

URECC-NEWS



for the members of Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation

September 2020



Upshur Rural Provides Funding for Area Schools

URECC is working with schools served by the cooperative to provide pandemic relief.

With much of the world still in the grips of the global pandemic, Upshur Rural recognizes the need many schools are facing for new technology and tools for students to continue learning at school or from home.

URECC recently presented the opportunity for 16 area schools that

are served by Upshur Rural to receive a refund towards the purchase of school supplies and technology to be used for the benefit of their students. This refund is available to them through our Economic Development and Energy Efficiency Escheat Fund.

Through the Escheat fund we are offering a total of \$200,000 for schools

to utilize if they choose.

We do hope that these funds will be of use for our local educators and will help alleviate the stress of having to navigate in a world full of uncertainty. No matter whether these students are in the classroom or learning from home, we hope everyone has a great and fulfilling school year!

2020 Virtual Annual Meeting

URECC members will soon receive their Annual Meeting booklet in the mail that includes the cooperative financials for 2019 as well as the prize drawing and co-op question form. The booklet will also include details on how to join this year's virtual meeting.





PO Box 70 • Gilmer, Texas, 75644

1200 W Tyler Street • Gilmer, Texas, 75644
tele: **(903) 843-2536**

(800) 259-2536
www.urecc.coop

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday-Friday,
8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

POWER OUTAGE
HOT LINES
903-680-2100
866-804-1674

FORMS AVAILABLE AT URECC.COOP

If you or your company needs official forms from URECC, those can be downloaded in PDF format at **URECC.coop/Reports-Forms**.

All forms and documents, and signatures needed can be scanned and emailed to URECC, or faxed to our offices, or the majority of our documents can be signed digitally through Docusign.

If you do not have internet access the forms may be mailed or faxed to you by request.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Pay online at **urecc.coop**
- Pay by phone by calling **888-223-2056**, available 24 hours a day. Visa, Mastercard, Discover, or American Express.
- Pay in person at our office or use any of our four Kiosks.
- Pay via automatic draft of your checking or savings account. To sign up, please visit **urecc.coop/ways-to-pay**.
- **Pay through our URECC App available for iPhones or Androids.**



Utility Assistance Programs

Sometimes people need a helping hand. For those members who qualify, special utility assistance programs are available. Thousands of dollars have been designated for distribution in our URECC service area.

Listed below are the utility assistance providers in our service area. Please contact these providers directly to determine if you need and qualify for assistance on your electric bill. The full list of contact information can be found on our website, www.urecc.coop.

- Aid Bank- Upshur/Wood County
- Neal McCoy's East Texas Angel Network
- Community Services of Northeast Texas- Rusk County
- Greater East Texas Community Action Program-Wood County
- Veteran's Resource Center
- Community Services of Northeast Texas- Camp County
- Community Services of Northeast Texas- Cass/Morris County
- Greater East Texas Community Action Program- Gregg County
- Northeast Texas Habitat for Humanity- Upshur, Harrison, and Gregg Counties
- Tri-County Community Action- Harrison County
- Ore City Ministerial Alliance
- Greater East Texas Community Action Program- Smith County
- Tri-County Community Action- Upshur County

**LIGHTS OUT?
REPORT IT HERE**

If the power goes out, be sure to keep URECC's Outage Reporting information handy. You can make a report by phone by calling 903-680-2100 (local) and 866-804-1674 (long distance.)

Members are also encouraged to report outages through URECC's Smarthub app, which is available in your phone's app store.

SAVE THE DATE

URECC Virtual Annual Meeting available:
October 1, 2020.

Smart Home Devices That Can Save You Money



Some smart devices for your home can help you save money. Others are designed for pure convenience – like phone apps you use remotely to close your garage door, unlock your door, or see whoSmart Phone is on your front porch.

Using smart devices that can impact your energy bill won't make you rich, but they can help lower your bills each month, which adds up over time. Here are some devices to consider:

SMART THERMOSTAT

A smart thermostat studies your heating and cooling trends over time and can help reduce your energy bill by optimizing energy-saving tactics. You can also adjust the temperature of your home remotely and know how much energy you are using to heat or cool your home in real time. So while a programmable thermostat can help you save money, a smart version earns its name by all the extra things it can do above and beyond programming.

In either case, adjusting your thermostat up (air conditioning) or down (furnace) just one degree can make a difference in your utility bill, according to EEC Board

Member Sam Adair. Adair says households can save up to 3 percent on the heating and cooling portion of their bill by making that simple adjustment. "So if your smart thermostat can shed a few degrees for a couple of hours or more, it should do nothing but save you money with the added convenience of peace of mind," Adair said.

SMART LIGHT BULBS/LIGHTING

The first way to save money on lighting comes from good old-fashioned smarts and not a literal smart bulb, per se. Look around and see what kind of light bulbs you have in your house. By replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with Energy Star versions, you can save \$75 a year, according to energy.gov.

Upgrading your light bulbs can help you replace them less often as well. For example, a 60-watt incandescent bulb lasts an average of 1,000 hours, while a 12-watt LED bulb has an average life span of 25,000 hours.

Then there are actual smart light bulbs, which allow you to "schedule" lights and control them remotely. This could save you

a little money if you or someone in your house is always leaving the lights on.

SMART WINDOW COVERINGS

Smart window coverings are pricey but they can help you save money on your energy bills over time. For example, they allow you to lower blinds on a hot and sunny day even if you're not home, which may prevent your air conditioner from kicking on.

About 76 percent of sunlight that falls on standard double-pane windows enters your home to become heat, according to energy.gov. Conversely, about 30 percent of a home's heating energy is lost through windows, and the efficient use of window coverings can reduce energy loss when it is cold outside.

SMART WATER VALVES

According to the U.S. EPA, an average household's water leaks can account for 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year. Collectively, that's 1 trillion gallons of water each year in the U.S.!

Smart leak sensors monitor leaks under sinks, behind toilets and near other water sources in your home. And, like most smart home devices, the sensors can be linked to your smartphone to alert you of leaks. There are also smart water valves designed for your main water line for catastrophes like bursting pipes, although these are pricey and require professional installation.

THE SMART PLUG

This device plugs into a regular outlet and allows you to control appliances remotely via a phone app. Most smart plugs track energy use so you can see how efficient (or inefficient) an appliance is. Some of them have a convenient away feature that allows you to program lights to make it look like someone is home.

How to Manage Energy Use



As many American families and businesses continue to work and study remotely, they may see a surge in home energy use – and in upcoming electric bills. Simple money-saving steps can help lower monthly electric bills without jeopardizing safety or comfort.

It's important for families to be mindful of their energy use and consider adjusting certain habits to avoid higher costs later on

Recommended energy-saving tips include:

- Program your thermostat to maximize energy savings. Setting your thermostat one degree lower when heating or one degree higher when cooling can reduce energy use by up to 5 percent.
- Do full loads of laundry and wash with cold water. Using warm water instead of hot can cut a load's energy use in half, and using cold water will save even more.
- Air dry dishes. This step can cut

your dishwasher's energy use by up to 50 percent.

- Substitute LEDs for conventional light bulbs. Lighting can amount to up to 12% of monthly energy use. LED bulbs can cut lighting costs by 75%.
- Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use. Small appliances and electronics use energy even when not in use. When powered on, game consoles, televisions and similar electronics are responsible for up to 12 percent of energy use.

URECC members who have questions about their energy bills should contact us at 903-843-2536.

URECC will be closed Monday, September 7th, in observation of Labor Day. We will return to normal hours Tuesday, September 8th.

Two-Way Outage Texting

URECC is introducing Two-Way Outage Texting to provide members a quick and efficient way to report power outages and receive updates on restoration progress. This feature will also help to avoid overloading our outage phone lines during storms.

Using the Two-Way Outage Texting tool is simple. Members only need to text **OUT** to **768482** to report an outage.

For more information or for help signing up for Outage Texting, contact us at 903-843-2536 or visit urecc.coop.

2 Ingredient Lemon Bars

by TammileeTips.com

Ingredients:

1 box angel food cake must be the one step, just-add-water kind
21 oz lemon pie filling

Directions:

Combine angel food cake and lemon pie filling
Pour into a 9x13 pan
Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees

Please keep in mind that nutritional information is a rough estimate and can vary greatly based on products used.

