

# Don't Be Surprised by a High Bill this Summer

Start Controlling Your Energy Costs  
by Taking Action Now



## RECNEWS

May 2023

At Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC), we recognize that inflation and the increasing cost of energy continue to impact many member-owners. Your Cooperative is focused on providing you with the best VALUE possible and empowering you to lower your bill by reducing your energy use, especially as we head into the summer months.

### What You Can Do Now

- ✓ **Get your HVAC a checkup.** Now is the time to call in a professional to make sure your system is geared up for sweltering temperatures. A multi-day heat wave is not the time to find out your system needs a tune-up. Call in a professional today.
- ✓ **Check and replace air filters.** These filters not only help keep the air clean in your home, but also keep your heating and cooling system from getting clogged with dirt or other debris. If you haven't changed your filter in a while, now is the time. REC recommends checking your filter once a month and changing as needed.
- ✓ **Seal any cracks or leaky areas** where cool air could escape during warmer months.
- ✓ **Have a pro inspect your home's insulation.** Is something missing or compressed? There should be about 13" of insulation, or an equivalent of R-38, in attics, R-13 for walls and 6" or R-19 in crawl space floors. Add additional insulation if yours is below standard.

### What You Can Do Once the Heat Arrives

- ✓ Raise your thermostat. During the day, turn your thermostat up to 78 degrees – or the highest comfortable temperature. If you have a programmable thermostat, you can set it to be warmer in the house when you are not at home.
- ✓ At night, lower your thermostat to cool off the house, if desired.
- ✓ Run ceiling fans only in occupied rooms. Don't block supply vents or return air vents with furniture or other objects.
- ✓ Avoid placing lamps, TVs or other heat-producing devices near your air-conditioning thermostat.
- ✓ Close drapes and curtains to keep the sun out during the day.

## Other Ways to Save

Your cooperative is always looking for ways to **ADD VALUE** to your REC membership, including the following money-saving solutions.

#### Electric Vehicle Charging Incentive

If you drive an electric vehicle, REC's Vividly Brighter Charging solution allows a limited number of member-owners to receive a rebate in exchange for charging their vehicle during off-peak hours.



[myrec.coop/charging](https://myrec.coop/charging)

#### Shop and Save with Co-op Connections

From local shops to restaurants to national hotel chains, REC's Co-op Connections solution allows member-owners to save big. You can even save on many prescriptions. Activate your account and start saving today!



[myrec.coop/coopconnections](https://myrec.coop/coopconnections)

# Spring Cleaning?

## Scrub Out Safety Hazards



**May is a great time for spring cleaning, but it's also National Electric Safety Month.**

So as you're clearing out closets and decluttering from winter, REC urges members to take a few extra minutes for some simple safety checks.

### Here Are Some Places To Start:

#### Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI)

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations in a kitchen, bathroom or laundry room often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets.

#### Loose or Damaged Outlets or Switches

Unstable electrical outlets or wall switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, contact an electrician.

#### Surge Protectors

Power strips with surge protectors help safeguard expensive equipment such as televisions, home entertainment systems and computer components from power spikes.

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn you when they've stopped working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit, or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

#### Extension Cords

With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to the electricity you get from REC, having enough outlets can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the needed protection. And always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use.

**"It's easy to overlook electrical hazards—especially ones we might have ignored for months or even longer," said John Medved, Director—Safety and Security Officer. "But please take time to address any potential hazards before they cause an accident or injury."**

# Value *for your money*

**That's what you're getting  
as an REC member.**

See other side for more.



Curious about your electric cooperative and what you get for your money? Find info in our monthly magazine, local news outlets, and on REC's app, website and social media.



Tips to save



How we're improving reliability



Accessible information



Ways REC is committed to the local community



Convenient billing and payment options



Online services