

Eastern Illini PowerLines®

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

February 2010

SAVE MONEY NOW!

Energy Wise Home Savings Events are back!

Here at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, we're working hard to hold down energy prices. You, too, can play an important role in controlling your energy costs by evaluating your home and taking simple steps to trim unnecessary energy use.

And we can help!

That's where the 2010 Energy Wise Home Savings Events come in. Each month this spring and fall, we will travel to Onarga, Paxton or Pesotum to show you simple ways you can save money now. Not only are these Savings Events free to attend for Eastern Illini members, but you will also receive some free tools to start you on the savings path, just for attending!

The first Savings Event will be held at the EIEC facility in Pesotum (just east of I-57 at the Pesotum exit) at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18. Plan to attend!

Energy Wise Home Savings Tips

Most air leaks are hidden in your attic and basement and can significantly raise your energy bill. Here's a list of common hiding places. Seal them with caulk, weatherstripping or other appropriate materials. Thirty percent of your expenses, up to \$1,500, may qualify for an energy efficiency tax credit!

Windows and Doors

Attic Hatch

Wiring Holes

Plumbing Vent

Recessed Lights and Open Soffit

(the box that hides recessed lights)

Furnace Flue or Duct Chaseways

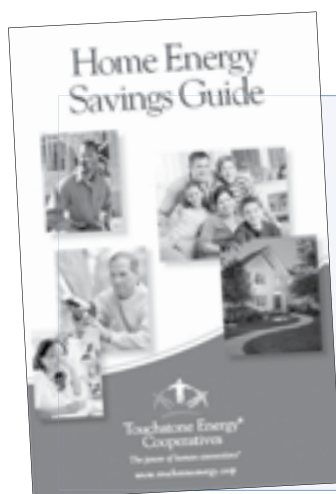
(the hollow box or wall feature that hides ducts)

Basement Rim Joists

(where the foundation meets the wood framing)



Source: Alliance to Save Energy's Guide to Home Sealing



Attend the Energy Wise Home Savings Event at EIEC's Pesotum facility (just east of I-57 at the Pesotum exit) and receive a FREE copy of the Home Energy Savings Guide! The meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18.

Fire Extinguishers: A Little Preparation Can Go a Long Way

House fires can happen in seconds: In one instant, you could go from whipping up dinner to watching flames spring up from the stovetop.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 410,500 fires — or 78 percent of all reported structure fires — occur in homes. In the right hands, a household fire extinguisher can save lives and protect property should a small fire start.

“Every home should have at least one fire extinguisher, and you need the right type and you must know how and when to use it,” says John Drengenberg, consumer affairs manager at Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the Chicago, Ill.-based not-for-profit firm that tests and sets minimum standards for electric-consuming items.

Fire extinguishers should be placed in easily-accessible areas of the home, close to where they might be needed (such as in a kitchen, garage or bedroom). Some basic rules to keep in mind when using household fire extinguishers:

If the fire is not spreading and remains confined to a small area, use the appropriate type of extinguisher. Select a multi-purpose extinguisher (rated A, B, or C) with the UL mark that can be used on all types fires such as wood, cloth, paper, flammable liquids (gasoline, oil, grease, oil-based paint), and energized electrical equipment including wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers and appliances.

Know both your limits and that of the fire extinguisher.

Periodically inspect your extinguishers to determine if they need to be recharged or replaced. Extinguishers need to be re-



charged or replaced after each use — even if you haven’t used the entire extinguishing agent. Check the gauge on the fire extinguisher for this information.

When operating a fire extinguisher, stand at least 6 feet away from the fire and keep your back to a door so you can escape easily, if necessary. Remember the word **PASS**:

- Pull the pin, hold the extinguisher away from you and release the locking mechanism.
- Aim low, pointing the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
- Sweep the nozzle from side to side.

“Fire extinguishers for home use are not designed to fight large or spreading fires,” stresses Drengenberg. “Rather than fighting the fire, your number one priority should be getting out safely.”

Source: Underwriters Laboratories

Be sure to have a fire extinguisher rated for the type of fire at hand: Class A fires are ordinary materials like burning paper, lumber, cardboard, and plastics; Class B fires involve flammable or combustible liquids like gasoline and kerosene; Class C fires involve energized electrical equipment, such as appliances, switches, panel boxes, and power tools. *Source: Fire Safety Council*

Fact or Fiction?

Using a Dishwasher Is More Expensive Than Hand Washing

This is fiction. It is a commonly-held belief that dishwashers are convenient, but use more water and energy than hand washing. In fact, dishwashers can help you to conserve water and save on energy bills.

An average load of dishes cleaned in a dishwasher uses 37 percent less water than washing dishes by hand. This can save the typical household nearly 5,000 gallons of water per year.

Although operating a dishwasher increases electricity consumption, the energy reduction from lower hot water temperatures on your hot water tank ultimately lowers energy use and your utility bills. According to ENERGY STAR®, the average household with an electric water heater saves \$40 per year by using a dishwasher and households with a gas water heater save \$32 per year.



Dishwasher Savings Tips

Additional energy savings can be obtained by properly preparing your dishes for the dishwasher. Rinsing dishes before loading them into the dishwasher can use up to 20 gallons of water. Most dishwashers and detergents are designed to clean without rinsing, just scrape the dishes and load. If dishes will be sitting overnight, the residue may become difficult to clean. Use your dishwasher’s pre-rinse feature. It uses only a fraction of the water that is needed for hand rinsing. Be sure that your dishwasher is full before beginning a cycle and use short wash cycles when less cleaning is needed. In addition, using a rinse agent and air-drying, rather than using the heat dry cycle, will save energy use during the wash cycle.

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