

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation

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Mission Statement

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is committed to providing dependable, affordable electric service through the expertise and dedication of competent leadership and a well-trained and responsive workforce.

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Co-op Concerns

News from your community

75 cents of every dollar

In January, many of us resolved to eat healthier this year. There are many benefits of a healthy diet: weight loss, more energy, reduced risk of cancer and even improved memory.

It's hard to argue against making smarter choices when it comes to the food we eat.

However, when visiting your favorite local restaurant — the one known for its amazing cheeseburgers — sticking to those resolutions can be difficult.

Although your favorite restaurant may be known for their burgers, they don't actually have a herd of cows out back. Their success depends on a quality supplier for their ground beef and other ingredients.

You may think that Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation has little in common with a restaurant, and that's probably true, but we both need quality suppliers to be successful. We are best known for electricity, but we don't actually make it. We buy it — and we buy lots of it.

In fiscal year 2018, CEMC purchased \$206.7 million of electricity from our wholesale energy supplier, the Tennessee Valley Authority. TVA generates power and delivers it to each of our 30 electric substations located throughout our service area.

Our wholesale power cost, or the money we pay to TVA for power, represents our single largest expense. In

fact, 75 cents of every dollar you pay on your monthly power bill goes directly to TVA.

Obviously, what happens at TVA matters.

We challenged the TVA board to select a candidate who understands the industry, the region and our non-profit model.

In 2018, TVA's CEO Bill Johnson announced his retirement, and the TVA board is going through the process of selecting a new CEO. We expect an announcement to be made any day now, possibly even before you read this. The board's selection will have a significant impact on TVA, but it will also impact your co-op and your energy bill.

CEMC has been vocal to the TVA board regarding our expectations for the new CEO. We challenged the TVA board to select a candidate who understands the industry, the region and our non-profit model. More importantly, we challenged board members to select as CEO someone who shares our commitment to deliver safe, affordable and reliable energy to the people we serve.

Like your favorite restaurants care what goes on with their suppliers, we care about what happens at TVA. The benefits of making smart choices are significant.



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



CEMC offers DIY energy-efficiency workshops

Learn how to save on energy costs at home

Join Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation for a FREE do-it-yourself energy-efficiency workshop and learn easy energy-efficiency improvements that anyone can do at home.

These two-hour workshops will cover how electricity is consumed and billed and include suggestions on low- to no-cost upgrades that can be completed by homeowners to lower energy costs. Hands-on training will teach how to properly caulk, replace weather stripping, install spray-foam sealant and more.

These sessions are limited to the first 25 households that register, and each will receive a FREE energy-saving tool kit valued at \$25 to help you get started.

Rebates and financing for home upgrades!

Learn easy ways to reduce energy use for FREE!

Receive a FREE energy-savings kit!

Register at www.cemc.org for the workshop in your area.



Thursday, March 14

6-8 p.m.

CEMC Operations
1810 Ashland City Road
Clarksville

Thursday, March 21

6-8 p.m.

CEMC
315 N. Main Street
Ashland City

Thursday, March 28

6-8 p.m.

UT Extension
658 Hartsville Pike
Gallatin

Three easy DIY projects to save energy

Winter weather can have a big impact on your energy bills, hitting your pockets a little harder than you would have liked. Now that spring is just around the corner, it's the perfect time to tackle a few do-it-yourself efficiency projects for your home. The good news: You don't have to be an energy expert to do this!

There are several easy ways to save energy, but if you're willing to take a hands-on approach, here are three projects you can do now to start saving:

Make the most of your water heater

Let's start with one of the easiest projects: insulating your water heater. Insulating a water heater can save 7 to 16 percent annually on your water heating bills. It should also be noted that if your water heater is new, it is likely already insulated. But if your water heater is warm to the touch, it needs additional insulation.

You can purchase a precut jacket or blanket for about \$20. You'll also need two people for this project. Before you start, turn off the water heater. Wrap the blanket around the water heater and tape it to temporarily keep it in place. If necessary, use a marker to note the areas where the controls are so you can cut them out. Once the blanket is positioned correctly, tape it permanently in place, then turn the water heater back on. If you have an electric water heater, do not set the thermostat above 130 degrees, which can cause overheating.

Seal air leaks with caulk

The average American family spends \$2,000 annually on energy bills. Unfortunately, much of that money is wasted through air leaks in the home. Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money. Many different types of caulking compounds are available, but the most popular choice is silicone, which is waterproof and flexible and doesn't shrink or crack.

Before applying new caulk, clean and remove any old caulk or paint with a putty knife, screwdriver, brush or solvent. The area should be dry before you apply the new caulk.



The average American family spends \$2,000 annually on energy bills. Unfortunately, much of that money is wasted through air leaks in the home. Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money. Photo credit: Rare Form Properties

Apply the caulk in one continuous stream, making sure it sticks to both sides of the crack or seam. Afterward, use a putty knife to smooth out the caulk, then wipe the surface with a dry cloth.

Weather strip exterior doors

One of the best ways to seal air leaks is to weather strip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Weather stripping materials vary, but you can ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you're unsure about the supplies you need.

When choosing weather stripping materials, make sure they can withstand temperature changes, friction and the general "wear and tear" for the location of the door. Keep in mind that you will need separate materials for the door sweep (at the bottom of the door) and the top and sides.

Before applying the new weather stripping, clean the molding with water and soap, then let the area dry completely. Measure each side of the door, then cut the weather stripping to fit each section. Make sure the weather stripping fits snugly against both surfaces so it compresses when the door is closed.

By completing these simple efficiency projects, you can save energy (and money!) while increasing the comfort level of your home. And you can impress your family and friends with your savvy energy-saving skills.

Considering solar? We're here to help

Today's consumers want and expect options, including the type of energy powering their homes. Many homeowners are looking for a less expensive form of energy with ongoing savings. Some are looking for a green energy source. These two motives are why many homeowners are exploring rooftop or ground mounted solar panels.

The interest in alternative energy sources is also being fueled by decreasing costs for solar, the availability of financial incentives and the proliferation of companies offering solar panel installation.

However, as attractive and popular as rooftop or ground mounted solar may appear, it is important for consumers to fully understand its true costs, the operational reality of this form of energy and actual energy savings. To determine whether solar is right for their particular situation, homeowners must undertake their due diligence.

We're here to help

As your trusted energy advisor, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation can offer a candid assessment of your specific situation. After all, CEMC has a different "bottom line" that is not directly tied to the sale of a product or service. We constantly strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently.

CEMC is seeking to keep pace with the changing energy environment and evolving technology. We are exploring more options that will help you manage your energy use such as Energy Audits and our eScore Program. We take a more holistic, objective view of how to achieve energy savings.

Is solar right for you?

Unlike a solar company that has one objective — to sell their products and services — we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. While solar certainly works for many people, it's not the answer for all.

When helping co-op members determine whether solar is right for them, a co-op energy advisor will discuss the many financial considerations:

- Is there a large, up-front payment required, or are fees spread out over time?
- Will the homeowner own the panels, or will they be leased?
- Are there any hidden costs, i.e., does the roof need to be replaced before installing the panels?
- Are there ongoing maintenance fees?
- Are there rebates or other financial incentives available?
- Is the estimated energy savings worth the investment?
- Is it more cost-effective to invest in other energy-saving measures?

Most importantly, an energy advisor will provide perspective on the total energy puzzle. Taking into account current energy consumption, the home "envelope," age and efficiency of the HVAC system and home site, an energy advisor can help co-op members determine whether solar is the best choice given the homeowners' objectives.

Assessment of solar options is an excellent time to examine other potential energy-efficiency improvements for your home. For example, it may make sense to insulate the attic at the same time as installing solar.

CEMC recognizes that consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is at an all-time high, and we stand ready to help our members determine their best options.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spring is nearly here! Now is the perfect time to test your air conditioner and ensure it's ready for summer. Remember to check the evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually for optimal efficiency.

Source: energy.gov



Convenient payment methods

These days, families are busier than ever, making convenience a must when it comes to managing your electric account. By offering a number of convenient ways to pay your bill, Cumberland Electric Membership Electric Corporation is making it easier than ever to do just that.

- **Bank draft payment:** Payments are automatically drafted from your checking/savings account each month on your due date.
- **Auto Pay:** Payments are automatically drafted from a credit or debit card each month on your due date.
- **Mail:** Mail your payment in the return envelope included with your monthly statement.
- **Credit/debit card by phone:** Pay your bill by phone using your credit card or debit card. There is no fee for this service.
- **SmartHub:** Pay your bill through the app or online with a credit/debit card for no additional fee.
- **District offices:** You can make payments at our district offices, which are open 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- **Kiosk stations:** For your convenience, each district office is equipped with a payment kiosk station that is available 24/7. Kiosks accept cash and credit/debit cards.

Download CEMC's SmartHub Mobile App

For 24/7 access to your electric co-op

At home or on the go:

- Report an outage
- Check your balance
- View an image of your bill
- Make a payment
- View bill history
- View daily use
- Sign up for Auto Pay
- Go Paperless

The SmartHub app is available free in the iTunes App Store or Google Play Store. Download the SmartHub app, and then search for Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation. Members can also sign up online at www.cemc.org.



Save money on water-heating

Next to heating and cooling your home, heating your water uses more energy than anything else in the house. Your family probably spends in the neighborhood of 18 percent of your utility dollars on water-heating, according to U.S. Department of Energy estimates.

Here are eight ways to lower your water-heating bill:

Replace old showerheads and faucets in every bathroom. Older models push out way more water than you need to take a comfortable shower or wash up at the sink. Replace them with low-flow faucets and aerating showerheads. The less water you use, the less you have to pay to heat it.

Repair leaky faucets. It might not seem like those few drips of water add up much, but they can: The U.S. Geological Survey says that a faucet that drips 20 times per minute will waste a full gallon of water every day. If it's the hot-water faucet that's leaking, you're paying to heat water that you're wasting.

Turn the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees. The Department of Energy says that's a

safe and sanitary temperature, and it will keep you comfortable in the shower.

Wrap an insulated blanket around your electric water heater. Take care to leave the thermostat uncovered. And if your tank is gas or oil-fueled, don't cover the top or bottom of the heater or its burner compartment. You might need to ask a plumber for help.

Wrap the hot and cold water pipes that connect to the water heater — for about 6 feet out.

Drain about a quart of water from the tank every three months to remove sediment. Built-up gunk in the water heater can make it inefficient because it has to work harder to transfer heat to the water.

If you're in the market for a new water heater, choose a high-efficiency model with the Energy Star label. High-efficiency water heaters use 10 percent to 50 percent less energy than traditional models.

Water heaters last up to 15 years, but new models are much more energy-efficient. It may be worth it to replace yours if you've had it for seven or more years.

Daylight saving time begins March 10



Don't forget to spring forward on Sunday, March 10! Set your clocks ahead by one hour. This is also the best day to change the batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors — even if the batteries aren't dead.

Why we plan outages

Occasionally, the equipment Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation uses to bring power to your home needs to be replaced, repaired or updated. When this happens, we plan an interruption to electric service so we can keep our crews and members safe.

In doing our best to plan these outages during times when you will be least inconvenienced, we often perform planned outages during school and business hours. We also try to avoid planning these outages during winter or summer months because we understand these are peak times of the year when you depend on running your heating and cooling units the most.

While they may sound slightly inconvenient, planned outages are actually beneficial. Regular system upgrades are necessary for optimal performance, and they increase reliability. Repairing and upgrading our

equipment are also critical to maintaining public safety. If older lines need to be replaced, we plan and then repair or replace them. That keeps everyone safe.

Planned outages also allow us to keep you informed of when and how long you will be without power. We will notify you at least two days prior to a planned outage so you can make arrangements, if needed, to prepare for the interruption. For this reason, it is important that we have your correct contact information. To check your contact information and update it if needed, visit our

website, www.cemc.org, and click on "My Account." Or call us at 1-800-987-2362.

We want to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep you safe and to keep our system running smoothly. So, the next time you hear about a planned outage, know that it is one of the best ways we can provide you with quality electric service.



If spring storms knock out your power, CEMC is ready to respond.



In the event of a power outage:

- Report outages by using the SmartHub Mobile App or by calling 1-800-987-2362.
- Please do not report outages via social media. CEMC's pages are not monitored 24/7 and are not tied to the outage management system.
- View the outage map at www.cemc.org for up-to-date outage information.
- Always assume downed power lines are energized, and stay away! Call 911 and CEMC immediately.

