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Mitchell  
EMC



The news  
you need to  
know in  
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA  
[www.mitchellemc.com](http://www.mitchellemc.com)

*Mitchell EMC wishes  
you and your family a  
Very Merry Christmas*

# Take the Chill Out of Winter Bills

By Amber Bentley

**B**etween holiday houseguests and shorter, colder days, electric bills tend to climb in the winter. Read on for ways to save energy when the temperature drops.

**Lower your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower):** If you decrease the temperature by just one degree, you can save up to 5 percent on heating costs. Consider a programmable thermostat that you can set to lower the temperature when away from home and increase before you come back.

**Adjust blinds and curtains:** Keep them open to let in sunlight during the day, and close at night to keep heat inside and protect from drafts.

**Reduce hot water temperatures:** Heating water accounts for 12 percent of the average home's energy use. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees or lower—that's usually sufficient for a household's hot-water needs. Also, if you've had your water heater for more than 12 years, you might want to consider replacing it with a more energy-efficient model.

**Seal and insulate:** This is the best way to keep heat in and air out. Areas that may need sealing include corners, cracks, door frames, and windows.

**Consider replacing old appliances, doors, and windows with ENERGY STAR-rated models:** You can save about 15 percent of your normal energy use with these appliances and get better insulation on doors and windows for the price you pay. ENERGY STAR-rated items meet special efficiency standards set by the federal government.

**Free your vents:** HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems will have to work twice as hard if vents are blocked by rugs, furniture, or doors. Keep vents clear for proper air flow.

**Keep food cool:** Don't make your fridge work too hard. A temperature set between 34 and 37 degrees Fahrenheit is usually sufficient.

**A special holiday tip:** Use LED lights to decorate.

They're up to 75 percent more energy efficient than traditional incandescent lights and last much longer—but check for an ENERGY-STAR rating before you buy. Cheaper LEDs tend not to last as long or be as durable.

Visit [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov) or [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) for more ways to save.

*Amber Bentley 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.*

Sources:

<http://blog.togetherwesave.com/> "Five Action Steps to Winter Energy Usage"

<http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/top-10-tips-save-energy-and-money-winter>

<http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/tips-save-energy-during-holidays>

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

**M**itchell EMC has several options for you to pay your bill. You can come by any Mitchell EMC office during business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm. Night deposits are available at each location as well. In addition, phone payments can be made by calling (229) 336-5221 or (800) 479-6034 any time, day or night, to pay your bill by credit card. You may also mail your payment to: Mitchell EMC, PO Box 409, Camilla, GA 31730. The following billing options are also available for our members:

### Bank Draft

Members can arrange for energy bill payments to be processed automatically each month on the due date via bank draft. A bank draft authorization form should be completed. Please include a voided check and either mail or bring it in to one of our offices.

### Recurring Credit Card

Two ways to arrange for payment by Visa or MasterCard:

- Complete and sign the back part from your bill stub

and return to Mitchell EMC, noting the type of credit card, card number, expiration date and verification code.

- Initiate the process electronically by completing the form on the right.

### Pre-Pay

Prepaid metering is a pay-as-you-go alternative to traditional electric service with a monthly bill. Once the account is set up, you can pay as frequently as you like, as much as you like. To sign up, call our office at (800) 479-6034 or complete the form on the right.

### Online

You can pay online by using our convenient online payment system.

### Mobile App

The Mobile App gives you the ability to view your accounts, view your bills, make secure payments directly from your mobile device, view your payment history, modify or maintain your subscriptions for alerts and reminders, and contact us via email or phone.



**Thank you** to Meigs Baptist Church Youth and kids that delivered brownies to Mitchell EMC recently. They wanted to say Thank You to the Linemen for their service! Pictured Front Row (L-R): P.J Whigham, Camden Wilson, Maston Whigham and Thornton West; Back Row (L-R): Scott Humphries, Chris Sharp and Jay Dollar.

## Digital devices impact energy use

By Tom Tate

Ah, the Digital Age. We have gadgets galore, the ability to manage our homes in new and innovative ways, brilliant images and captivating sounds of modern entertainment options and of course, the internet. Clearly, digital devices reign supreme. Yet these cool new capabilities come with a couple of pitfalls; vampire loads and the issue of “technology reincarnation.”

Over the course of the Digital Age, electricity use has continued to increase. Families have multiple televisions. Computer prices have plummeted, meaning many homes now have multiple computers. Everyone in the family needs a cell phone. Gaming consoles and set top cable/satellite boxes satisfy our desire for entertainment.

Major appliances aside, most digital devices do not use 120-volt power, which is the standard voltage of a home outlet. They actually use a lot less. So, trying to plug your brand new smartphone directly into an outlet is going to lead to a fried device and lots of tears from someone. This is why low-voltage devices come with a power adapter. These “wall warts” as some term them, take the 120-volt electricity supplied by Mitchell EMC and convert it to say, five volts. Unfortunately, most folks leave their adapters plugged in to make recharging easier. The problem with this approach is that the seemingly innocuous wall wart uses power even when it isn’t charging a device.

This invisible energy consumption is often called “vampire load.” Studies show that 5 to 10 percent of the average home’s energy use is from vampire loads. The only way to stop this is to unplug the power adapter when it is not in use or employ smart power strips. These look like the typical power strip but with a twist—only one socket gets power all the time. When the device or appliance connected to it turns on and starts using power, the remaining sockets receive power too. This is perfect for entertainment systems, computer set ups and a variety of other situations.

Technological advances have steadily increased ener-

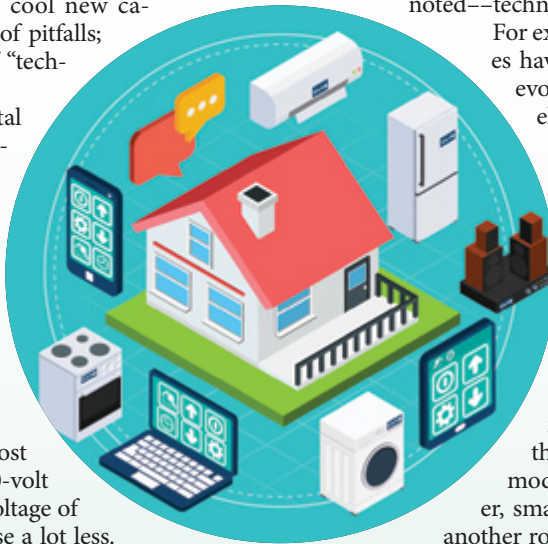
gy efficiency and reduced purchase prices. On its face, this seems like a good thing. Unfortunately, when replacing a product at the end of its life, the tendency is to go bigger, or continue to use the old tech. This is the second issue I noted—technology reincarnation.

For example, flat screen television prices have plummeted as technology has evolved—and so has the amount of electricity they use. Consumers wander into the big box store and are dazzled by walls of giant, brilliant televisions. What they used to pay for the paltry 32” model now might net them a 50” giant. And who doesn’t want to see their favorite show or sports event in near life size? But if you spring for the bigger TV, you won’t benefit from the increased energy efficiency of the newer technology. The bigger model uses as much juice as the older, smaller TV, which likely ends up in another room (reincarnated in another setting) still using power.

Or refrigerators. These are the showpieces of the evolution of smart appliances. Many new models include touchscreens and cameras; they communicate over the internet and probably even keep food cold and make ice. Yet what often happens is the old refrigerator ends up in the basement or garage, reincarnated as a dedicated beverage unit or overflow.

I’ll offer a couple words of advice to help you avoid—or at least reduce—the effects of vampire loads and technology reincarnation. Invest in smart power strips or make a point to use outlets where you can conveniently unplug power adapters when not in use. Don’t oversize your replacement appliances and entertainment gear unless family needs dictate the larger capacities. And recycle the replaced appliances and equipment to stem technology reincarnation. You will enjoy the Digital Age for a lot less.

*Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues 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.*



## Serving in 14 Southwest Georgia Counties...

Our offices will be closed December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, so that we may spend time with our families. We will also be closed on January 2, 2017. We would like to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## Mitchell EMC Facilities Charge Adjustment

Currently, some of the fixed costs of servicing your account are recovered through what you pay for electricity. Our goal is to more accurately allocate these costs, both fixed and energy, to their true sources. Effective with member billings that begin on January 1, Mitchell EMC's Facilities Charge will increase by \$3.00 per month.

The Facilities Charge partially covers the fixed costs of delivering your electric service. These fixed costs include reading your meter; maintaining the electric distribution system used in keeping your power flowing; maintaining rights of way; and performing other tasks necessary to ensure a reliable electric distribution system. The Facilities

Charge does not include the cost of the actual electricity you use. The monthly Facilities Charge is changing because the costs of servicing your account are rising. Every member benefits from these services, so the monthly Facilities Charge helps Mitchell EMC ensure that the cost are spread fairly among our membership.

We continue to offer free in home energy audits to help Members with options to make their homes more energy efficient. Our energy efficiency program includes rebates whether you are building a home, or just upgrading your present home.

To find out more about these rebates visit <https://mitchellemc.com/customer-service/consumer-rebates>.

**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. M/F/V/DV/D

# WATT'S COOKING



## Milk Chocolate Bar Cake

### Ingredients:

- 1 (18.25) package Swiss chocolate cake mix
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 10 (1.5 ounce) milk chocolate candy bars with almonds, divided
- 1 (12 ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed

Prepare cake batter according to package directions. Pour into 3 greased and floured 8" round cake pans. Bake at 325° for 20-25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks. Beat cream cheese, powdered sugar, and granulated sugar at medium speed with an electric mixer until mixture is creamy. Chop 8 candy bars finely. Fold cream cheese mixture and chopped candy into whipped topping. Spread icing between layers and on top and sides of cake. Chop remaining 2 candy bars. Sprinkle half of chopped candy bars over cake. Press remaining chopped candy along bottom edge of cake. Yield: 1 (3-layer) cake; Prep: 20 minutes  
Bake: 25 minutes

*Thanks!*

to **Betty Lewis**,  
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](mailto:heather.greene@mitchellemc.com).