted at Federated 30 days before the Annual Meeting. Nominations can also be made by petition at least 20 days prior to the meeting or from the floor during the meeting. 🗳️

Congratulations Federated scholarship recipients!



District 1: Taylor Salzwedel, Lakefield, son of Dennis & Margaret

District 2: Dastinee Vancura, Jackson, daughter of David & Dawn

District 3: Alysse Varilek, Jackson, daughter of Lennie & Janet

District 4: Jonathon Traetow, Sherburn, son of David & Judy

District 5: Spencer Seibert, Fairmont, son of Paul & Norma

District 6: Alyssa Sandberg, Fairmont, daughter of Dean & Ruth

At-Large District: Tyler Harder, Fairmont, son of Brad & Vonnie Cone

Seven high school seniors have more to celebrate than graduation. Each one received a \$600 Federated Operation Round Up Scholarship.

49 students completed Federated's scholarship application. This is the seventh year students applied for it. Previously, nine smaller scholarships were awarded to each high school, but that excluded the home-schooled and students in neighboring schools. A scholarship was awarded to each co-op district, the same districts used for director elections.

This is the 19th consecutive year Federated dedicated funds to high school scholarships and the 14th year that the scholarships are from Operation Round Up. This totals \$58,000 in Federated Round Up scholarships. 🗳️

Federated's districts



Operation Greentouch a success!

Mission accomplished at the Kilen Woods State Park! It is cleaned up and ready for the summer season thanks to Operation Greentouch's help.

35 volunteers consisting of co-op members, employees and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans' members helped spruce up Kilen Woods May 2 as part of Greentouch

"Volunteers scraped, painted and fixed picnic tables, raked and cleaned around the picnic area and Interpretive Center, and washed windows," stated Jon Beckman, Federated marketing specialist. "In addition, they removed branches from the scenic trails, cleaned out the fire pits and picked up branches in the campground and picnic area."

"I'd like to thank everyone who volunteered," added John Petersen, Kilen Woods park manager. "It shows a lot of people care about our natural resources and Kilen Woods State Park. Federated and the volunteers help us get ready for the summer picnic,



Greentouch volunteers included: Troy Jones, Dale Cuperus, Andy Erickson, Lois Kazemba, Sharon Douglas, Don & Bonnie Vrchota, Dale Aden, Girl Scout Cadette Troop 30801, Kristen R., Thalia Cannon, Victor Pohlman, George Wiegand, Elaine Walker, Blake; Gloria & Trey Rossow; Jan Titterington, Rachel Daberkow, June Daberkow, Harlen Kuchenbecker, Larry Burmeister, Jon Beckman, Blanch Hanson, Jim Bezdicek, Nikkole Walker, Kayla Drexler, Laessa Janssen and Kerry Ella.

hiking and camping season, donating nearly 120 hours of work. What they accomplished in one day would have taken one person about three weeks."

The volunteers received a free hot dog lunch and Touchstone Energy work gloves. 🍌

Go on Renewable Energy Tour/Twins game



Learn more about your electricity and see a Twins game!

Your electric cooperative is partnering with Nobles Cooperative Electric, Worthington, to offer this two-day tour August 25-26. It takes you to Great River Energy, your cooperative's wholesale power provider in Maple Grove to tour their LEED platinum headquarters. The second day tour a dairy farm that uses an anaerobic manure digester; see how garbage is used to produce electricity. Finally, enjoy

supper at Champps and then watch the Twins take on Baltimore Orioles (August 25) in the Metrodome's home run porch. Cost: \$80 per cooperative

member or \$160 per Federated couple. Price includes air-conditioned charter bus, meals, motel and Twins tickets.

Batter up and sign up today! 🍌

Renewable Energy Tour Sign Up Form

Name _____

Address _____

City/state/zip _____

Phone _____

Location no. _____ Phone no. _____

Renewable Energy payment enclosed: \$80 (1 person) \$160 (2 people)

Circle room preference: Smoking Non-smoking

*Enclose check for trip payment. Return this with your electric bill or mail to:
Federated Rural Electric, ATTN: Andrea Christoffer,
77100 US Highway 71, PO Box 69, Jackson, MN 56143.*



Stay cool the natural way

— Continued from Page 1

One solution is to apply a reflective coating. Two standard coatings are available. One is a white latex and the other is made from glass fibers and aluminum particles. Another way to reflect heat is to install a radiant barrier on the underside of your roof. A radiant barrier is a sheet of aluminum foil with a paper backing. When installed correctly, a radiant barrier reduces heat gains through your ceiling by about 25 percent.

Roughly 40 percent of unwanted heat comes in through windows. Reflective window coatings are one way to reflect heat. These coatings are plastic sheets treated with dyes or thin layers of metal. Besides keeping your house cooler, these reflective coatings cut glare and reduce fading of furniture, draperies and carpeting. The coatings are applied to the interior surface of the window. Although you can apply the films yourself, it is a good idea to have a professional install the coatings, particularly if you have large windows.

Blocking the heat

Insulation is the best way to block heat from your home. The attic is a good place to start because it is a major source of heat gain. Adequately insulating the attic protects the upper floors of a house. Recommended attic insulation levels depend on where you live and the type of heating system you use. In climates with extremely cold winters, you may want as much as R-49. Outside air can infil-



trate your home around poorly sealed doors, windows, electrical outlets, and through openings in foundations and exterior walls. Thorough caulking and weatherstripping will control most of these air leaks.

Shading saves

Shading your home can reduce indoor temperatures by as much as 20°F. Effective shading can be provided by trees, other vegetation and exterior/interior shades.

Landscaping is a natural and beautiful way to shade your home. A well-placed tree, bush or vine can deliver effective shade and add to the aesthetic value of your property. Deciduous trees that lose their leaves in the fall help cut cooling costs the most. They provide excellent protection from the summer sun and permit winter sunlight to reach and warm your house.

Both exterior and interior shades control heat gain. Exterior shades are generally more effective than interior shades because they block sunlight before it enters windows. Exterior shading devices include awnings, louvers, shutters, rolling shutters or shades and solar screens. Interior shades include draperies and blinds.

Reducing heat-generating sources

Often-overlooked sources of interior heat gain are lights and household appliances, such as ovens, dishwashers and dryers.

Since most of the energy used by incandescent lamps is given off as heat, use them only when necessary. Take advantage of daylight to illuminate your house. Consider switching to compact fluorescent lamps; these use about 75 percent less energy than incandescent lamps and emit 90 percent less heat for the same amount of light.

Many household appliances generate a lot of heat. When possible, use them in the morning or late evening. Consider cooking on an outside barbecue grill or use a microwave oven, which does not generate as much heat and uses less energy than a gas or electric range.

Washers, dryers, dishwashers and water heaters also generate large amounts of heat and humidity. If possible, seal off your laundry room and water heater from the rest of the house.

Energy Star appliances generate less heat and use less energy. When it is time to purchase new appliances, make sure they are Energy Star labeled. All refrigerators, dishwashers, and dryers display an EnergyGuide label indicating the annual estimated cost for operating the appliance or a standardized energy-efficiency ratio. In addition, your electric cooperative offers rebates on Energy Star appliances.

— Information courtesy of Questline

**NOBODY KNOWS
MORE ABOUT
STAYING COOL THAN
THE ABOMINABLE
SNOWMAN...**



That's why he's a part of your electric cooperative's Cycled Air Program. Under the Cycled Air Program your air conditioner or heat pump's compressor is cycled on 15 minutes/off 15 minutes during times of peak demand. This saves you and your electric cooperative money. Plus, it's good for the environment.





Turn up the summer heat with recipes for Mexican cuisine!

Mail your Mexican food recipes by June 25 to: Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop. Otherwise, drop it off at your local electric co-op. Add your name and phone number. 📧

Scallop Casserole by Laura Greiner, Truman

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| 1 pint scallops | ½ tsp. pepper | ¼ c. butter |
| ¾ c. light cream or evaporated milk | 2 tsp. celery seed | |
| 1 c. crushed Ritz crackers | 1 c. Swiss cheese, grated | |

Place scallops in buttered 9x13" dish. Pour cream over the scallops. Combine cracker crumbs with butter and seasonings. Cover scallops with crumbs. Sprinkle with grated cheese. Bake uncovered in a 325° oven for 30-35 minutes. (Recipe can be doubled). 📧



Lemon-Batter Fish by Kay Sandersfeld, Fairmont

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1-½ cups all-purpose flour, divided | 1 egg beaten |
| 1 teaspoon baking powder | 2/3 c. water |
| ¾ teaspoon salt | 2/3 c. lemon juice, divided |
| ½ teaspoon sugar | Lemon wedges, optional |
| 2 pounds perch or walleye fillets, cut into serving-size pieces | |
| Vegetable oil | |

In a bowl combine 1 c. flour, baking powder, salt and sugar, set aside. Combine egg, water and 1/3 c. lemon juice; add to the dry ingredients and mix until smooth. Dip fillets in remaining lemon juice and flour, then coat with the batter. Heat in 1 inch of oil in a skillet. Fry fish a few fillets at a time over medium-high heat for two to three minutes on each side or until the fish flakes easily with a fork. Drain on paper towels. Garnish with lemon if desired. Yields 6-8 servings. 📧

Tilapia by Veronica Wolff, Heron Lake

- 4 Tilapia fillets
- 2 T. butter
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 6 to 8 oz. mushrooms, sliced
- ½ c. cream
- 1 T. capers
- 1 T. lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

Saute fish in butter three minutes on each side. Remove and put in an oven-proof dish. Place in a 200° oven to stay warm.

Sauce: Saute garlic in the same pan with remaining butter 1 minute (add more butter if needed). Add mushrooms, saute until the mushrooms wilt. Add cream and heat until hot, but do not boil. Add capers and pour over the fish — ready to serve. 📧



Energy vs. Demand: What's the difference?

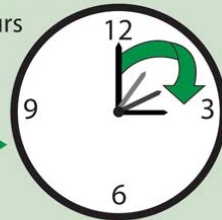
Demand: *The electricity you need*

A 23-watt compact fluorescent lightbulb (CFL) has a potential demand—the electricity it needs to operate—of 23 watts. Demand is often measured in kilowatts (kW). Each kW is equal to 1,000 watts.



Energy: *The electricity you use*

A 23-watt CFL needs a steady stream of electricity once switched on—a constant flow of 23 watts. This energy use is measured in hours: if left on for three hours, the CFL uses 69 watt-hours (23 watts x 3 hours).



Energy use adds up!

Your electric bill energy is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), which shows how much electricity was used in your home during the month. Each kWh equals 1,000 watt-hours. The average home uses 936 kWh of electricity each month!



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

Don't dig up trouble!



1-800-252-1166

www.gopherstateonecall.org

Contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before doing any digging more than 12-inches deep. Make this call 48 hours before digging for foundations, trees, tiling and more. You can also register on the website at www.gopherstateonecall.org. This gives utilities time to mark their underground lines up to your meter so you are safe! Then contact a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. 📧



Richard 'Rick' Burud

Manager's Message

Digital TV is coming!

Cooperative Television's (CTV) Board of Directors voted in May to convert all of their analog channels to digital. This means all analog TV sets will need a converter box in order for you to view CTV. The timeframe for the conversion is scheduled for late August or early September 2009. Why then? This way CTV qualifies for government assistance to pay for the majority of the new digital transmitters; this makes the digital conversion financially feasible. Watch your mail, scroller on the TV and your newsletter for the exact CTV conversion date. If you have a digital TV, you will be fine and will have all digital channels.

NOTICE — This will end all analog TV channels that CTV is now broadcasting on the Jackson, Frost and Godahl towers (except for the CTV Plus premium channels on the Godahl tower).

Attended D.C. legislative conference and visited with legislators

I attended the legislative conference in Washington, D.C. and visited with Representatives Walz, Peterson and McCollum, as well as Senator Klobuchar. The topics of discussion were: climate change legislation, funding of the rural electric program, renewable energy mandates, as well as stimulus funds and the economy.

All legislators were receptive and I came away that they had a genuine concern for the financial impact of climate change legislation on you, the ultimate consumer, during these difficult economic times. Although, with that in mind, a temptation exists to use this as a way to fund social programs, which is something we have opposed from the start.

We have a house bill, called Waxman-Markey, and many amendments to make it more workable, but we still have a long way to go. We'll keep you informed on what the ultimate cost for climate change legislation will be on you, the consumer. 📌



Electric grills available from Federated starting at \$69



Ready, set, surf!



Drop slow dial-up for Federated's fast WildBlue Internet — \$99 special through 6-30-09



Rural Electric

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The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 9 a.m. at the Jackson office. Regular board meetings are open to the membership. Members interested in discussing business items should contact the general manager or president three days before the meeting.

Board meeting highlights

Federated Rural Electric's Board of Directors met May 29. All directors were present. They acted on these issues:

- Approved the Valero ethanol plant addendum to the contract.
- Approved membership in the Cooperative Research Network.
- Discussed the Great River Energy transmission contract.
- Updated that Federated's allocation through Western Area Power Administration was reduced.
- Updated on the co-op's review of bids for an automated meter reading system and application for stimulus funding.
- Learned that the Rural Utilities Service received Federated's loan application.
- Approved a six-month loan to Cooperative Television Association of Southern Minnesota (CTV).
- Listened to department and subsidiary reports. 📌