



Crunch the Numbers on New Year's Savings

If your New Year's resolution to spend less and save more always fizzles out by March, don't fret. With a few simple adjustments around the house, you can save money on your energy bill each month. Here's how:

Save up to 20% on heating by installing a programmable thermostat and setting it to automatically lower the heat when you leave the house for more than five hours and when the family goes to bed for the night.

Save 1%-3% on heating costs for each degree you turn the thermostat down. For optimal savings, set the thermostat at 68 degrees while at home and 65 degrees at night and before you leave the house for an extended period.

Save up to 20% on heating and cooling bills by sealing air leaks around doors and windows with caulk and weatherstripping. This inexpensive energy saver will pay for itself within a year.

Save at least 25% on air conditioning when you replace your old, inefficient central AC with one that has a seasonal energy-efficiency ratio of 14 or higher.

Save up to 40% on what you spend to run your refrigerator by replacing an old unit with a new Energy Star-certified model.

Save more than 50% on energy for cooking when you use a microwave oven instead of a conventional oven to heat meals.

Save more than 10% on your water heating bill by lowering the water heater temperature from 140 degrees to 120.

Save 75% or more on energy for lighting by replacing incandescent lightbulbs with LED bulbs. They also last about 25 times longer. Switching out CFLs for LEDs will reduce lighting costs as much as 50%.

Consistently turning off lights when not in use or when natural light is sufficient can reduce lighting expenses 10%-40%.

Enable the power management function on computers and activate the sleep setting on printers, copiers and scanners so that they automatically enter a low-powered sleep mode when inactive. To save more, unplug them when not in use.

Know What Steps To Take

It's your worst-case scenario. A major storm was predicted, and this time the predictions were right. Power lines are down, and your electricity may be out for several days. You're low on everything: food, pet supplies, toilet paper, batteries, diapers and medication.

Imagine how you would feel in this situation. While you can't predict which weather forecast will come to pass, you can plan ahead so when severe weather strikes, you have the tools and resources to effectively weather the storm. The Department of Homeland Security offers several resources to help you prepare for major weather events and natural disasters at ready.gov/make-a-plan.

Don't Wait: Be Prepared Before the Storm

Preparedness Actions

- Keep your pantry stocked with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials, such as diapers and toiletries.
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies, including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and keep prescription medications filled and up to date.

With Advance Warning

If a severe storm is predicted, fully charge all cellphones, laptops and devices so you have maximum power in the event of a power outage.

During a Prolonged Outage

In the event of an outage, turn off appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and will keep circuits from overloading during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.



Ramiro De La Paz Memorial Scholarship

2020 Scholarship Applications now open!
Deadline is Friday, Feb. 11, 2020

Each year, NEC proudly awards college scholarships to high-school seniors of cooperative members to help further their educational pursuits. For 2020, NEC will be awarding a total of 18 scholarships totalling over \$25,000 to qualifying high-schol seniors.

There are three different types of applications that will be available for these scholarship funds: Students planning to attend a 4-year

college or university in Texas can win one of (10) \$1,000 scholarships or one of two (2) \$4,000 scholarships, students planning to attend a two-year or vocational college in Texas can win one of (2) \$2,000 scholarships, and students planning to attend an accredited Texas lineman's college can win one of (2) \$5,000 scholarships.

All applicants must reside in the home with a parent or legal guardian who has been an NEC member for a minimum of six months as of the application deadline.



*2019 Artwork by Megan Perkins

Entries must be hand-drawn and follow the contest theme of combining electricity or lineworkers with a Christmas or holiday component. All entries must be received by 5 p.m. on Thursday, January 23, 2020.

All submitted works must be an original concept and not a copy of anyone else's copyrighted material. If your image infringes upon another's copyright, it will be disqualified. Upon submitting your work to NEC for this contest, you are solely responsible for any infringement on copyrighted materials.

Artwork must be delivered to the NEC offices or emailed in a JPG format that does not exceed 1MB. This one-page submission form must also be completed and returned with the

2020 Christmas Card Contest

Christmas Card Age Categories

8 & Under 9-13 14-17

Deadline is Thursday, Jan. 23, 2020

artwork submission to be considered a complete entry. All artists must be dependents of a current member of Nueces Electric Cooperative.

Children 17 and under are eligible to participate. One grand prize winner and one runner up will be determined in each of the three age categories, listed below. Winners will be announced in the April edition of Texas Co-op Power magazine.

The three grand prize winners will each receive a \$100 electric bill credit and a \$100 Wal-Mart gift card. The three runner ups will each receive a \$50 electric bill credit and a \$50 Wal-Mart gift card. NEC will also determine which of the winners' artwork will be featured on the 2020 NEC Christmas Cards.