

**FLINT HILLS RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

News



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Co-op Connections Helps Millions Save in Prescriptions

Pharmacy discounts delivered through Touchstone Energy's® Co-op Connections® Program have saved electric co-op members nationwide almost \$6.2 million since May 2007, calculates Jim Bausell, NRECA vice president of business development and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives chief operating officer.

To date, more than 20 million Co-op Connections® membership cards and key fobs have been emblazoned with the name and logo of 221 electric co-ops in 40 states. All cards are printed with the discount information necessary for use at more than 56,000 participating independent and national chain drug stores. Co-op members generally receive savings ranging from 10 to 60 percent on most prescriptions.

Bausell explains that Touchstone Energy Cooperatives negotiated the pharmacy discounts through New Benefits headquartered in Dallas, TX. They are a national provider of non-insurance health-care services, as a value-added feature.

"While not a substitute for medical insurance, it does help make prescription drug coverage affordable for those without a plan," Bausell said. "In some cases, it may even provide a deeper discount than what's available through insurance."

Flint Hills RECA started this program with its members in July 2008. While relatively new, members have already saved over \$6,000.

In addition to pharmacy savings, the Co-op Connections® card offers discounts from more than 60 premier national companies, such as Alamo car rental, Sherwin-Williams paints, Sprint, Sirius XM satellite radio, La Quinta Inns & Suites, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Wyndham Hotel Group, Motel 6, Cruises, Inc., and Anna's Gourmet Goodies.

In addition, Flint Hills RECA has worked out Co-op Connections deals with some local merchants. These include State Farm Insurance, *Marion County Record*, Northshore Guesthouse, Flint Hills Rural Development, Quilts & Quilt Racks, Country Haven Inn, ACE Hdw. To see the full description of these offers, go to our web site www.flinthillsrec.com and click on the Co-op Connections® link.

If you travel, you can also check for other businesses that have signed up with other Touchstone Co-ops and use your discount.

For more information, visit Flint Hills RECA's web site at www.flinthillsrec.com. Currently, 680 electric distribution co-ops, generation and transmission co-ops, state-wide associations, and service affiliates in 46 states belong to Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

CO-OP Connections Update		Have you taken advantage of your Connections Card yet?	
	Prescriptions Filled	Savings to Flint Hills' Members	
May	36	\$482.53	
2009 Total	159	\$2107.90	

Protect Yourself from Lightning

According to the National Weather Service, lightning kills an average of 62 people each year in the United States. In 2008, 27 people died from a “bolt out of the blue.” The majority of these fatalities occurred outside, but caution must be taken indoors as well.

Follow the tips below to keep you and your family safe from lightning this summer:

- ▶ Seek shelter immediately if you hear thunder; lightning is not far away.
- ▶ Find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed vehicle with the windows rolled up.
- ▶ Do not seek shelter under trees, picnic or rain structures, or in open-frame vehicles. Avoid objects like electric wires or metal fences.
- ▶ If you cannot find shelter in a building or closed-frame vehicle, keep your feet together and crouch on the ground using the “lightning crouch:” feet together, squat low, tuck head, and cover ears.
- ▶ If you are inside, do not plug or unplug anything during an electrical storm.
- ▶ Do not use corded telephones—phone use is the number one cause of indoor lightning injuries in the United States. Avoid contact with other electrical equipment like computers.
- ▶ Avoid contact with water, pipes, washers, or dryers.
- ▶ If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and care for the victim immediately. You cannot be harmed by touching the victim after he or she has been struck by lightning

Include Home Energy Savings in Summer Vacation Plans

For consumers going on vacation this summer, the nation’s electric utilities advise them to make sure their home’s energy use takes a vacation as well. Simple tips can save consumers money while they are away.

Air Conditioning

Set the thermostat to 85 degrees. If it is a programmable thermostat, use the “hold” or the “vacation” setting to keep it at that temperature.

Electronics

Computers, CD/DVD players, TVs, and VCRs – these and other electronic appliances use electricity, even when they are not turned on. Unplug them before leaving.

Lighting

Consumers can improve their energy savings, and their home’s security, by using timers to operate lights each night. By installing compact fluorescent bulbs, or CFLs, in those lamps, consumers will be saving more energy, up to 66 percent less in each

lamp, and the bulb will last approximately 10 times longer than a regular incandescent bulb.

Water Heating

Turn the water heater’s temperature down to the lowest setting. Many water heaters have a “vacation” setting for this purpose. Leave a reminder to turn it back up upon returning home.

- ▶ Waterbed owners should unplug the heater, or at least lower the temperature 10 degrees.
- ▶ Pool owners should shorten the operating time for the pool filter and automatic cleaning sweep (if applicable). A pool cover can save energy too. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, up to 70 percent of pool heat loss is by evaporation.

Refrigerator

Adjust the refrigerator control to a warmer setting. If going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off. Remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew.

How Can I Help My Co-op Control Cost?

With summer approaching, Flint Hills RECA is coming into its peak load season. And the higher our peak, the more we have to pay for electricity in the winter. That’s why it is so important to try to control our peak load. Each Kilowatt shaved or shifted during peak load is a cost savings for all of us.

OK, so when does this peak load occur? Usually, between July and August is when Flint Hills RECA experiences its maximum peak load on the system. This usually occurs from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and on the days that the temperature reaches 95+ degrees.

On these days, anything you can do to avoid using electricity between these hours will help tremendously. Some possibilities are:

- ▶ Move your laundry time to earlier in the day or late at night.
- ▶ Use a slow cooker instead of the electric stove for cooking dinner.
- ▶ Save the ironing for later.
- ▶ Shut the grain dryer off for a few hours.
- ▶ Stop the irrigation pumps during the heat of the day.

When we are in a peak load period this summer, we will attempt to post a notice on the homepage of our web site letting you know which days are peak load days.

If you have any questions please just give us a call. Using energy wisely helps to keep our cost down, the electric rates stable and reduces the need to invest in new power sources.

Energy Commandment No. 3

“Thou Shalt Invest in an Energy-efficient Water Heater”

BY DOUG RYE

As we continue with the 10 Commandments of Energy Efficiency, we will keep our focus on making wise investments. This month, I am encouraging you to invest in a specific item that will make a world of difference in your utility bill.

Have you ever thought much about your water heater? Are you aware that about 20 percent of your utility bill goes toward the heating of water? Have you ever

in the Astrodome in Houston. It takes several days to see everything in that show, which is sponsored by the National Association of Homebuilders. I actually did an energy presentation there and had about four extra hours to look around. I was practically running through the aisles looking at every display as fast as possible. At one point, I looked to my left and saw some strange looking objects that

were shaped like a 44-caliber pistol bullet only they were about five feet tall.

I hol-
lered over to the fellow and asked, “What are these?” And he said, “Water heaters.” I said,

“commercial?” and he said, “No, mostly residential.”

I turned and walked his way and asked, “What is so special about these water heaters?”

And he said they are guaranteed to never leak or rust and are 91 to 95 percent energy efficient. I didn’t necessarily believe him but I knew that if it were true, a lot of my listeners would want to have one.

Later, when I got proof that it was true, I started telling about the Marathon water heater in my seminars and on my radio show. Folks just like you started asking where

they could get a Marathon.

I know for a fact that hundreds of you have already purchased one. If you understand the facts, the rest of you will do the same. The facts are simple.

It is the last water heater that you will ever need at a particular location. It won’t rust or leak because the tank has no metal. And the Marathon is so well insulated with “envirofoam,” that it has practically zero standby loss regardless of the location. It does not warm your cold garage in the winter and it does not heat your house in the summer.

Now, consider this: The average gas water heater is less than 58 percent efficient, which means that about 40 percent of the natural gas you buy goes up the flue into the sky. On the other hand, the all-electric Marathons average 91-plus percent efficiency. That’s a no-brainer in my book. So, my advice to you is this: When you need a water heater for your new or existing house, contact your local electric co-op and ask about the Marathon water heater.

Remember – your co-op values you, the member, and it cares. That’s why your co-op is doing all it can to help you save money on your electric bill.

Doug Rye, is a licensed architect and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show. You can contact Doug at 1-888-Doug-Rye. Source: Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Corporation.



“...the all-electric Marathons average 91-plus percent efficiency. That’s a no-brainer in my book.”

had to replace your water heater? Nearly every one of you said “yes”. Now, why did you replace it? Was it the wrong color? Well, of course not. You replaced it because it quit working or had started leaking. At some point, we all need to replace a water heater. Now wouldn’t it be great if we could install a replacement guaranteed to never leak or rust? And wouldn’t it be great if the new water heater was super energy efficient? Well, such a product is available and I will tell you how I learned about it.

About 10 years ago, I was attending a really big home show



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