

### May Your Holidays Be Merry and Bright



As November kicks off, it's hard to believe we'll soon be gathering with family and friends to celebrate the holiday season. This festive time of year brings joy and warmth, but as the weather gets cooler and we spend more time indoors, the holidays can also bring increased energy use and a higher risk of electrical and fire hazards.

As your local electric cooperative, our team at CNMEC cares about your wellbeing. This month, I'd like to share a few practical tips to help you stay safe and efficient during the holiday season.

#### **Safety first.**

**Alena Brandenberger** My family truly enjoys decorating our home for the holidays. Before we deck the halls, I always check electrical cords and light strands to make sure they aren't frayed or damaged. This gives us peace of mind, knowing our holiday lights are ready to safely brighten our home. I also double check the lights we use outside to make sure they're rated for outdoor use.

Like many households, we also enjoy holiday-scented candles. While festive, candles can create fire hazards and should never be left unattended. One of the best and easiest ways to safeguard your home is to test smoke alarms often. Testing smoke alarms only takes a few seconds and could save lives, so make it a habit.

#### **'Tis the season for savings.**

Spending more time indoors with a few more guests in the home can really impact home energy use. By taking a few small steps to save energy during the holiday season, you can lower your bills.

I like to remind my family members to mind the thermostat. Since heating and cooling makes up the majority of home energy consumption, the thermostat is one of the best places for savings. Lower it a few degrees, especially when you have family or friends stopping by. Good company brings additional warmth to your home.

Your family can also save energy by decorating with LED holiday lights. LEDs are the most energy efficient lighting options available, and they last much longer than traditional bulbs.

There's no denying one of the best parts of the holiday season is the food—not just the meals but the time we spend together in the kitchen. There are many ways to save in the heart of your home, but one of the best approaches is to cook with smaller countertop appliances, such as air fryers, slow cookers and toaster ovens. These handy appliances consume a fraction of the energy used to heat the oven, creating the perfect recipe for mealtime and energy savings.

I hope you will implement some of these energy-saving and safety tips into your holiday plans. For additional advice, visit our website at [www.cnmec.org](http://www.cnmec.org). We're here to help you with safety and savings year-round.

From your friends at CNMEC, we hope your holiday season is merry and bright.



## Tips for a Safe and Efficient Holiday Season

This holiday season, keep energy savings and electrical safety in mind.

### SAVE ENERGY

- Use smaller appliances like slow cookers instead of the oven.
- Lower the thermostat when hosting friends and family.
- Decorate with energy-saving LED lights.

### PRIORITIZE SAFETY

- Never leave unattended candles burning.
- Ensure all smoke alarms are working.
- When decorating, inspect all light strands and cords for damage.



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you're heading out of town during the holiday season, remember to set your home to vacation mode. You can save energy while you're away by lowering your thermostat a few degrees or creating an "away" schedule with a smart or programmable thermostat. Newer water heaters include a vacation mode setting to help you save on water heating costs, or you can simply lower the temperature manually.

Small actions can also stack up to energy savings. Unplug devices that consume energy when they're not in use, including phone chargers, toothbrush chargers, TVs and gaming consoles.



## BE AN ENERGY EFFICIENCY MVP

Do you have what it takes to be the energy efficiency MVP (most valuable player) in your home? When you take proactive steps to save energy at home, you can help your family save on monthly energy bills and help the environment—that's a win-win!

Read the sentences below and unscramble the bolded letters to complete the energy efficiency tips.

Check your work in the answer key.



1. Turn off **gllhsit** when you leave a room.

2. Unplug smaller electronic devices like phone **reahgcsr** when you're not using them.

3. Reduce your **nesecr** time to save energy and spend more time outdoors.

4. Turn off the **reatw** while brushing your teeth.

5. Keep doors and **swdwnio** closed when your home's heating/cooling system is running.

6. When it's cold, wear an extra layer of **tohgncl** inside instead of adjusting the thermostat.

Answer Key: 1. lights 2. chargers 3. screen 4. water 5. windows 6. clothing