

FEC® POWER

Source

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Checklist of Things to Help Curb Your Home's Energy Appetite

Thankfully, no matter if you live in an apartment or house, there are several steps you can take to make your home more energy efficient. Doing so can reduce your energy usage and improve your comfort. Getting the job started is not always easy, especially if you are not entirely sure where to begin. Below are some suggested energy efficient measures that you can use as a check list to get your apartment or home well on its way to saving on current and future energy bills:

1) Switching out incandescent bulbs (and CFLs) for LED lighting

- A 60 watt incandescent bulb that puts out about 800 lumens (brightness) will cost about \$9 a year using the bulb 4 hours a day.
- A 13 watt CFL that puts out the same amount of lumens, meanwhile, will cost about \$2 over the same amount of time.
- A comparable 8 watt LED bulb will cost only about \$1.25 over the same period.

*If you have CFL bulbs, start learning more about LED bulbs and color temperature so you will know the best ones to buy when your CFLs burn out. Prices have come down enough now on LEDs that changing-out your existing CFLs and replacing with new LEDs makes sense. Some of the upper-tier LEDs are rated to last more than 22,000 hours. That's over 15 years! Become familiar with the product's energy "nutritional" label on the box.

2) Seal drafts and cold spots

Check entry doors for signs of drafts where cold air can leak into your home. This includes tightening loose door hinge screws and replacing worn, loose, or missing weatherstripping. Weatherstripping kits for doors and windows are inexpensive, and blocking drafts will help make your home feel more comfortable and keep it warmer.

Another thing you can do is to buy an inexpensive infrared thermometer and use it to detect temperature differences that indicate where drafts might be getting in, such as outlets, light switches, and window frames. You can find these for under \$10 in most cases.

3) Install thermal-backed drapes and curtains

In a typical single-family home, 25% to 35% of the heat is lost through windows at night. Insulated drapes can cut this loss by 25%. Opening these during the day, especially on the southside of your home, lets the warming sunshine in to heat your home for free! It will cut back on lighting too! In the warmer summer months, close the curtains on the east-west facing windows in the morning and the west-facing windows in the afternoon to keep out the sun's intense summer heat.

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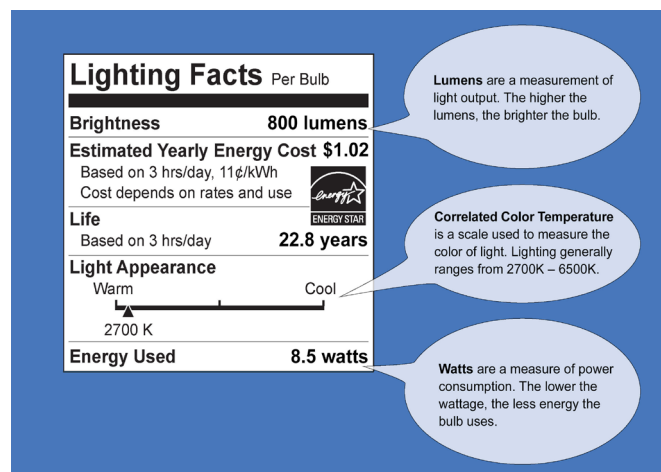
4) Kill the energy vampires and zombies

An energy vampire is anything like a power brick for a game console, battery charger, or any other kind of wall wart. These are inexpensive AC adapters that use transformers (induction coils) to convert wall current into low voltage DC. Even if you turn off the device or gadget, these power supplies stay on.

An energy zombie is any appliance that isn't ON, but it's also not OFF. Such devices linger in "standby mode" waiting for you to push a button to bring them to life. What's "standby mode?" Any remote-controlled device must use a tiny bit of electricity to power its receiver circuit so it can pick up a signal to turn-on on a whim. The zombie horde includes game consoles, Blu-ray players, wireless printers, scanners, and more.

How do you beat back these ravenous energy monsters? Simply control them by using inexpensive timers, smart

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Manager's Message...**Lance Adkins, GM****60 Day Session - 55th Legislature**

January 19th, beginning at noon, marked the opening day of the first session of the 55th New Mexico Legislature. In New Mexico each Legislature is divided into two legislative sessions, convening in regular sessions on the third Tuesday in January each year. Each Legislature will meet for sixty days in odd-numbered years and thirty days in even-numbered years. Key dates to consider, February 18 is the last day to introduce legislation, and the session will end at noon on March 20. Farmers' Electric Cooperative (FEC) effectively participates in the legislative process

individually and through our state association of electric cooperatives, the New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NMRECA). On behalf of cooperative members across the state NMRECA tracks legislation that has potential to impact the cost members pay for electricity through additional taxation and regulation.

Early on, we witnessed several changes in leadership positions, in both parties, one result of the November elections. We are aware that several key long-serving legislators around the state, strong advocates for rural areas, lost their primary election to progressive candidates; however, representatives across the FEC service area retained their seats this election cycle. Over time rural areas of our state have experienced a decrease in legislative representation as redistricting moves "seats" to urban areas like Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Las Cruces. Restrictions on meeting face to face due to COVID concerns will make it challenging to get to know these new faces. In addition, the general public is barred from attending committee meetings in person, but do have limited access, and the ability to make comments, through web-based electronic means. While not perfect, with service interruptions to remote access, the process is moving forward.



In New Mexico, all bills follow the same path through the legislature and can be introduced in either the house or senate. Once introduced, the bill is assigned a number, read twice publicly, printed, and referred to the proper committee. Each bill is reviewed by one or more committees in each house where the committee can approve the bill, amend it, forward it to the next committee with no recommendation, or kill the bill by tabling it. Committee hearings are open to the public and folks are encouraged to participate in the legislative process.

Once a bill passes all committee hearings, it will be considered by the full house where it was introduced and scheduled for a final vote. If it passes, the bill moves to the other house and repeats the entire process and if approved in the same form, the bill goes to the governor to be signed or vetoed. If each house passes a different

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Questions or article ideas
 should be
 directed to :

Thom J. Moore,

POWER SOURCE

P. O. Box 550
 Clovis, New Mexico
 88102-0550

Phone (575) 762-4466 or
 1-800-445-8541
thom@fecnm.org

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version of the bill, they form a conference committee to work on a compromise. If the committee agrees on a compromise, the bill goes back to the house and senate for a final vote.

Bills that pass both houses are formally prepared by the house where they originated, signed by the speaker of the house and the president pro tempore of the senate and forwarded to the governor. The governor can sign the bill, making it law; or veto the bill, or portions of it, if the bill contains an appropriation or financial commitment by the state. If the governor does not sign or veto the bill within three days and the legislature is still in session, the bill automatically becomes law. If the legislature has adjourned, the governor has twenty days to sign the bill and unsigned bills are automatically vetoed after the appropriate amount of time has passed. However, the legislature can pass a bill over the governor's veto with a two-thirds vote in each house.

Signed bills typically become law 90 days after the legislature adjourns. If the legislature specifies an emergency, the bill becomes effective when the governor signs it or a later date as specified in the bill.

I appreciate the commitment and determination of those representing the citizens in the legislative process. Folks who desire to follow the legislative process can track and read bills, follow committee activities and keep abreast of the daily calendar at the legislature's web site, www.nmlegis.gov.

Until next month,



#STAYSAFENEWMEXICO



Pole Inspectors in Area

Continuing through the end of March and into April, weather permitting, GLS, Ground Line Services out of San Antonio, Texas, will be testing poles for Farmers' Electric Cooperative (FEC) out of the Clovis Substation.

Pole testing is a yearly maintenance program that FEC performs, however, every pole is not tested each year, rather, FEC strives to test each on a ten-year rotation.



This type of maintenance program helps to ensure that FEC can continue to supply the very safest, reliable electricity to our members.

All FEC contractors should be marked as such, "FEC Contractor" on their trucks. They should also, have a letter from FEC on their vehicle dash when parked and working. You may also see some four wheelers in and around these areas as GLS crews use these to get to most of our poles. If you have any questions about pole testing or the pole testers, please feel free to contact the office at (800) 445-8541 and ask for Member Services or Engineering.

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

- Never try and connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system yourself. There are only two safe ways to connect a standby generator to your home and/or equipment.
- **Stationary Generator:**
- An approved generator transfer switch, which keeps your house circuits isolated from Farmers' Electric, should be installed by a licensed professional electrician.
- **Portable Generator:** Plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator.
- Set up and run your generator in a well-ventilated area "outside" of the home. Make sure it's out and away from your garage, doors, windows, and vents. The carbon monoxide generated can be deadly.
- Use a heavy-duty extension cord to connect electric appliances to the outlet on the generator.
- Make sure the generator is full of fuel before starting. Start the generator first before connecting appliance load.



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power strips that turn-off when levels fall to standby levels, smart outlets you can control with your smartphone, or just turn off the power to those that are plugged into a multi-outlet strip/surge arrestor.

5) Air seal your attic

Air sealing means sealing electrical and plumbing holes in walls, between floors, and even in the lighting fixtures and wiring in your attic. This stops the flow of air from your home's air-conditioned living space out of your home, which can save an average of 11% or more off your energy costs. In particular, seal around the soil stack vent, lighting junction boxes, and install insulated covers for recessed lighting fixtures.

6) Add more insulation to your attic

By increasing the insulation amount from R11 (about 4 inches) to R49 (roughly 16" of cellulose, loose-fill fiber, or fiberglass batts), homeowners can save about \$600 a year. This number is driven by savings in heating and cooling. Needless to say, preparing for the job is of key importance, so make sure your attic has been thoroughly air-sealed before you start. Additionally, you will want to make sure your electric outlets, lighting canisters, ductwork, etc. are all shored-up. If you can completely encase or bury your ductwork, the better off you will be. Even though insulating is expensive, the job can be completed in stages; simply begin by insulating over the area that gets the most use and then build out from there.

7) Seal and insulate your ductwork

Unsealed or uninsulated ductwork loses up to 20% of the energy from your heating, ventilation, and air conditioner (HVAC) system. Worse still, if you have unsealed return ductwork passing through crawlspaces, your furnace may be blowing mold, mildew, and fungus spores into

and throughout your home.

Sealing your ductwork with aluminum duct tape or duct sealing mastic ensures that your HVAC system will blow the conditioned air to where it is supposed to go. Sealing the return ductwork as well means the system will be able to pull air more efficiently from all the rooms of your home.

8) Stop warm air from going up the flue

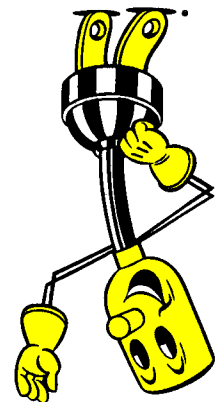
Fireplaces in winter might add warmth and charm to a room, but when they're not in use, you could be sending heated air out of our house – even if you have closed the flue. Install a chimney-top damper that fully seals your chimney. It looks much like a hatch and uses a heat-resistant gasket. Another solution is to use an inflatable fireplace damper balloon or plug that gets stuffed up inside the chimney and past your damper to reduce drafts.

9) Inspect your windows

Repair worn or cracked window glazing on older wood sash windows. Look for signs of moisture damage and rotten wood. If you discover a window that can't close properly or has damage to the window frame or sill holding the window in place, then it's time to replace it with one that is Energy Star® certified. Energy Star® windows block solar heat gain in the summer, reflect radiant heat indoors during the winter, and are designed to resist condensation problems.

10) Fix that dripping faucet

A leaky faucet that drips one drop per second will waste over 27,000 gallons of water in a single year. You probably would not let a leak go for a full year, but it certainly puts a new perspective on that dripping noise! Save some water and preserve your sanity by fixing any leaky faucets in your home.



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