

Be Energy Aware This Winter

BY STEVE JOHNSON PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER

We have said goodbye to the warmer temperatures and have begun to head into the colder months. At Yampa Valley Electric Association, we wanted to ensure you had cost-saving ideas at your fingertips, with easy switches you can make to help cut down on all your energy bills. We know it is not just your electric bill that has been increasing in price — all utility bills have seen price increases over the last two years. So here are a few tips for our members to use daily to help reduce their overall energy consumption and keep energy costs down.

Seal up drafts

Remember when your parents asked, “Are you trying to heat up all of the town?” If your house isn’t properly insulated or sealed during the winter, you could be doing just that. Weatherstripping is an easy, cost-efficient way for you to help seal out drafts and save up to 10% on your total energy bill. An easy method to check for drafts is to hang a plastic bag around a coat hanger and place it around windows or doors that lead outside. If the bag moves, you have found a draft that needs to be sealed. One other thing to think about is your fire damper. If your fireplace is not in use, close the damper so heat doesn’t escape from your home.

Turn off electronic equipment

Unplugging space heaters and electronic devices when not in use can save an

astonishing 25% on your electric bill. When you’re done charging your phone, for example, unplug the charger from the wall. Of course, we live in such a connected world, but not all electronics need to be connected to a power source at all times.

Thermal Heating and Cooling

Like sealing out drafts, an easy way to help save money on heating and conserving heat is by keeping your blinds up during sunny days, allowing the sun to naturally heat your house. And when the sun goes down, close all windows and blinds to help trap the heat in your home.

Budget Billing

YVEA offers a program called Budget Billing. Many people like to know, within a few dollars, what their electricity bill will run each month to keep within their budget.

Budget Billing is a way to even out your monthly payments to avoid those high spikes that can sometimes occur during peak usage months.

How does it work? We take the current 12-month history at your service location and round to the next highest \$5 increment. You then pay the same monthly amount going forward. The account is reviewed after six months to ensure there haven’t been any significant increases or decreases in usage; the monthly amount is updated if necessary. The payment amount is then paid for an additional five months, with the



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sixth month being a clearing month. (The account is trued-up.) Finally, your average is again recalculated as it was a year ago, and you start the process again. We just ask members to keep in mind that a true-up month does happen, so they should be mindful of how much energy they are using to help avoid a larger bill at the end of the true upcycle.

Having Trouble Paying?

If any of our members are having difficulties paying their bill, the best thing to do is to reach out to us, and we will work with you to get your bill paid. We have contacts with outside agencies who can assist members with payment options. The worst thing you can do is let a bill become overdue. Please call us at 970-879-1160 to discuss your bill and what options are available.

Making even small changes and using energy wisely can make a significant difference in the amount you spend on your energy bills. For more energy tips, tricks, and ideas, visit yvea.com/energy-hero

Steve Johnson

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Price Advisory

Yampa Valley Electric Association wants you to be aware that the cost of all energy sources has increased. Based on current market prices, your monthly energy bills are expected to be higher this winter. As a member-owned co-op, YVEA is not in the business of making profits; we only pass through our cost to customers.