



Think Before Pulling The Plug

By John Pulley

You may have seen a new marketing initiative by the propane industry that encourages homeowners to dump their electric water heaters in favor of water heaters fueled by propane gas. The multimedia campaign, called “*Pull the Plug on Electric Water Heaters*,” makes its case with brochures, flyers, print advertisements, videos, radio spots, fact sheets, webinars, an e-book and even endorsements by a celebrity home-improvement expert. But make no mistake – the intent of the campaign is simply to sell a lot more propane.

At Mitchell EMC, we believe electricity is the smart energy choice. It is safe, reliable, clean, predictably priced and adaptable to many uses, from the exotic to the mundane. Electricity powers everything from cars, cell phones and laptop computers to air conditioners, dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and lighting. More than ever, America runs on electricity.

Still, you might be tempted to switch water heaters. The campaign developed by the Propane Education and Research Council is slick.

As your trusted energy advisor, Mitchell EMC wants to provide you, our member-consumer, with the facts you need to make the best decision.

Let’s look at the propane marketing campaign. Some of the claims challenge common sense and would be hard to prove, including assertions about efficiency, environmental impacts and cost. “With a propane water heater, you can use less energy, save money and reduce your carbon footprint,” proclaims Danny Lipford, host of the television program “Today’s Homeowner,” in a campaign video. “They really are that efficient.”

Really? Apparently Danny neglected to mention that propane is a fossil fuel.

The campaign also resorts to scare tactics. Installation of propane water heaters is often a laborious process that requires running propane lines and exhaust

vents. Turning reality on its head, the pro-propane campaign would have you believe that replacing an electric water heater “can take days longer, days you’ll spend taking icy cold showers,” Lipford warns.

Actually, in most cases, installing an electric heater is a snap.

At Mitchell EMC, we believe electric water heaters are the smart choice for many reasons:

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pumps, are *readily available*.
- Electric water heaters are *safe*. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including *solar, wind, hydro and other renewables*.
- Electric heaters *don’t lose energy from exhaust* or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house. Propane heaters require on-site storage tanks.
- Electric water heaters are *easy to install*. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues.

- *The cost of electricity is less volatile* than it is for other fuels. The cost of propane tends to fluctuate wildly.

Touchstone Energy has produced three fact sheets on water heating choices, water heater efficiency, and hot water distribution that are part of the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool – see <http://homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com/>. To access these fact sheets, enter information about your home and go to the “systems” tab for the water heater sheets.

John Pulley writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



Find Ways to Save With Co-op Energy Efficiency Programs



By Abby Berry

As a member of Mitchell EMC, you are in a unique position to take advantage of energy efficiency programs offered by the co-op. Because we are a not-for-profit organization, our goal is to provide safe, reliable power at the most affordable price for our members. This means helping you save money on your monthly electric bill.

So, how does practicing efficiency habits save you money? It's common sense that if you use less electricity, your bill will be lower. But there's more to it than that. Mitchell EMC purchases electricity from Oglethorpe Power, a local generation and transmission cooperative. When electric use is high, we pay peak demand charges for the electricity we purchase. By incorporating energy efficiency into your daily routine, you are helping to reduce the demand for electricity, thus lowering its overall cost. And as a co-op, we pass these savings directly on to you! Let's take a look at some of the ways you can save.

Basic energy efficiency practices, like caulking around windows and doors, turning off lights when you leave the room and using a programmable thermostat, are great ways to start saving.

Monitor your energy use by visiting www.mitchellemc.com and logging into the online portal. By using this free service, you can keep tabs on when your energy use is high, what appliances use the most electricity and other details about your energy use. This information is available at your fingertips and will help you keep energy savings top of mind.

When you use electricity is just as important as how much you use. Typically, most households use larger amounts of electricity in the mornings and in the evenings – when most people are either getting ready for their day or returning home. Remember that peak demand charge? This can be avoided by lowering energy use during on-peak hours, when electricity is in high demand.

Mitchell EMC offers free home energy audits. Our energy expert can assess insulation gaps and other common problems that cause homes to use more energy than required. We can tell you more about the latest technologies for heating, cooling and lighting in a home, including heat pumps, LED lights and more.

Mitchell EMC is proud to offer these energy efficiency programs for you, our members. As you can see, there are many ways to save, and we want to be your trusted energy resource. To find out more about energy efficiency programs and tips, contact Mitchell EMC at 229-336-5221 or visit www.mitchellemc.com.

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College and Career Day



Worth County High School held their annual College and Career Day on February 26, 2016, at Worth County High School. Over 300 students attended.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Avoid placing lamps or TV sets near your room air-conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

Source: energy.gov

MAKE THE MOST OF CEILING FANS

By turning on the fan, you can turn up the savings!

If you are like most Americans, you have at least one ceiling fan in your home. Ceiling fans help our indoor life feel more comfortable. They are a decorative addition to our homes and, if used properly, can help lower energy costs.

Tips for making the most of your ceiling fans:

- 1. Flip the switch** – Most ceiling fans have a switch near the blades. In warm months, flip the switch so that the blades operate in a counter clockwise direction, effectively producing a “wind chill” effect. Fans make the air near them feel cooler than it actually is. In winter, move the switch so the fan blades rotate clockwise, creating a gentle updraft. This pushes warm air down from the ceiling into occupied areas of the room. Regardless of the season, try operating the fan on its lowest setting.
- 2. Adjust your thermostat** – In the summer, when using a fan in conjunction with an air conditioner, or instead of it, you can turn your thermostat up three to five degrees without any reduction in comfort. This saves money since a fan is less costly to run than an air conditioner. In the winter, lower your thermostat’s set point by the same amount. Ceiling fans push the warm air from the ceiling back down toward the living space, which means the furnace won’t turn on as frequently.
- 3. CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE** – Make sure your ceiling fan is the right size for the room. A fan that is 36-44 inches in diameter will cool rooms up to 225 square feet. A fan that is 52 inches or more should be used to cool a larger space.
- 4. TURN IT OFF** – When the room is unoccupied, turn the fan off. Fans are intended to cool people - not rooms.

In observance of
Memorial Day
Mitchell EMC Offices
will be closed
Monday, May 30th



Note: If you move or no longer have electric service with Mitchell EMC, it is important that members keep their address current, so that future disbursements can be properly mailed. Capital credits are reserved for members even if they move out of the Mitchell EMC service area. Mitchell EMC will make a diligent effort to send a check by mail.

Statement of Equal Employment Opportunity

All applicants for employment shall be considered and hired on the basis of merit, without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), age, national origin, disability, genetic information, or past or present military status. The employment practices shall ensure equal treatment of all employees, without discrimination as to promotion, discharge, rates of pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or past or present military status.

WATT'S COOKING



Chocolate Peanut Butter Popcorn

Ingredients:

1/3 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
3 tablespoons of smooth peanut butter
1 tablespoon of butter
1/3 cup powdered sugar
4 cups popped pop corn

Microwave chocolate chips, peanut butter and butter for 30 seconds. Stir and microwave for an additional 30 seconds. Place popcorn in a gallon Ziploc bag, pour mixture over popcorn and shake. Add powder sugar, close and shake again. Spread on wax paper to cool completely. Store in refrigerator or in an air tight container.

Thanks!

to **Beverly Jones**,
Dougherty County, GA,
for sharing this recipe.

Share & Win!

Send us your favorite quick and easy dinner recipes. If your recipe is chosen for print, you can win a **\$25 credit** on your next Mitchell EMC bill.

Send recipes to Heather Greene, P.O. Box 409, Camilla, GA 31730 or email to heather.greene@mitchellemc.com.