

# FEC® POWER

## Source

Vol. 24 No. 09

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## Room-By-Room Energy Efficiency Tips

**C**onserving energy around the home is the quickest and easiest way to reduce your monthly utility bill. A common-sense approach, such as turning off lights when you leave a room or shutting down electronics when they are not in use, can be augmented by a practical plan to identify areas of high energy consumption or energy loss in the home.

Use the suggestions on this page to start making your home more energy efficient. Many of these upgrades can be made for little or no cost.

For larger considerations such as replacing a major appliance with a new energy-efficient model, remember that the money you save through conservation during the life of the appliance will offset its initial cost. Once you have offset any premium you may have paid for the more energy efficient appliance, it will be like putting money in your pocket.

Don't forget: Farmers' Electric (FEC) is the energy expert, and can offer advice on reducing home energy use.

### Living Room

- Install weather stripping around the frame of exterior doors. Solid or insulated doors work best.
- Set your thermostat at 68 degrees in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer. Also, programmable thermostats conserve energy and can pay for themselves in as little as six months.
- Replace heating and cooling systems filters often or at least once every 2-3 months.

### Kitchen

- Microwave ovens use up to 75 percent less energy than conventional ovens. They also don't warm up your home making it harder on the air conditioner in the summer.
- Don't preheat your oven. Most recipes can be baked

successfully without preheating.

- Check to make sure you have a tight seal on your refrigerator gasket between the door and the frame of the refrigerator.
- Use the power-saver or similar feature if your refrigerator is equipped with one.
- Wait until your dish washer is full before running it. You use the same amount of water and electricity whether it is full or half full.

- A new Energy Star qualified refrigerator can save up to \$150 a year in electricity costs compared to with models built before 2000!



### Roof/Attic

- Properly placed ventilation allows excess moisture to escape.
- Insulate attic floor, but don't cover vents. Insulate and weather strip attic access.
- Minimum attic insulation should measure 12 inches. For example: if you look into your attic and you can see ceiling joists, you should go in and blow in at least another 6-8 inches of cellulose (chewed up newspaper) on top of whatever is already there (battling or blown insulation). Even more for a home heated electrically.

### Bathroom

- Low-flow showerheads conserve water and cut down on the electricity needed to pump water and to heat water.
- Install LED lights in all fixtures. The better quality LEDs last up to 20 or more years and only use a fraction of the amount of electricity as the old incandescent bulbs. Plus, you can choose your color. Anything from 5000 degrees K (cooler bright white) to 3000 degrees K (warmer yellow light). Regional utility "buy-down" programs have made LEDs very affordable.

See **ENERGY EFFICIENCY** on **PAGE 4**

*Manager's Message...***Lance Adkins, GM**

be 100 percent “zero carbon” and 80 percent renewable, by 2050. Fortunately, the ETA also contains “off ramps” in case technology does not advance at a pace to accomplish ETA requirements in accord with established transition timelines and in consideration of the economics involved. In working with our wholesale supplier, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC), we believe we are on pace to meet and exceed the first two goals. In fact, as reported in the July issue of this publication, 33 percent FEC’s 2019 wholesale supply was comprised of energy generated by renewable resources!

Over the past few months several initiatives have sprung up to explore what changes may be necessary to transition our state under the ETA. Electric cooperatives across New Mexico, including our statewide association, the New Mexico Electric Cooperative Association (NMRECA), are actively participating in this process. We are aware of three ETA working-groups including those led by New Mexico State University (NMSU); the New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD); and the Senate Memorial 63 Working Group (SM63) formed in response to community solar legislation in the last legislative session.

Recent developments in California, rolling blackouts during a heat wave, underscore the critical importance of planning and utilization of all resources necessary, including non-renewable resources, to ensure grid reliability. Energy policy in California has favored increasing reliance on renewable resources and “spot” purchases of excess non-renewable energy in periods of shortfall. Utility system reliability requires planning for and reserving sufficient generation, fuel, and transmission resources (capacity) for all reasonable contingencies.

NMSU, with grant funding from the US Economic Development Administration, has contracted with the North American Intelligent Manufacturing Initiative to develop a “clean energy roadmap.” NMSU expects this to be a two-year process and will also examine the potential for new manufacturing, business opportunities, and job creation through renewable energy development.

EMNRD is working under a much shorter timeline, organizing a group of partici-

See ETA on **PAGE 3**

## The Clean Energy Roadmap Will Likely Have Some Challenging Curves

**R**eaders may recall the New Mexico Energy Transition Act (ETA), signed into law in 2019, requires a steady increase in renewable and non-carbon energy resources in the supply utilities provide to consumers. For Farmers’ Electric (FEC), at least 40 percent of our wholesale energy supply must be provided by renewable resources by 2025, increasing to 50 percent by 2030. In addition, the ETA requires New Mexico to



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## ETA from PAGE 2

pants in response to House Bill 233 (HB233), 2020 legislative session, Grid Modernization Roadmap and Grant Program. Under EMNRD, the Grid Modernization Advisory Group (GMAG) is tasked with development of a “draft grid modernization roadmap” by October of this year focusing on priorities and strategies to modernize New Mexico’s electric grid. EMNRD, in conjunction with the University of New Mexico (UNM), prepared a baseline Report of existing utility infrastructure for the GMAG in support of this effort. It is expected this roadmap will drive future policy and legislative efforts to encourage coordinated grid modernization planning well ahead of clean energy transition deadlines established in the ETA.

Community Solar (CS), the focus of the SM 63 Working Group, seeks legislative authority to require utilities to interconnect with local, small, third-party owned solar projects. CS would use the local utility distribution system to deliver solar energy to subscribers. Stated “benefits” of CS are varied and, in my humble opinion, highly questionable. WFEC, our wholesale supplier, has considerable experience with CS, operating a number of these systems in Oklahoma. Legislation proposed in the last session would have exposed FEC members to significantly higher costs as small projects are two to three times



more expensive than utility-scale projects and FEC would have been required to purchase any excess energy produced at a significant premium. Still, FEC can support CS legislation that makes clear that participants/subscribers pay all costs associated with providing service, and that other FEC members do not subsidize the cost of providing CS service or in purchasing excess energy at a premium.

It is critical to keep in mind, the cost of service FEC provides includes those costs associated with wholesale generation, fuel, and transmission capacity sufficient to meet the electricity needs of all members at all times. CS subscribers would also rely on these systems and must pay their share of costs to keep these systems available.

Until next month,

## Scholarship Applications Available Now!

Farmers’ Electric Cooperative will be awarding scholarships again this year through the Farmers’ Electric Education Foundation. Scholarship applications may be obtained from area high school guidance counselors or from cooperative office locations in Clovis, Ft. Sumner, and Santa Rosa. Scholarship applications can also be requested by calling the Clovis office at 575-762-4466 or 800-445-8541 or by going online to [www.fecnm.org](http://www.fecnm.org). All cooperative members and their dependents are eligible to apply for these scholarships.

## Don’t Delay! Deadline For Applications Is February 1, 2021!



As in the past, there are two different scholarship forms. Be sure when requesting a form that you specify either the “Graduating High School Student Application” or the “Returning College Application.” Both forms are available from any FEC office or are available to download from [www.fecnm.org](http://www.fecnm.org).

This year, the FEC Board of Trustees has authorized (63) \$1,000 scholarships and (1) \$2,000 Glenn Holland Memorial scholarship.

*The Farmers’ Electric Education Foundation was established by the members of the cooperative in 1986 and is funded through donated and unclaimed patronage capital refunds and donations by private individuals.*

*Only the interest earned on donations is used for scholarships, ensuring that the Education Foundation will continue to support higher education for our members for many years to come. Through 2020, the foundation has awarded 1319 scholarships totalling \$966,730.00.*

ENERGY EFFICIENCY from PAGE 1

Laundry Room

- A water heater’s efficiency is measured as the Energy Factor (EF), which is usually listed beside the EnergyGuide label. The higher the EF, the more energy efficient the water heater. Most conventional water heaters carry an EF of .95. Hybrid heat pump water heaters, the latest in electric water heater technology, have an EF ranging from 2.5-3.25.
- Insulate your new or old water heater with a water heater blanket making sure to leave openings around electrical connections, heating elements, and drain valves. Set the heater’s thermostat to about 120 degrees.
- Clean out the lint in your dryer after every use. Also, dryer vents should vent to the outdoors.
- Wash clothes when you have a full load. Use cold water for all loads. Most detergents are formulated to wash



in cold water. An Energy Star qualified clothes washer can cut utility bills by an average of \$50 a year and use considerably less water.

For those members considering energy efficiency upgrades, Farmers’ Electric has rebates for air source heat pumps, insulation, hybrid heat pump water heaters, electric water heaters, and mini-split ductless heat pumps. Additionally, there are federal tax credits available for many of these upgrades and more. For a list of residential energy efficient equipment and upgrades that qualify for tax credits, go to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) and find the button labeled “Tax Credits for Residential Energy Efficiency.” Look for the calculator icon.

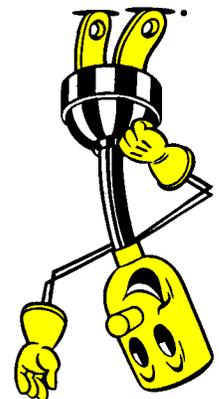
If you have any questions regarding energy efficiency, please call our Clovis office at (800) 445-8541 and ask to speak to the “Energy Guy.”

**Attention: Irrigation Consumers**  
**Subject: Irrigation Annual**  
**Minimum Charges**

In accordance with Farmers’ Electric Cooperative’s irrigation rate schedule, certain annual minimum charges apply to all irrigation accounts. Your original minimum charges were calculated through a contract with the Cooperative based on the cost of line extension to the irrigation load. Upon expiration of the contract, the horsepower on that account determines the annual minimum at the rate of \$20.00 per horsepower, but not less than \$110.00 for single-phase service, and not less than \$165.00 for three-phase service.

Under the irrigation rate schedule, consumers have one calendar year, (approximately December 20 through December 20 of the following year), in which to use the annual minimum charges. The December billing will reflect the remaining charges, if any.

If you have any questions regarding the annual minimum charges for your irrigation account(s), please contact the Cooperative’s Billing Department at 575-762-4466 or 800-445-8541.



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