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Y-W Electric Association, Inc.

is dedicated to providing high-quality, reliable electric service and related products to our members at competitive prices. Our members deserve and shall receive quality service unexcelled in our industry. We are committed to maintaining an environment where the Board of Directors and employees can perform at maximum potential to benefit our Y-W community.



Each month, Y-W Electric Association offers consumer-members a chance to earn a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. If you find your name and account number in this magazine, call 800-660-2291 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* magazine and pick up the phone. You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine. (Check the date on the front cover.)



We Want to Hear From You

BY TRENT LOUTENSOCK GENERAL MANAGER

We live in a device-driven world. Our smartphones, tablets, laptops and an assortment of other devices help us communicate and connect. Companies spend billions pushing out a steady drumbeat of messages and information, and we are constantly bombarded with one-way communication. But is anyone listening on the other end? [Barry R Brown 1043203402]

At Y-W Electric Association, Inc., we are not only listening, we are eager to hear from you. Whether you text us, respond to a survey or social media post, send an email or simply stop by and chat in person, we thrive on your feedback. Connecting with you helps us keep pace with our community's priorities and needs.

Because we are a cooperative, we have a different way of operating. Y-W Electric Association, Inc. exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve. We hope you will consider us more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people. [Smith Dairy General Partnership 741314000]

Throughout the year, you will notice that we create opportunities for you and other community members to attend co-op gatherings and events so we can hear from you. These include our annual meeting, as well as our annual customer appreciation day at our Halloween open house.

We are in the midst of significant changes in the energy sector, as technology and the drive for more renewables and a more balanced energy mix is impacting long-term planning. These are complex issues that we will navigate in the coming months and years. This is why it's so important that we hear from you and other community members as we plot our course for the future. [Lonnie L. & Courtney Knudsen 3034004205]

Y-W Electric Association, Inc., works to continually learn from our members about their priorities so we can better serve you — because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community. But we can only improve, adapt and effectively plan for the future if we have two-way communication.

For our co-op and community to thrive now and in the future, we depend on hearing from you. I hope you will connect with us and let us know your perspective. We are listening.



TRENT LOUTENSOCK



SHOULD I CHANGE MY CHARGING HABITS?

Four things to know about extending rechargeable battery life

BY PAUL WESSLUND

Many of us are so connected to our phones, tablets and laptops that we panic when their battery nears the dreaded 0% mark.

We want our device batteries to perform well for as long as possible, but taking care of them can conflict with why we have our electronics in the first place. The point isn't to fret about battery life — it's to read and send emails, scroll on social media, take photos and countless other pursuits.

If you ever find yourself fretting over your device's power levels, here are a few tips on striking the right balance between battery health and how you work and play.

1. KEEP YOUR BATTERY ABOUT 40%–80% CHARGED.

There's a lot of reasonable advice around the internet to keep your phone charged between 20%–80%, or between 40%–80%. To understand those recommendations — and why you might want to either follow them or ignore them — it helps to understand how rechargeable batteries work.

Up until about 20 years ago, batteries benefitted from occasional “deep discharges” — running the battery down until the device shuts off. But because of different materials used in batteries today, that's not true anymore.

Rechargeable batteries work using two different materials that produce electricity when particles flow from one to the other. They flow the other direction when being recharged — a process that will degrade any battery over time. Keeping both sides of the battery in balance, with the device charged at about 50%, will put the least amount of stress on the battery and make it last longer.

But that's unrealistic — no one's going to keep their phone half-charged all the time. So, the experts try to make it easier by recommending 40%–80% or 20%–80%. Apple devices offer even more flexibility, pointing out that modern rechargeable batteries are designed to last for years under a variety of ways you use them. They recommend that, rather than worrying about the battery, just focus on using and enjoying your device.

2. OVERNIGHT CHARGING CAN ADD STRESS TO SOME BATTERIES.

Charging your device up to 100% or letting it drain to 0% until it shuts down puts extra stress on the battery and can shorten its life. That's why it can make sense to charge your devices occasionally throughout the day rather than keeping them plugged in while you sleep. Newer electronics will stop charging at 100%, but each time the charge drops to 99%, charging resumes.

3. KEEP IT COOL, BUT NOT COLD.

One absolute in battery care is to not let your device get warmer than 95 degrees. Keep it out of the sun and never leave it in a hot vehicle. If the device does get hot, don't go to the other extreme and put it in the freezer. Just place it in the shade or take the cover off for a while. [Russell & Deborah Zwirn 632801402]

4. USE LESS POWER.

It sounds simple, but one of the easiest ways to put less stress on the battery is to use less power. You can close energy-draining apps and functions when you're not using them, and you can activate energy-saving settings like putting the device to sleep sooner. Another easy way to reduce battery use is to activate the “airplane mode” button every now and then. You may be inconvenienced by a temporary pause on receiving emails or phone calls, but it might help you focus on that movie you're watching, the trail you're hiking or the conversation with your dinner companions. [Raymond & Margaret Flake 1141001603]

If you're the kind of person who likes to turn in their electronics every couple years for the latest versions, these recommendations likely won't apply. But if you're someone who wants your devices to last longer, these suggestions can help prolong battery life.

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

DON'T MISS OUT ON FREE MONEY

FROM Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

GET YOUR APPLICATIONS IN PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE TO COMPETE FOR THE FOLLOWING SCHOLARSHIPS:

Y-W Electric Association* \$1,000/year scholarships (renewable up to \$4,000)

Y-W Electric* \$1,000 scholarships

Basin Electric \$1,000 scholarships

Y-W Electric* \$500 scholarships

Y-W Electric* \$500 continuing education scholarship

Tri-State G&T \$500 scholarships

Y-W Electric* \$1,000 line technician training scholarship

* Y-W Electric scholarships are funded by unclaimed capital credits.

TO QUALIFY FOR THESE SCHOLARSHIPS:

- ✓ Your parents or guardians must receive electric service from Y-W Electric.

- ✓ You must be a graduating student from a local high school or approved home-schooling program or be a continuing college student.
- ✓ You must maintain full-time resident student status.
- ✓ Semesters must be continuous, excluding summer.
- ✓ You must provide a copy of your grade transcript to Y-W Electric at the end of each semester to receive renewable funding for specific scholarships.
- ✓ You must maintain minimum GPA requirements.
- ✓ Applications are available on our website, ywelectric.coop.
- ✓ Applications must be emailed or delivered to Y-W prior to 5 p.m., January 31, 2023.
- ✓ Applications received after January 31, 2023, WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED, regardless of postmark.

Y **W** **ELECTRIC**
ASSOCIATION, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE THROUGH Y-W ELECTRIC

APPLY TODAY!



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know insulating your electric water heater can reduce standby heat loss by 25% – 45%? This could save you 7% – 16% on annual water heating costs. Insulating your electric water heater is an easy, inexpensive project that can improve energy efficiency and save you money each month. The Dept. of Energy rates this project as medium difficulty, meaning most homeowners can tackle this project on their own. You can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets for about \$20 at most home improvement stores. Visit energy.gov for project tips and additional considerations.

Source: energy.gov





Justin Sage

Y-W WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEE

We at Y-W Electric Association want to welcome Justin Sage to the cooperative. He started his employment with Y-W on November 21. Justin was raised in the Sidney, Nebraska, area. He graduated from Sidney High School then continued his education at Western Nebraska Community College in Alliance where he earned a certificate in utility linework. Justin started his career working as a line technician for Highline Electric Association in Holyoke and then Tri-State G&T before coming to Y-W Electric Association, Inc. He enjoys spending time with his wife Jessica and two girls, Olivia and Emma. Justin also enjoys spending time outdoors hunting and fishing. Welcome to the Y-W Electric family, Justin.

BILLING CORNER

SmartHub Bill Pay & More

For convenience, Y-W Electric offers the ability to pay your account with a SmartHub app. This service allows you to pay your bill electronically with a credit or debit card or checking account. This is also a great place to go to get account information. Information on billing history, usage, payment history and past billing invoices are available. There is also a link to sign up for auto payment.

Reporting an outage is also available on SmartHub. This information goes directly to our operations department in an email. This leaves our phone lines open for those who do not have SmartHub available.

The app is compatible with iPhones as well as Androids. Check our website at www.ywelectric.coop for more information.

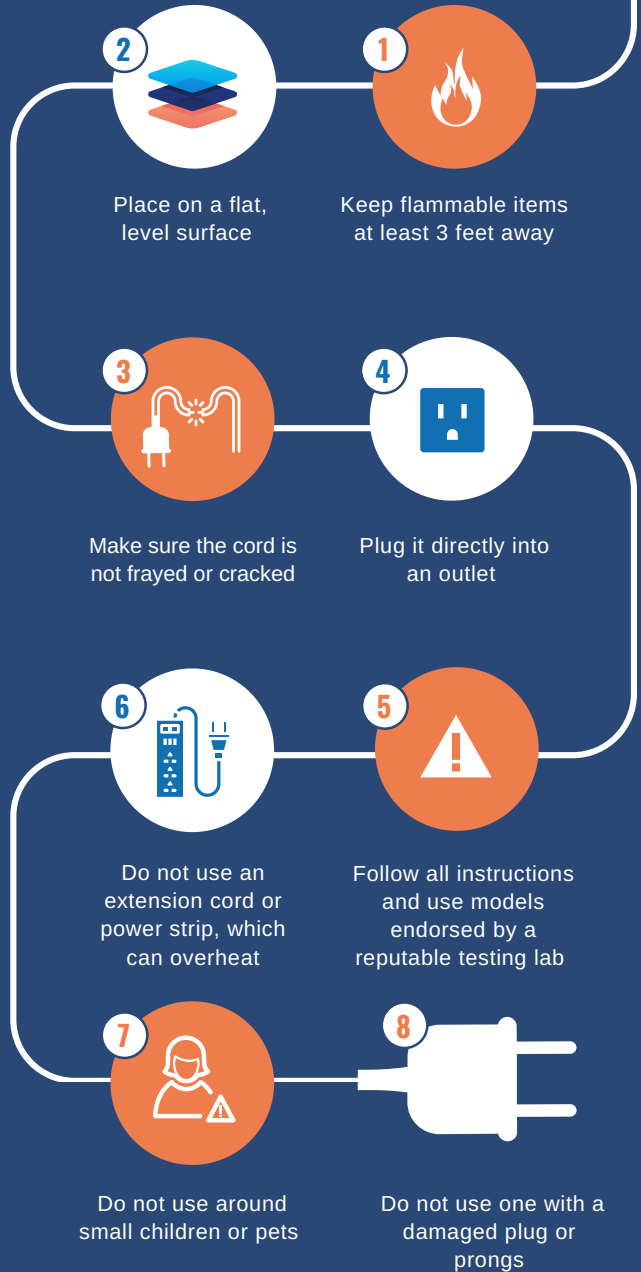


Congratulations to the winners claiming \$20 from the November 2022 issue:

Keith S. Damrow
Donald G. & Susan G. Rogers

feeling chilled?

HEAT YOUR SPACE SAFELY



Safe Electricity.org®