

Technology Brings Greater Efficiency

OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, THE AVERAGE HOME HAS INCREASED IN SIZE BY 30 PERCENT. Despite this fact, newer homes only consume 2 percent more energy, largely due to improved energy efficiency. More efficient appliances, better building materials and advances in residential technologies help homeowners save energy, and many of these technologies can trace their roots to the U.S. Department of Energy.

Here is a list of what the DOE says are the top four contributors to holding the line on home energy costs.

1. Loose-fill fiberglass insulation. Hidden in walls, attics and floors, insulation helps keep homes comfortable. Today, nearly 75 percent of homes use this type of improved loose-fill fiberglass insulation, and researchers estimate it has helped consumers in cold climates save 5–10 percent on heating costs.



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The DOE is working on a project that uses nanotechnology to develop cost-effective, environmentally friendly and even more efficient foam insulation. If successful, the technology could save U.S. homeowners \$8 billion a year in heating and cooling costs.

2. Electric heat pump water heaters. The growing demand for more efficient water heaters spurred by the Energy Star program laid the groundwork for the electric heat pump water heater market.

Electric heat pump water heaters can provide substantial savings for homeowners.

3. Energy-efficient refrigerator compressors. Over the years, refrigerators have changed dramatically—from a box cooled by an ice block to a Wi-Fi-connected smart appliance. But even though today's fridges are bigger and pack more features, they use about 25 percent less energy than those built in 1975.

Today, more than 100 million refrigerators in homes across the country use an advanced, energy-saving compressor.

4. Beyond double-pane windows. The creation of low-emissivity coatings—a technology applied to glazing layers that allows visible light to pass through a window while trapping heat—substantially increased the effectiveness of double-pane windows. Today, the majority of residential windows sold in the U.S. have low-e coatings, saving consumers billions of dollars in energy costs.

More efficient (and more costly) triple-pane windows are now available. They use an insulating gas between two window panes and an additional glazing layer with low-e coating. They provide added savings, reduce noise and add security.

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Electricity: Stay Out of Its Path

UNDERSTANDING HOW ELECTRICITY BEHAVES CAN REINFORCE WHY YOU ALWAYS

should exercise caution around it. Even a small night light with a 6-watt bulb draws enough current to be fatal under certain circumstances. Take note:

- ▶ Electrical current will not flow unless it has a complete path.
- ▶ Current can flow through you and other conductors, such as metal, dirt and concrete.
- ▶ Current can harm you when it flows through your body (electric shock).
- ▶ Just as there is pressure in a water pipe even with no water flowing, there is voltage at a receptacle even if current is not flowing. The electric current is essentially waiting for an opportunity to flow—to power an appliance or the TV. But given the chance, it will just as quickly pass through you.

If current passes through your body, you likely will be subjected to three types of injuries:

1. Burns.

2. Other bodily injuries: Muscles can be damaged and bones can break. When electric shock occurs, muscles often clamp on to whatever the person is holding.

3. Nervous system effects:

 Breathing can stop and cardiac arrest can occur.

The heart often is damaged because it is in the path of the most common routes electricity takes through the body: Hand to hand and hand to foot.

Your electric cooperative encourages you to always stay safe around electricity.



Coleman County Electric Cooperative

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“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

—C.S. Lewis, British writer and theologian

We wish you and yours a happy, healthy and joy-filled 2019. Coleman County EC will be closed Tuesday, January 1, in observance of the holiday.

Happy New Year



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Power Tip

Close the doors to your home and refrigerator quickly. Your heating system won't have to work as hard to maintain a constant temperature, and your appliances will use less energy to do their jobs.

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