

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# The Enlightener

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### LIGHTBULB WINNERS

Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:

- ▶ James Haas
- ▶ Joe Harvey
- ▶ Amy Hazen
- ▶ Lorena Hinojosa
- ▶ Levi Ingram
- ▶ Kyle Kaltenbach

Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!

### NONDISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## Unlock Comfort and Savings

If you're working on your summer to-dos, consider adding home weatherization to your list.

We typically think about weatherizing our homes during winter months when we're standing next to a chilly window or a drafty exterior door. But weatherizing your home provides comfort and energy savings year-round, especially during summer months when your air conditioner is working overtime.

According to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov), a home with insufficient insulation and air leaks wastes more than 20% of the energy used to heat or cool the home — that's essentially throwing money out the door. Fortunately, most weatherization projects are easy to DIY and can be completed in a day.

The simplest and most cost-effective weatherization strategies include air sealing around windows and exterior doors.

If you have older windows, odds are you have air escaping through tiny cracks and gaps around the frame. Do

a quick visual inspection. If you can see any daylight around the frame or the windows rattle easily, you likely have air leaks. Also check for any small cracks around the frame that may not be visible with sunlight.

If you suspect you have leaky windows and plan to apply new caulk, be sure to remove the old caulk and clean the area well before application. Caulking materials vary in strength and properties, but you'll likely need a half-cartridge per window.

Silicone caulk is a popular choice and can also be used to seal joints between bathroom and kitchen fixtures. If you have any leftover caulk, use it to seal those areas.

Another effective but simple weatherization project is installing weatherstripping around exterior doors. The most common types of weatherstripping options are V-channel, felt and foam tape. To choose the best type for your home, consider temperature fluctuations and weather

*Continued on page 12B ▶*



# 3 WAYS TO SEAL IN COMFORT

In addition to increased comfort, weatherizing your home is an excellent way to save energy and lower your cooling and heating costs. Here are three ways you can seal in comfort and savings.



## 1 CAULK

Apply caulk around cracks and openings between stationary components like door frames and window frames.



## 2 WEATHERSTRIPPING

Install weatherstripping around components that move, like doors and operable windows.



## 3 INSULATE

Adding insulation is an effective weatherization strategy, especially for older homes. Consider additional insulation in areas like an unfinished attic, exterior walls and floors above uninsulated spaces.

# Unlock Comfort and Savings

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exposure. Most homeowners opt for felt or foam tape; both options are easy to install but will need to be replaced every couple of years, depending on wear and tear. Weatherstripping should be installed around the top and sides of the door.

If you see daylight around the bottom of an exterior door, consider installing a door sweep in addition to weatherstripping. Door sweeps are available in aluminum, plastic, vinyl and felt options.

Weatherstripping can also be installed around windows, typically to the sides of a double hung or sliding window, or around the window sash.

If you're unsure how to install weatherstripping or apply caulk, check out trusted websites like [www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com) or [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov) for step-by-step instructions and video tutorials.

Another way to improve comfort in your home is adding insulation. While this is a more costly project and

requires a professional's help, it's an effective way to decrease heat flow, which impacts energy use in winter and summer months. Older homes may need additional insulation to either replace older materials or meet newer efficiency standards. Contact a qualified installation specialist if you suspect your home's insulation levels are inadequate.

The best way to identify air leaks in your home is a blower door test. A blower door test helps determine how airtight your home is and identify air leaks. Our free home assessments are a benefit of your co-op membership, so we encourage you to take advantage of this helpful service.

In addition to saving energy, air sealing can help you avoid moisture control issues, improve indoor air quality and extend the life of your heating and cooling system. Weatherize your home to unlock year-round comfort and savings on monthly energy costs.

## SAFETY TIP

Only use a gas or charcoal grill outside. Grills are designed to be used outside where there is plenty of ventilation. Using one in a closed or partially enclosed space can cause carbon monoxide (CO) to build up and cause CO poisoning. Grill in the great outdoors.



SOURCE: WWW.SAFELECTRICITY.COM

HAPPY

★

# 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY

★ ★ ★

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Our office will be closed on July 4, for the holiday and will reopen July 5.

# Grilling: A Delicious and Energy-Friendly Option for Cooking

Grilling and America go together like hot dogs, baseball and apple pie. There's nothing like a sizzling grill on a summer day. But guess what? Grilling not only satisfies our cravings for great food but also helps preserve the environment. So, let's fire up the grill and save energy!

## THE COST OF STAYING COOL

As refreshing as it is to feel the cool breeze of an air conditioner (AC) on a hot summer day, its energy consumption can be hefty. Depending on the model, it can consume as much energy as a marathon runner (and run almost nonstop), using anywhere from 0.48 to 5.14 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per hour. That is enough to make anyone break a sweat.

Did you know that millions of people add to their AC's energy consumption without realizing it? How? By opening the oven door while cooking. According to the book "Bakewise" by Shirley O. Corriher, an oven can lose up to 150 degrees within 30 seconds. Where does all that heat go? You guessed it — right into your home. Plus, even with the door closed, your oven still radiates heat into your home since it has nowhere else to go.

## THE SOLUTION: GRILLING

If you are looking to maintain a cool vibe and lower your AC's energy consumption, head outside to the grill.

Rather than generating heat indoors, the heat is dispersed outside, reducing strain on the AC, which ultimately lowers utility bills. Additionally, you will be chowing down in no time like a true grill master, as grills reach a toasty 375 degrees in just 5 minutes. Compare that to the oven's sluggish 20-minute warm-up, and you'll be laughing all the way to the butcher shop.

## TIPS FOR SAFE GRILLING

Make sure your next barbecue extravaganza is a sizzling success without any burns or mishaps. Here are some safety tips to follow:

- ▶ Take it outside. Only use grills in the great outdoors.
- ▶ Keep your grill at least 10 feet from any buildings or structures.
- ▶ Make sure your grill is on a flat, steady surface.
- ▶ Stay close. Never leave your grill unattended while preheating, cooking or cooling down.
- ▶ Dress for success. Avoid loose or long clothing that can catch fire.
- ▶ Keep a water spray bottle beside your grill to tackle any little flames that flare up quickly.
- ▶ Keep your cool with a fire extinguisher nearby, just in case.

## KEEPING YOUR GRILL CLEAN

Grills should undergo deep cleaning once or twice per year. Follow these steps to keep your gas grill in prime condition:

- ▶ Burn away buildup: Turn on the grill, close the lid and set the heat to maximum for at least 30 minutes. This process will eliminate any remaining grease or food debris.
- ▶ Scrub it clean: In a bowl, mix warm water with soap and dip a wire brush into the mixture. Scrub the grates to remove any carbon buildup.
- ▶ Let it cool: Allow the grill to cool down completely before storing it. Now your grill is ready for your next barbecue feast.
- ▶ Regular maintenance: In between uses, preheat your grill and then scrape it off with a wire-bristled brush before adding food.

## HAPPY GRILL, HAPPY LIFE

In addition to keeping it clean, it is also important to regularly check the propane tank and replace it if necessary. Inspect the hoses and connections for any leaks or damage. Make sure the burners are free of debris and functioning properly. Finally, covering your grill when not in use can help protect it from the elements and prolong its lifespan.

Menu options are truly endless when it comes to grilling. Grab your apron, fire up the grill and get ready to impress your friends and family with your grilling skills while saving energy.

**HEAT UP THE GRILL**  
To Save Energy This Summer

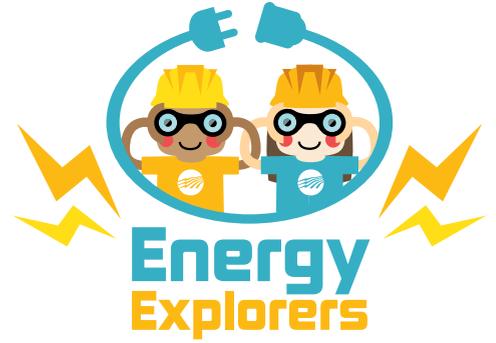
**NOTHING SCREAMS SUMMER MORE THAN FIRING UP THE GRILL.**

The good news is that using your grill in the great outdoors helps lower your energy bill. If you cook outside, less energy is needed to cool your kitchen.

- ▶ Nearly 70% of Americans own a grill.
- ▶ The Fourth of July is the most popular holiday for outdoor cooking.
- ▶ The hamburger is the favorite item to grill.
- ▶ The all-American hot dog gets the most votes from kids.
- ▶ More men grill than women.
- ▶ Grilling and barbecuing are not the same thing.
  - ▶ Grilling means cooking over a fire, hot and fast.
  - ▶ Barbecuing means cooking slowly over indirect heat.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFELECTRICITY.COM, BREO BOX

# WATER SAFETY FILL-IN-THE-BLANK



Summer means fun in the sun and spending time in the water to cool off. But remember, electricity and water never mix! Read the safety tips below and fill in the blanks with the correct choice from the word bank.

*Psst! Check your work in the answer key.*

- ▶ When possible, use \_\_\_\_\_-operated or rechargeable devices when you're near water sources like a swimming pool.
- ▶ If you hear \_\_\_\_\_ while swimming, go inside until storms have passed.
- ▶ Never bring \_\_\_\_\_ devices near a swimming pool or other body of water. Devices should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources.
- ▶ All outdoor electrical outlets should be covered and kept \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ Never handle electrical devices if you are \_\_\_\_\_ from swimming or other water activities.

## WORD BANK

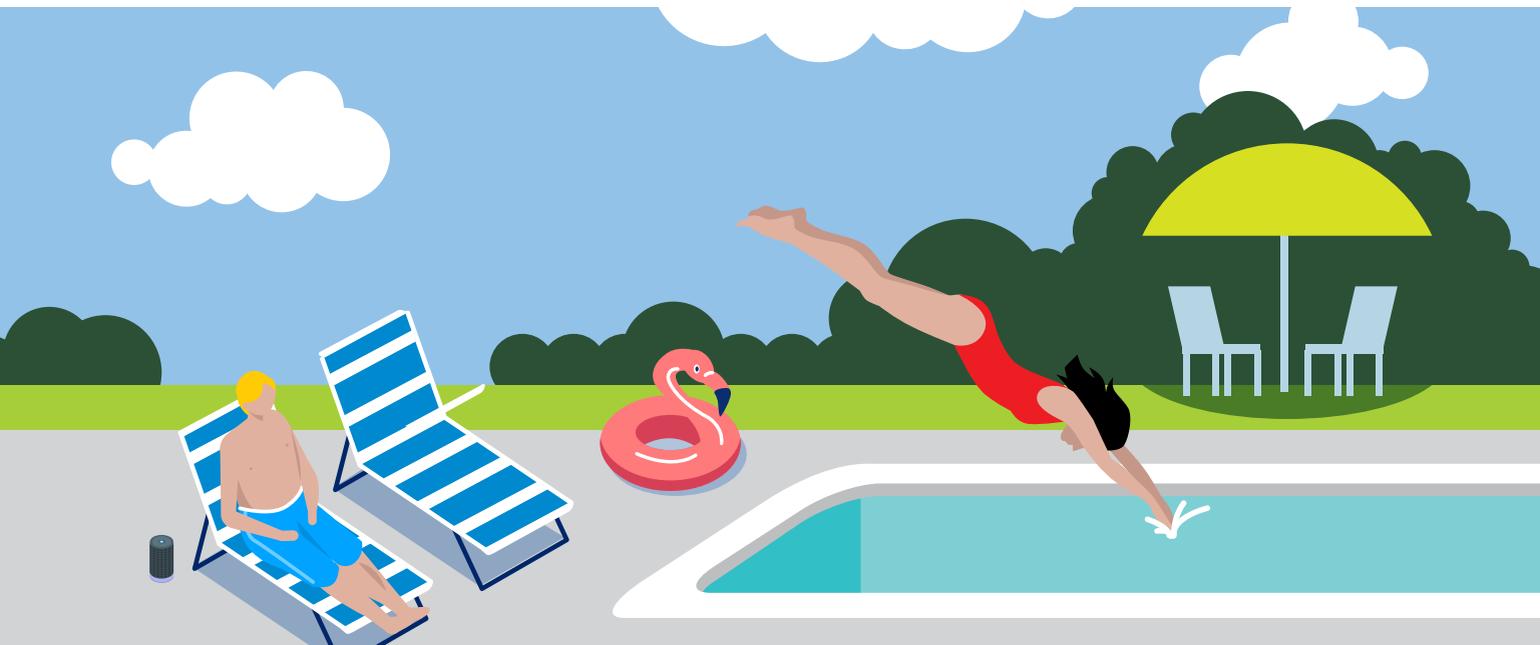
thunder

wet

battery

dry

electrical



ANSWER KEY: 1. BATTERY, 2. THUNDER, 3. ELECTRICAL, 4. DRY, 5. WET