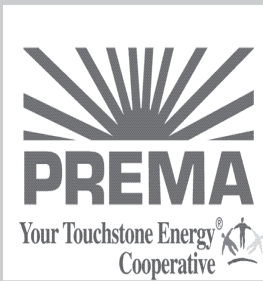


February 2015



PLUGGED IN WITH . . .

Panhandle Rural Electric Membership Association

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PREMA



You have heard the term Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, but who are they and why are they important?

Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives — the national brand of electric co-operatives — provides innovative resources and the strength of a national network to co-ops, helping them enhance their unique relationships with their local member-owners.

The Touchstone Energy Cooperatives brand represents a nationwide alliance made of more than 740 local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives in 46 states. Touchstone Energy co-ops collectively deliver power and energy solutions to more than 30 million members every day.

Four values are the foundation of every Touchstone Energy co-op's service to its members. These values represent the cooperative difference and how Touchstone Energy cooperatives connect with and earn the trust of millions of people, every day.

Innovation

Touchstone Energy cooperatives offer new solutions and state-of-the-art technology to meet customers' needs.

Accountability

Since consumers own co-ops, they have a say and help chart the course for the business. Every member has an equal voice in running the enterprise. Unlike an investor-owned utility, in which the investor with the most shares has the most clout, co-op business is conducted through a locally elected board of directors and an annual meeting where policy is proposed and voted on by members, each having one vote.

Integrity

The co-op business model always puts customers first. Not-for-profit electric cooperatives deliver energy to their members at the cost of service. In contrast, investor-owned utilities typically distribute their profits to investors across the nation or even the world — not necessarily to those they serve.

Commitment to community

Electric cooperatives invest time, money and expertise to build the local economy and strengthen relationships with consumer-owners.



Smart TVs
4K
Curved TVs
OLED
Big/Small Screen

If you didn't get a TV for your man cave for Christmas, there is hope. You still have an opportunity to find one that's so big it barely fits on the wall.



Don't forget to recycle your old TV.

5 Trends to Check Out Before You Buy Your Next TV

If you didn't get a new TV for Christmas, the biggest time of year for TV sales, and you didn't get one in time to replace your old model before Super Bowl Sunday, there's still hope.

Why: *New models are introduced at the International Consumer Electronics Show each January. Retailers clear out old inventory to make way for the latest items, which ship in March, says Greg Tarr, executive editor of This Week in Consumer Electronics. This makes March the second best month to purchase a TV.*

Before you go shopping, you might want to learn about what's new, because the latest TVs have a lot more bells and whistles than the one you've been watching.

Here are five TV trends for 2015:

1. Smart TVs. Manufacturers are tripping over themselves to

get Internet-based TV into American living rooms, and they're getting support from content providers like Netflix and telecommunications companies that offer fiber optics. Smart TVs let the viewer "watch" the Internet, movies, TV shows, videos, games and anything else they could watch on a computer screen, on big-screen TVs mounted to their living room walls. Throughout the year, watch for more and more models to appear.

2. "4K." This is industry-speak for ultra-high definition, also called UHD TV. If you already have an HDTV, it's not like these. 4K televisions have four times the resolution of a typical high-def television. That lends to a much sharper, clearer picture.

3. Curved TVs. A couple of the big manufacturers have introduced TVs that are slightly

bent, like the screen in a movie theater. A curved screen gives the impression of a deeper viewing area, and offers up more of a movie theater experience.

4. OLED Displays. Organic light-emitting diodes serve as their own light source, so the TV needs no backlighting, and no room to hide that lighting. The result is the thinnest TV on the market. These models also have superior color contrast and are more energy efficient than most other TVs.

5. Big Screens and Small Screens. While the typical man cave in the home of a sports fan has at least one TV screen that's so big it barely fits on the wall, many teenagers and young adults are eschewing the big-screen experience and watching the big game, and everything else, on their smartphones and tablets.

Phantom Energy Use Can Add to Your Electric Bill

Between the price of the phone and the cost of the service, a smartphone is a pretty big investment. Don't add to the cost by wasting electricity while you charge it up.

If your phone is plugged into a charger that's plugged into a wall, it's using electricity. If the phone is fully charged and it's still plugged in, it's still using electricity.

If you unplug your phone but leave the charger plugged

into the wall, that charger is still using electricity.

Charging your phone—or even leaving the charger plugged in without the phone wastes very little energy. But, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the average home wastes about \$100 a year on "phantom energy"

from electronic devices that remain plugged in when not in use.

So why waste and pay for energy that you're not using? Simply plug chargers and other digital equipment into power strips, and unplug the power strip when you're not using the devices.



Stay Safe During a Winter Storm

- ◆ Never touch a fallen power line. Assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. Contact PREMA at 308-762-1311 immediately to report any sightings.
- ◆ In the event of an outage, an alternate heating source, such as a fireplace, propane space heater, or wood stove may be used. If using any alternate heating, extreme caution should be taken.
- ◆ To maintain safety, plan to stay in the area of the home where the alternate heating source is located.
- ◆ Fuel and wood burning heating sources should be vented. Be sure to follow manufacturer's directions.



- Make sure carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors are working properly.
- ◆ Do not use a gas powered oven for heating. A gas oven may go out; posing a risk for an explosion or may burn inefficiently, leading to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ◆ Do not use a gas or charcoal grill inside the home. Do not use charcoal briquettes in the fireplace.

- ◆ If you use a portable generator to power a heating source, be sure the generator is located outside your house for proper ventilation.
- ◆ Take special care not to overload a generator. Use appropriately sized extension cords to carry the electric load. Make sure the cords have a grounded, three-pronged plug and are in good condition.
- ◆ Never run cords under rugs or carpets.
- ◆ Never connect generators to power lines. The reverse flow of electricity can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Stay Safe With Portable Generators



- Follow all local electrical codes and make sure the generator is properly grounded.
- DO NOT connect generators directly to household wiring unless an appropriate transfer switch has been installed.
- Without a transfer switch, power from the generator can "back-feed" to the power lines, creating an electrocution hazard to anyone touching the lines, including the line workers making storm repairs.
- Never operate a generator inside your home or any other enclosed, or even partially enclosed area. Generators produce carbon monoxide, which can easily enter your home. Place the generator on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure.
- Opening windows or doors or even using fans do not provide adequate ventilation to prevent the build up of carbon monoxide. Generators must be located outside a safe distance from your home's doors, windows or vents.
- Research indicates that even 15 feet from the home is too close. Remember your neighbors also.
- Over 50 carbon monoxide deaths per year are associated with the improper use of portable generators. More than 80 percent of those deaths occurred in the home from generator operation within the living space.
- Symptoms may include fatigue, shortness of breath, drowsiness, headache and nausea. Get to fresh air right away if you feel weak or dizzy while running a generator.
- Do not refuel a generator while it is running. Unplug all appliances from the generator and shut it down, allowing it to cool, before refueling. Refueling a generator while it is running is a significant fire hazard.

Notices

We are looking for the following individuals current addresses:

- Rick Anderson—Chadron
- Griff Carfield—Lebanon
- James A. Chaulk—Alliance
- Adah Dukat—Rushville
- Phillip F. Guntle—Bingham
- Grace Leetch—Scottsbluff
- Tom Walker-Alliance



If you, or anyone you know has any current information, please contact PREMA at 762-1311. Thank you.

REMINDER

If you will be making any changes in your irrigation, such as rentals, leasing, etc., it is important to make PREMA aware of these changes so the appropriate name and address can get billed correctly. Please contact Janet at our office 308-762-1311. Thank you.

*******Be watching for your member Bylaw booklet to vote for proposed changes. Don't forget to return your ballot.*******

Notes From Load Management

The Load Management program is in place for the 2015 irrigation season. There will be no change in the program. All of PREMA's irrigators will be receiving a letter of information for Load Management. Please call the office at 762-1311 if you do not receive this letter by February 1. Deadline for Load Management enrollment is February 27.



Happy Valentines Day



Serving Arthur, Box Butte, Cherry, Garden, Grant, Hooker, McPherson, Morrill, Sheridan, Sioux and Dawes Counties

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