BRIGHT IDEAS FOR A HOLIDAY SEASON



As November kicks off, it's hard to believe the holiday season is just around the corner. It's a time for gathering with family and friends, decorating our homes and enjoying time together. But with cooler temperatures and more time spent indoors, it can also mean higher energy use and an increased risk of electrical and fire hazards.

As your local electric cooperative, we want to help you enjoy the season safely while finding simple ways to keep energy use — and your electric bill — in check. Here are a few tips to help you have a safe, comfortable and energy-wise holiday season.

Safety first

Before decorating, take a few minutes to inspect electrical cords and light strands. Replace any that are frayed, cracked or damaged, and make sure outdoor lights are specifically rated for outdoor use. A quick check now can help prevent electrical problems later.



If candles are part of your holiday traditions, remember to never leave them unattended. An easy way to add another layer of protection is to test your smoke alarms regularly. Testing them takes just a few seconds and could help protect your home and family.

'Tis the season for savings

With more people in the home and more cooking, decorating and entertaining, your energy use can add up quickly. The good news is that a few simple changes can help you save energy without taking away from the holiday fun.



Start with your thermostat. Heating and cooling account for a large portion of home energy use, so lowering your thermostat a few degrees when you have family and friends over can help reduce energy use. And with a house full of people, you may find you don't notice the difference!

When decorating, choose LED holiday lights. LEDs use significantly less energy than traditional bulbs and last much longer, making them a simple choice for brightening your home while keeping energy use down.

The kitchen is another place where small changes can make a difference. When preparing holiday meals, consider using smaller countertop appliances such as air fryers, slow cookers and toaster ovens when practical. They can use less energy than a full-size oven and still help you prepare some of your favorite holiday dishes.

We hope these simple tips help you enjoy a holiday season that is safe, comfortable and a little more energy efficient. And remember, Scenic Rivers Energy is here to help with energy-saving ideas, electrical safety information and resources throughout the year.

From your friends at Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, we wish you and your family a safe, happy and bright holiday season!

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) helps assist eligible households with their heating and electric bills. Your household may be eligible for WHEAP, the Weatherization Assistance Program, and HE+ Program Services based on a number of factors. If your household gross income (before taxes and other deductions) is less than the amount shown on the chart, you may be eligible.

WHEAP assistance is a one-time payment during the heating season (October 1-May 15). The funding pays a portion of energy costs, but it is not intended to cover the entire energy costs of a residence. The amount of energy assistance benefit depends on a variety of factors, including the household's size, income, and energy costs. In most cases, the energy assistance benefit is paid directly to the household's energy supplier.

Homes heated with wood, propane, natural gas, electricity, or fuel oil can receive energy assistance. Your household may also be eligible to receive a payment for your non-heating electric costs through funding provided by Wisconsin's Public Benefits Program.

Crisis assistance may be available if you have no heat, have received a disconnect notice, or are nearly out of fuel and are unable to purchase more. WHEAP agencies provide a 24-hour crisis phone number to help with emergencies after business hours. Non-emergency assistance may include information on how to reduce energy costs, counseling on budgeting and money management, and payments to an energy provider.

Local WHEAP agencies will be contacting vendors or checking utility portals to confirm each eligible household has an active account before awarding the crisis payment.

For more information or to locate your local agency call 1-866-HEATWIS (432-8947).

Households with income at or below the amounts shown may qualify during the 2026–2027 program year (October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027).

Based on 60% of Wisconsin's median income.

Household Size	One Month Income	Annual Income
1	$3,322.00	$39,864
2	$4,344.08	$52,129
3	$5,366.25	$64,395
4	$6,388.42	$76,661
5	$7,410.58	$88,927
6	$8,432.75	$101,193
7	$8,624.33	$103,492
8	$8,816.00	$105,792





BEYOND THE LINES

A huge thank-you to our lineworkers for all they do to serve our communities!







Top photo and left: Joe Ihm and his children joined the Harvest Fest Parade, tossing candy to the crowd along the way. Center and right: Hunter Fortney joined the Gays Mills Apple Fest Parade, while his children helped spread the fun by tossing candy to the crowd.





Hunter Fortney and Dan Welsh demonstrated electrical safety during the Crawford County Safety Day Camp.









ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Adjust your water heater settings to save energy. As cooler weather arrives, your water heater may be working harder to keep up with longer, hotter showers. Check its temperature setting and consider lowering it to 120°F, which the U.S. Department of Energy recommends for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use while also helping prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



"Foggy Morning Finds" is this month's featured photo from Rachel Mumm, a member in Platteville, Wisconsin.

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