

# Wake ElectriConnection

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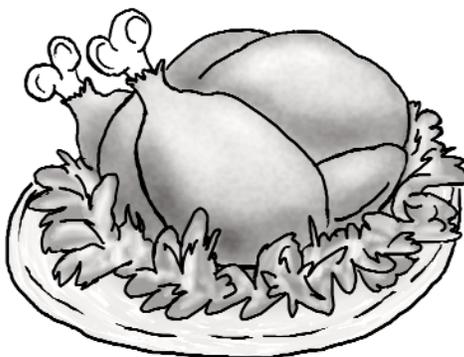
## Staying warm in the winter calls for fire safety

The lower the temperature dips in the winter, the higher your chances for a fire in your home. That is because nearly one-third of residential fires occur during the winter, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Several culprits mar the holidays with fires: Space heaters and wood stoves are obvious threats, but candles and overloaded outlets from holiday lights pose problems as well.

Wake Electric wants our members to safely enjoy the holidays. Prevent holiday fires by decorating carefully and paying a bit of extra attention to fire safety this winter.

### Here are some tips to follow this season:

- Have the chimney cleaned and inspected each year before winter use. Keep a tight-fitting screen on the fireplace.
- Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood in wood stoves. Do not burn trash, as it can start a chimney fire. Scrape ashes into a closed metal container and dispose of them outdoors.
- Electric space heaters may help you stay cozy when it is cold, but they can be dangerous. Replace your old heaters with newer models that have automatic shut-off protection. Keep them away from curtains and other flammables; never put snow-covered clothes on an electric heater to speed drying. Most important, teach your children to steer clear of the heaters.
- Do not overload outlets or extension cords for holiday lights.
- Extension cords are designed for temporary use, so pack them away when the season is over. Do not put extension cords under rugs or in walking paths. Not only can they trip someone, but the wear on the cord could cause it to fray and cause a fire hazard.
- Candles are a classic holiday decoration, but also a potential fire starter. Keep candles off of coffee tables, where they easily can be knocked over. Never leave one unattended in an empty room.



Wake Electric offices will be closed on  
Thursday, November 23 and Friday, November 24  
for the Thanksgiving holiday. Should you need to  
report a power outage or electrical emergency,  
please contact us at  
(919) 863-6499 or (800) 743-3155

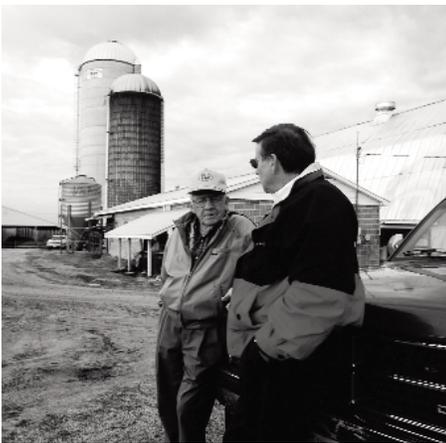
Happy Thanksgiving.

## From Your Manager...

### Investments made here, stay here

Businesses make financial investments every day. They have to, in order to keep things running and to stay competitive. All you have to do is look at the annual report of any Fortune 500 company to see that year after year, these companies make significant investments in technology, infrastructure and equipment.

Electric co-ops make investments too. They are no different from any large corporation in this respect. However, where the benefits of those investments go now there is a big difference.



The benefits of co-op investments stay right here in our local community.

Co-ops around the country are on the verge of making significant investments to meet their

member-owners' demand for power. Energy experts say that the nation may need to build between 1,300 and 1,900 new power plants to meet the expected 43 percent rise in electricity demand over the next 20 years.

America's electric cooperatives, part of an industry that is growing close to 4 percent annually, would need to invest \$28 billion over the next decade to build new generation and transmission facilities to keep up with growth, as well as adding emission-control technology to comply with federal regulation, according to National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Glenn English in his June 20, 2006, testimony to the U.S. Senate.

Perhaps one of the strongest ways that co-ops are benefiting their communities is by developing local renewable energy sources to provide electricity, create jobs and cut down on waste from farms. A

great example of this is electric co-ops using biomass to produce electricity from local agricultural centers.

Biomass refers to organic matter such as farm by-products, wood wastes, aquatic plants, and land-fill waste. According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Power Online—an annual survey of electric co-ops—120 co-ops in 23 states across the country are utilizing biomass in their power supply.

Not only do these investments contribute to the local economy, but they help the rural economy remain strong. According to the Center for the Study of Rural America in Kansas City, Mo., last year was a banner income year for the farm sector, with solid gains in employment and income. In addition, the unemployment rate in rural areas dropped from 6 percent to 5.7 percent, with some of the strongest gains in highly skilled, higher paying jobs. We can be proud of electric co-ops' contribution to this rural economic growth.



Jim Mangum

## Wake ElectriConnection

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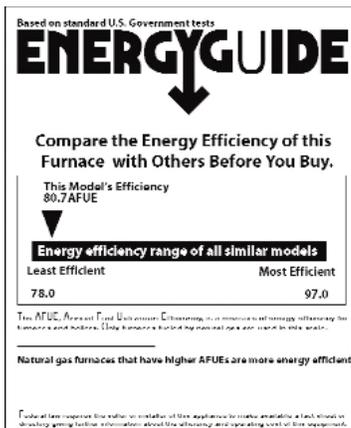
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# Understanding furnace efficiency ratings

If you have an older forced air furnace, you may be able to save energy and money by replacing it with a more efficient system. The best new furnaces consume up to 30 percent less fuel than older systems.

The efficiency of combustion heating systems such as furnaces is measured in Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency (AFUE). This rating is included on the



yellow Energy Guide label posted on all new appliances, and it measures the efficiency at which the appliance delivers heat to your home's ductwork. Many older furnaces have an AFUE of about 60 to 70 percent. This means that at least 30 percent of the fuel you purchase is

wasted as heat that escapes up the chimney or out the sides of the furnace.

You can identify these old-fashioned conventional furnaces by their standing pilot light (a small visible flame that lights the main burners), and open draft

diverter (that allows room air to flow into the chimney). When shopping for a new gas furnace, you'll have two choices of efficiency:

- Mid-efficiency furnaces have an AFUE rating of 80 to 82 percent. This efficiency upgrade includes an electronic ignition (no pilot light), a lightweight heat exchanger (less warm-up time), and a fan that controls chimney draft (less heat going up the chimney).
- High-efficiency furnaces have an AFUE of 90 percent or higher. Like the AFUE 80+ furnace, these furnaces have electronic ignition and a draft fan. The AFUE 90+ furnaces will also have a sealed combustion chamber, offering an important safety advantage since they draw combustion air from outdoors. Finally, the AFUE 90+ furnaces extract extra heat from their combustion gases by cooling them to the point of condensation, releasing latent heat.

No one looks forward to the day their furnace needs to be replaced. But the new generation of heating equipment can save you a lot of energy and money in the long run.

*Source: Chris Dorsi, Saturn Resource Management, Inc. For more information, visit [www.srmi.biz](http://www.srmi.biz)*

# Why it is important to start investing in your 20s

It has been said that the best time to plant a tree is 30 years ago. This statement could not be truer when it comes to the best time to start investing.

By starting to invest early in your working career, you can position yourself to take the greatest advantage of compound investment returns—or money you make on the money your investments earn. Even a modest savings plan you start when you are young can provide a much larger nest egg than if you start saving larger amounts later in life.

Look, for example, at what happens when you invest \$2,000 at different ages and follow up with additional monthly savings:

- If you start such a program at age 25, saving \$100 a month after your initial investment, you will accumulate almost \$400,000 by the time you are 65, if your investments earn an 8 percent return annually.\*

- If you invest \$2,000 at the age of 35 and save \$200 monthly thereafter, your savings will grow to only about \$322,000 by age 65.\*
- If, at age 45, you invest \$2,000 and then add monthly savings of \$300, by the time you reach 65, your investment will have grown to only about \$187,738, assuming the same annual 8 percent return.\*

The bottom line...It is never too early to start investing. The power of compounding allows you to build up your savings for retirement with less money when you start early.

*Source: Greg Dimeris, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*

*\*This example assumes that investments were made at the beginning of each month and compounded monthly.*

