



Seal Air Leaks with Caulk

Did you know heating and cooling accounts for roughly half of your home's energy use? Caulking cracks and gaps around windows, doors and spaces around wires (telephone, electrical, cable and gas lines), water spigots and dryer vents can pay off with big energy savings.

- **Approximate cost:** \$5-\$30
 - **Energy savings:** Approx. 5-10 percent
- Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy*

Materials You Will Need:

Caulk, caulk gun, knife or tool to cut, rags, water

- 1. Prep:** Clean the area where you will be applying the caulk. Remove any dirt, loose paint or old, cracked caulk. Be sure the area is dry before applying new caulk appropriate for your application.
- 2. Load:** You will need to pull the plunger all the way back to load the tube of caulk into the barrel of the caulking gun. Next, squeeze the trigger a few times until the plunger makes contact with the tube. Squeeze once or twice more to fill the tip with caulk.
- 3. Apply:** To figure out the right amount of caulk needed, experiment with an out-of-the-way section. You may find that you need less caulk than you thought. Hold the gun at a slight angle. Apply steady pressure on the trigger to create a solid stream from the tip, which should be placed 1/2 inch or less from the intended destination of the material. Use just enough caulk to do the job. Use your finger to gently press the caulk into the corner, crack or space.
- 4. Release:** Once the trigger is fully depressed, allow it to spring back and depress it again. Keep the gun moving while caulk is still coming out of the tip.
- 5. Clean:** Use a damp cloth or rag to clean off most of the excess caulk. Use a dry cloth to clean off the rest.

Mitchell EMC Scholarship Opportunities

Mitchell EMC is proud to offer two (2) scholarship opportunities for the youth of our area. We are currently accepting applications for the Walter Harrison Scholarship and our Operation Round Up Scholarships. Application forms and criteria can be found on our web site, www.mitchellemc.com.

Walter Harrison Scholarships:

- Mr. Walter Harrison was a pioneer in the electric industry in Georgia, and this scholarship is named in his honor and memory.
- It is a statewide \$1,000 scholarship.
- Scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement and financial need.
- Application deadline is **February 1, 2016**.



Operation Round Up Scholarships:

- Funds for these scholarships are provided by consumer participation in the Operation Round Up program at Mitchell EMC.
- A maximum of twelve (12) \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors and/or college/technical school students.
- Scholarships are awarded based on "All Around Student Performance" including academic performance, volunteerism, and participation in school, church and community activities. Financial need is also considered.
- Application deadline is **March 1, 2016**.

Please note that the scholarships have different deadlines and should be mailed to different addresses listed on the scholarship form. We encourage students to apply for both scholarships. Applications will be judged by an independent scholarship committee, and winners will be notified by May 1.



Top Five Energy Users In Your Home

A starting point for savings

By Anne Prince

While most homeowners would like to be more energy efficient and save money, often it feels overwhelming because many people don't know where to start. How can the average family use less energy, lower their utility bill and still meet their daily energy needs? To help jumpstart your effort, it is useful to know what the top energy users are in your home. With this knowledge, you can choose a path that works best for your family.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Agency, the top five energy users in U.S. homes are:

- Space cooling
- Space heating
- Water heating
- Lighting
- Refrigeration

Adjust the temperature.

Together, home heating and cooling use the most energy and take the biggest bite out of your energy budget. On the bright side, there are ways you can achieve at least 10 percent savings by taking a few simple low-cost or no-cost steps.

- During cold weather, set your thermostat to 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- During warm weather, the recommended indoor temperature is 78° Fahrenheit.
- Cleaning the filters of your HVAC system can cut costs from five to 15 percent.
- Clean the coils around your electric base board heater to maintain maximum efficiency.
- Caulk and weather-strip around windows and doors to prevent heat from escaping to the outdoors.

No matter what the climate or time of year, proper use of a programmable thermostat can save you 10 percent on your monthly utility bill.

Shine the light on savings.

Take a fresh look at the lighting in your home. If you still use incandescent lighting, your light bulbs are operating at only 25 percent energy efficiency. Replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified LEDs can save you \$75 per year. Another easy way to save is to always turn lights off in rooms that are not being used.

Water heating efficiency

Just as it is energy-wise to insulate your roof, wall or floor, it also pays

to wrap your hot water heater with an insulating blanket. This is all the more critical if you have an older unit. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. For additional efficiency and savings, insulate exposed hot water lines and drain one to two gallons of water from the bottom of your tank annually to prevent sediment build-up.

Put cold hard cash back in your wallet.

If your refrigerator was purchased before 2001, chances are it uses 40 percent more energy than a new Energy Star model. If you are considering an appliance update, a new Energy Star refrigerator uses at least 15 percent less energy than non-qualified models and 20 percent less energy than

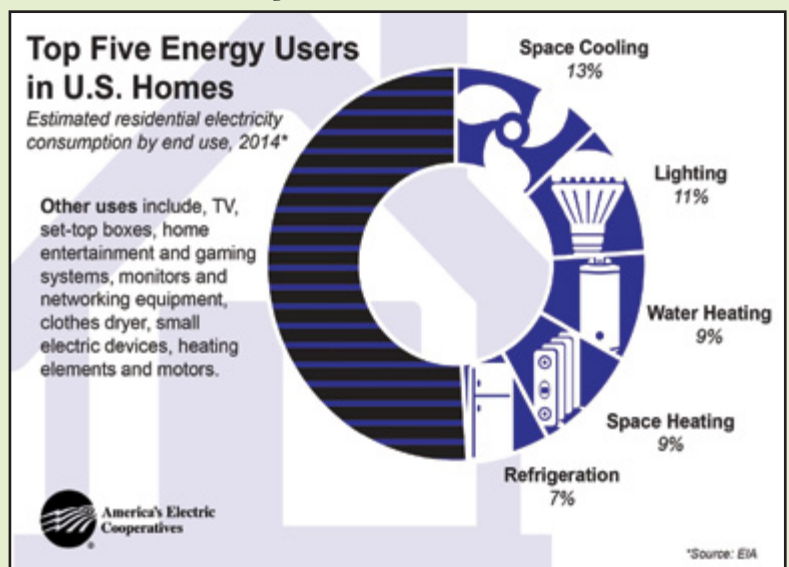


required by current federal standards. Regardless of the age of your fridge, there are additional steps you can take to save energy and money. For example, don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends temperatures of

35 – 38° Fahrenheit for the fresh food compartment and 0° Fahrenheit for separate freezers (used for long-term storage).

By understanding how your home uses energy, you can determine the best ways to modify energy use and keep more money in your wallet. For additional ways to save, contact Mitchell EMC's energy experts at 229-336-5221.

Anne Prince 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.



Serving in 14 Southwest Georgia Counties...

Mitchell EMC would like to thank Westwood School's first grade class for helping with the Coat Cover-up Drive. They donated many good used children's coats for needy kids in the area.



Employee SPOTLIGHT

Renee Allen is Mitchell EMC's January Employee Spotlight. Renee is a Customer Representative in the Camilla Office, and has been employed with MEMC for 21 years.

"On a daily basis I get the opportunity to speak with our consumers. I am truly blessed to work for an organization that prays before meals and meetings. I really love my job and feel very thankful to come to work here at Mitchell EMC every day," said Renee.

"One of my memorable events in my tenure at Mitchell EMC was Y-2-K and the fear that all computers were going to crash. We rolled in the New Year from 1999 to 2000 and worked around the clock in case of technical or grid failure. Thankfully, nothing happened and it was a smooth transition."



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



Butter Pecan Bars

Bar Ingredients:

1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup granulated sugar
1 stick melted butter
1-1/2 cups self-rising flour
1 cup chopped pecans
1 teaspoon vanilla

Icing Ingredients:

1-1/2 cups 10X powdered sugar
1/2 stick melted butter
1 teaspoon canned milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup chopped pecans

Grease a 9" pan and preheat oven to 350°. Add the bar ingredients in order one at a time, folding after each ingredient with a wooden spoon. Bake for 20-30 minutes until firm. You can cut the bars while they are slightly warm. Mix all ingredients for the icing and pour over the cooked bars.

Thanks!

to **Suzanne Strickland**,
Mitchell 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.