

**CEMC Management and Staff**

**Chris A. Davis, General Manager**  
**David Abernathy,**  
Engineering and Operations  
Division Manager  
**Annebelle Chester,**  
Administrative Division Manager  
**Mark T. Cook, P.E.,**  
Broadband Manager  
**Michael Blackwell,**  
District Operations Manager  
**Jonathan Fielder,**  
Engineering Services Manager  
**Seth Roberts,**  
Member Services Manager  
**Brad Taylor,**  
Financial Services Manager  
**Beau Baggett,**  
Manager of Member Experience

**District Managers**

**Ashland City office**  
**Josh Gill**  
**Clarksville office**  
**Kenny Davis**  
**Dover office**  
**Bobby Joiner**  
**Gallatin office**  
**Travis Akins**  
**Portland/White House offices**  
**Scott Brown**  
**Springfield office**  
**Chad Crabtree**

**CEMC Board of Directors**

**Tommy G. Whittaker,**  
Sumner Co., President  
**Wesley H. Aymett,**  
Cheatham Co., Vice President  
**Shela K. Williams,**  
At Large, Secretary-Treasurer  
**K. Jean Beauchamp,** Robertson Co.,  
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
**Charles R. Hancock,** Stewart Co.  
**Michael A. Mason,** Robertson Co.  
**C. David Morgan,** Montgomery Co.  
**Edward L. Oliver,** Montgomery Co.  
**J. Bryan Watson,** South Stewart Co.  
**Joe H. Whitaker,** Sumner Co.

**Mission Statement**

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is committed to meeting the needs of our membership by delivering safe, affordable and reliable services the cooperative way.

**The Tennessee Magazine**

(ISSN 0492746X), Volume 64, No. 3, is published monthly by Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, 2964 Sidco Drive, Nashville TN 37204. Periodicals Postage Paid at Nashville TN and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Tennessee Magazine*, PO Box 100912, Nashville TN 37224-0912.

# Co-op Concerns

*News from your community*

## Think win-win-win

On Aug. 15, 1989, Stephen R. Covey's "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" was first published. The book has sold more than 25 million copies worldwide, and it remains one of the most influential business and self-help books ever written. In his book, Covey challenges his readers to follow seven universal and timeless principles designed to help them be more effective in their personal and professional relationships.

Covey's fourth habit is, "Think win-win," and he encourages readers to seek solutions that benefit everyone involved.

A recent term being used a lot in the energy industry is "beneficial electrification." The idea behind beneficial electrification is simple: Pursue solutions that benefit all — co-op consumers, the co-op that serves them and the environment. I can't think about this concept without recalling Covey's fourth habit.

Beneficial electrification is the process of replacing technologies that have traditionally been powered by fossil fuels — think propane furnaces and gasoline automobiles — with electricity-power options.

Electric prices in Tennessee are 17 percent below the national average,

and prices traditionally are far more stable than other energy sources. At the same time, electricity is becoming cleaner. Today, 59 percent of the energy we provide comes from carbon-neutral sources, and our energy mix becomes cleaner each year.

For our consumers, this means that investing in an electric appliance — as opposed to gas or propane — will save you money over time, improve your quality of life and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It also allows our team at Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation to operate a more efficient and resilient power grid.

Beneficial electrification benefits you, your co-op and your community. That's a win-win-win.



**By Chris A. Davis**  
*General Manager,  
Cumberland Electric  
Membership  
Corporation*



# Watson appointed to CEMC board

**B**ryan Watson has been appointed to serve the remainder of the term of Steve Douglass, who passed away Oct. 26, 2020. Watson represents South Stewart County on Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation's board of directors.

Watson, a graduate of Murray State University, is the branch manager and vice president of the Dover branch of F&M Bank, a position he has held for the past 20 of his 39-year career in the banking industry.



*Bryan Watson*

Watson also serves as director of Mid-Cumberland Area Development Corporation; chairman of Stewart County Economic Community Development and Stewart County Industrial Development Board; finance committee chairman and backpack program volunteer at Fort Donelson Memorial United Methodist Church; and board member at EdPro Development Inc.

He and his wife, Tracy, reside in Dover. The Watsons have two grown daughters and five grandchildren.

---

## Let the sunshine in

**O**ne of the easiest ways to warm up your home during late winter and early spring: Open the window drapes.

Saving energy isn't the only benefit of adding natural daylight to your rooms. Daylight is a natural stimulant that makes people feel better.

Here are five ways the sun can help you save energy on heating bills:

1. Open the curtains or blinds during the day and close them once the sun goes down. The heat from the sun's rays could warm up the room enough to remain comfortable even if you lower the thermostat. South-facing windows are the best for letting sunlight in during the winter. A side benefit: You won't have to turn on any lamps in sunlit rooms.

2. Clean your windows. Nobody likes that chore, but dirty windows can block natural light from finding its way into the home. Wipe down the indoor glass panes once a month year-round and the outdoor panes once a year.



3. Install a skylight in an otherwise shaded room. The rooftop windows aren't cheap, but they let the sun into the room and give you a view of the sky.

4. Replace any single-pane windows with energy-efficient, double-pane models. Besides letting in the light, they keep your home's heated air from leaking outside.

5. As spring arrives and the weather starts warming up, an abundance of natural light in your rooms could allow you to turn the heat off a bit sooner.

# 2020 In Numbers

Upon completion of Phase 1 Fiber Construction, we have accomplished:

Miles of fiber constructed



**1,400+**  
miles

Number of **locations** passed & CCFiber services made available



**16,500+**  
homes & businesses

Number of **fiber subscribers** (and lives changed!)



**5,000+**  
as of December 30, 2020

## But we're just getting started...

### On to Phase 2!

Phase 2 Fiber Construction is projected to pass

**21,000+**  
locations in 2021!



**2020** undoubtedly was a challenging year for everyone, and our team at Cumberland Connect is no exception. Cumberland Connect began construction on its Fiber Network Build-out in November of 2019 and officially launched our project in May 2020. We set out with the goal of bringing fast, reliable broadband access throughout our entire service territory. During the initial planning of our project, we certainly did not anticipate having to construct our network in the midst of a global pandemic. But these difficult circumstances and the way they changed our world highlighted the importance of our mission. Access to Internet is especially critical now more than ever, given that many people are working, accessing telemedicine, and going to school remotely. With that in mind, our dedication to our members spurred us on to get to work.

Retracing an entire infrastructure throughout five counties is a monumental task, and our construction schedule was aggressive as a result. Mike Neverdusky, our Network Operations Manager, knows firsthand that Cumberland Connect has garnered industry recognition from our vendor partners and from our service provider peers for the rapid speed of our design and deployment. "We went from first hire to first sign up in only 9 months, then to installing 200+ members weekly," comments Mike. "I am extremely proud of all the hard work and long hours all the teams have put in to make Internet a reality for so many members in our first year." Even now, our crews continue to work seven-day workweeks and average a pace of over 30 miles of new fiber constructed every week. All of the hard work was worth it, because by the end of our first year, CCFiber broadband services were connected at over 5,000 homes and businesses. And we're far from finished - because that was only Phase 1! We are projecting to pass over 21,000 homes and businesses throughout Phase 2 Fiber Construction in 2021.

We are so honored to serve all of our members and invest into our communities with this project. Our members deserve the very best, and we are devoted to expanding our network throughout our service territory. Because for all of us at Cumberland Connect, our purpose is

## Connecting you to your best life!



To check service availability and sign up for updates on our progress, visit us at

**[www.CumberlandConnect.com](http://www.CumberlandConnect.com)**

# Prepare now for spring storms

Spring officially begins on Saturday, March 20. Along with warmer weather and longer days, spring often brings strong storms to Tennessee. Here are some tips from the American Red Cross to help your family be better prepared for spring weather.

## *Make a plan*

Develop a plan to help your family respond to disasters. Discuss how to prepare and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play. Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team. Know where you and your family will shelter during severe weather. Identify a basement, storm shelter or an inner hallway or closet that can provide protection during storms.

## *Get educated*

Know the difference between storm watches and warnings. A watch means that bad weather is possible. A warning means that bad weather is occurring, and you should seek shelter. Conditions following a storm can be hazardous. Stay away from downed power lines, and call Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation at 1-800-987-2362, or dial 911.

## *Have a kit*

Take time now to organize the basic supplies you will need during a disaster. Basic kits should include food, water, medicine, a flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries, first-aid kit, medicine, cell phone and charger. A full list of items to include in your kit can be found at [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).

## *Prepare for power outages*

Despite our best efforts, strong storms can create extended power outages. Battery-operated flashlights and lanterns can provide light and are safer than candles. Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. If you plan to use a generator, have an electrician properly install it to keep you, your family and first responders safe.

If you do lose power, be sure to let us know by calling 1-800-987-2362 or by using the SmartHub mobile app. Our team will work to restore power as quickly and safely as possible, and you can follow our progress by viewing the outage map at [cemc.org/outagemap](http://cemc.org/outagemap). To learn more about CEMC's power restoration process and why outages occur, visit [cemc.org/outage-faq](http://cemc.org/outage-faq).



# Three electrifying kitchen appliances that save time and energy

Whether your oven and stove top are powered by gas or electricity, it's no secret that they consume more energy than smaller countertop appliances, like slow cookers and toaster ovens. In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup.

If you're looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are

three electrifying appliances for your kitchen:

1. Air fryers are becoming increasingly popular, and consumers have a lot of good things to say about these handy little appliances. Air fryers use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food — this means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. Because air fryers are fairly small, they won't take up much of your counter space, and with everything cooked in the fryer, cleanup will be a breeze.

Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes, and prices range from \$40 to more than \$200.

2. Electric griddles have certainly been around for a while, and they offer several benefits for any home chef (beyond bacon and eggs!). Griddles are convenient because you can cook everything at once like a



*Electric griddles consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Photo credit: Hamilton Beach*

“one-pan” meal, and the possibilities are endless. From fajitas to sandwiches to French toast, griddles can help satisfy any taste buds. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes for griddles vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30 at your local retail stores.

3. Pizza brings people together, so why not consider a pizza maker for your kitchen? These compact countertop machines are inexpensive alternatives to costly brick ovens, and they use less energy than your traditional oven. Choose your own fresh ingredients to whip up a faster, healthier pizza at home. Plus, most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas,

quesadillas and more. You can purchase a pizza maker for about \$30 to \$150-plus online or at your local retailer.

These are just a few electrifying appliance options for your kitchen. Remember that when you're cooking a smaller meal, countertop appliances can save time and energy. To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit [cemc.org](http://cemc.org).



*Air fryers circulate hot air (convection) to cook food. This means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. Photo credit: Hamilton Beach*



*Pizza makers are compact, inexpensive and use less energy than your traditional oven. Photo credit: Hamilton Beach*

# Smart home tech for your budget

By Maria Kanevsky

Smart home devices can add comfort and convenience to your life, but the price tag for some of these devices can be another story. Since many smart home technologies are new and cutting-edge, the cost of owning these devices can sometimes be a major barrier. Luckily, there are several inexpensive options for smart home devices that won't break the bank while still offering nearly all the same benefits. If you're new to smart home technologies, here are three inexpensive options to get you started.

Smart home speakers provide a wide range of features such as the capability to play music, call friends or family or even locate a misplaced smartphone. One of the most useful aspects of smart home speakers is that they act as a smart home hub for your other smart devices. Each smart speaker comes with a voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant, which can be used to control additional smart devices in your home. When choosing a smart home speaker, make sure your other smart devices are compatible with the system. Google Assistant, for example, works best with other Google products, rather than Amazon or Apple products. Several smart home speakers, especially smaller, entry-level types like the Amazon Echo Dot and Google Home Mini, can cost as little as \$30 or less. This makes them more affordable than the larger versions like Amazon Echo and Google Home while still offering nearly all the same features.

Another affordable smart home technology is the smart plug. The technology works by directly inserting the smart plug into an outlet, then plugging your device into the smart plug. This can make any device "smart" by connecting it to your Wi-Fi network through the smart plug. They can also be used with smart home speakers. One of the best features of a smart plug is that it can help you reduce your monthly energy use. This can be done by programming automatic shut-off times to prevent devices from drawing energy when they're not in use. There are plenty of inexpensive and well-performing smart plugs available for less than \$20.

Smart lightbulbs are among the cheapest and easiest smart devices to install in your home. They can be controlled through your phone or by voice if connected to your smart home speaker. Some interesting features include the capability to choose different lighting colors and shades, dimness levels and the ability to turn them on or off entirely. There is an extensive market for smart



*Smart home speakers like the Amazon Echo Dot offer a wide range of features that provide consumers convenient control of smart home devices. Photo source: Abby Berry, NRECA*

LED bulbs, but some of the less expensive options are the Wyze Bulb, the Lixf Mini and the Ikea Tradfri, with prices ranging from about \$8 to \$20 per bulb. For multi-bulb fixtures, an alternative to buying several smart bulbs is to buy a smart light switch to control the entire fixture. However, this option doesn't allow for different color choices and requires a bit more handiwork to manually change out the switches.

Remember that if you're looking to buy more than one smart home device, make sure the devices are compatible with your smart home hub (Google Home Mini with Google products or Amazon Echo Dot with Amazon products) to ensure the best performance of all devices. As with any smart home device, access to a secure and stable Wi-Fi connection will be crucial to properly using the technology. Smart home devices will almost always be more expensive than their "nonsmart" counterparts, but they provide additional comfort and convenience that traditional devices simply cannot. The value of these devices is up to you, the consumer, to determine if they are truly worth the price.

*Maria Kanevsky writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.*

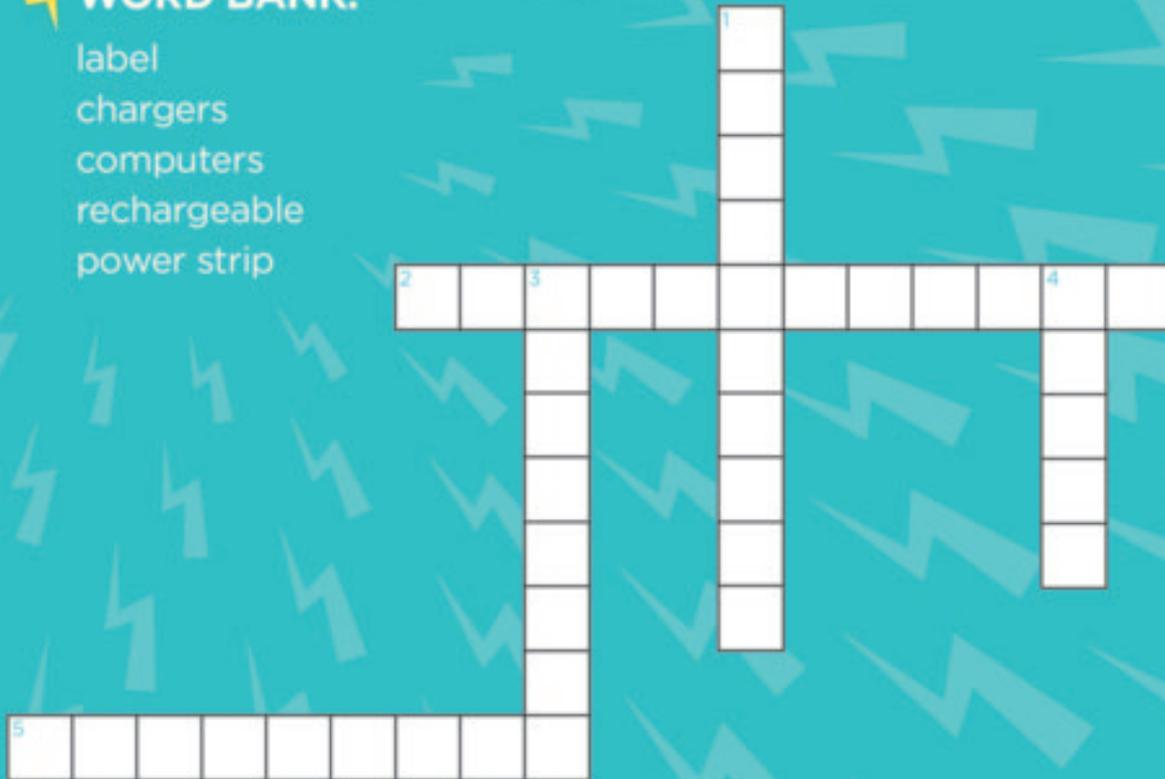
# ELECTRONICS EFFICIENCY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Did you know there are ways you can reduce your electronics energy use? Complete the crossword puzzle below to learn about electronics efficiency.

## WORD BANK:

- label
- chargers
- computers
- rechargeable
- power strip



**1 DOWN:** Use a \_\_\_\_\_ with an on/off switch when powering multiple electronics to easily manage energy use.

**2 ACROSS:** For devices that require batteries, use \_\_\_\_\_ ones, which are more cost-effective and environmentally friendly.

**3 DOWN:** Unplug electronic products, like \_\_\_\_\_, when you're not using them.

**4 DOWN:** Electronics that include the ENERGY STAR® \_\_\_\_\_ are the most energy efficient.

**5 ACROSS:** Many \_\_\_\_\_ come with a sleep mode or power management feature, which can save \$30 on annual energy costs.

ANSWER KEY 1. DOWN-POWER STRIP 2. ACROSS-RECHARGEABLE 3. DOWN-CHARGERS 4. DOWN-LABEL 5. ACROSS-COMPUTERS