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CAMILLA, GEORGIA
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Efficiency tips for outdoor shops and barns

By Meghaan Evans

There are many benefits to having an energy efficient outdoor shop or barn. Aside from saving energy, an efficient outdoor building can keep the environment around your structure healthy and safe; save money on your water bill; keep your animals happier and healthier; and save you from costly structural repairs.

Whether you are looking to build a new structure, or make changes to an existing structure, there are many ways you can make your outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient.

Are you planning to build a new structure on your property? Follow these tips to achieve energy efficiency:

- **Location matters.** If possible, carefully consider where you build your shop or barn. Consider drainage, sun exposure and how the building may affect your neighbors.
- **Start with a sustainable design plan.** A sustainable design plan, according to the U.S. General Services Administration, includes the ability to use environmentally preferable products; protect and conserve water; enhance indoor environmental quality; and optimize

operational and maintenance practices.

- **If you are hiring a contractor** to help build your structure, make sure you look for companies who specialize in “green” buildings and energy efficient practices.
- **Choose efficient building methods.** Pole barns offer reliable shelter without costly excavation, concrete foundations or general site disruption.

Follow these tips to make energy efficient upgrades to an existing structure:

- Replace indoor lighting with energy efficient LED bulbs.
- Ensure your existing structure has adequate insulation levels.
- Choose outdoor lighting designed to be energy efficient, and install motion detectors to reduce energy consumption when not in use.
- Plant trees around your metal shed or barn. In colder climates, trees act as a windbreak, and in warmer climates, trees have a natural cooling effect that can reduce temperatures in your metal building 3 to 6 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Consider adding a ceiling fan to circulate air. Typically, there is a 2 degree Fahrenheit temperature increase for every one-foot increase in ceiling height. A ceiling fan can help keep warm air close to the ground in the winter, and circulate fresher, cooler air in the summer. Not only will this help with energy costs, it will also help keep the air in the building from becoming hot and stagnant, which will keep harmful bacteria from building and will keep insects at bay.

To learn more about how to make your outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient, contact the energy experts at Mitchell EMC.



Whether you are looking to build a new structure, or make changes to an existing structure, there are many ways you can make your outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient.

Meghaan Evans 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.

A Community Partner Since 1937



Do You Have Electrical Debris?

Due to the widespread damage from the January tornadoes, Mitchell EMC encourages our members to report storm related debris in your area. This would include broken poles, wires and other related utility devices. Please call our office at 229-336-5221 or 800-479-6034.

Is your contact information correct?

If we have your correct phone number, address and email address:

- Reporting power outages is easier and more accurate.
- You'll get up-to-date information from us.
- We're better able to give you excellent service.



Take a look at the phone number listed on your monthly electric bill. If it's not correct, please contact us by calling 229-336-5221 or 800-479-6034.

Power strips vs. surge protectors

By Tom Tate

As the proliferation of electronics impacts our daily lives, we realize there simply are not enough outlets in our homes. This is particularly true for older homes. As a result, we end up with a number of “outlet expanders,” more commonly known as power strips.

Power strips are generic and fulfill a very simple function. They are inexpensive, and the quality, I suspect, is on par with the price.

Keeping this in mind, let’s look at factors to consider when purchasing a power strip or a surge protector, the power strip’s more talented cousin.

Important tip: Make sure you know the amperage rating of the outlet into which you are connecting the strip and other equipment. A residential circuit can overload if you are not careful.

Purchasing a power strip:

- Look for power strips with a built-in circuit breaker. If you connect too many electronics and devices, the strip will kick out the circuit breaker rather than causing the breaker in your electric panel to trip.
- Pay attention to the orientation of the outlets. The typical design is along the length of the strip, facing the bottom or end of the strip. I recommend power strips with the outlets perpendicular to the length of the strip.
- Get a smart strip. These are becoming more common and less expensive. With smart strips, one outlet serves as a master, receiving power all the time. The other outlets do not receive power until the master device is turned on. This is ideal for home entertainment setups.

If you are connecting expensive electronics, you may want to consider a surge protector. Here, price is even more important because a cheap surge protector can be worse than none at all for two reasons. One, they use cheap, small surge

fighting components. Two, these components can fail and the strip still will provide power, all without any indication that its protective side is gone.

Like power strips, there are some key factors to consider when buying a surge protector.



- Go for a significant joule (jewel) rating. This is a measure of how much energy it can withstand.
- Cable and internet connection protection. You may want to consider this for your entertainment and computing needs as surges can enter via any wired connection. Be sure the protector is designed to handle a digital television. Otherwise, it can cause pixilation if it’s only designed for analog signals.
- Indicator light that shows if protection has burned out.
- The same outlet orientation as previously mentioned.
- Power conditioning feature (for PCs, this is a nice-to-have feature but not a necessity).
- A smart capability as mentioned above.

Power strips and surge protectors are worth the investment when you follow these simple suggestions. Don’t get “burned” by purchasing cheap, inefficient strips and protectors. Pun intended.

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.

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. There are only two safe ways to connect a standby generator to your equipment.

Stationary Generator:

An approved generator transfer switch, which keeps your house circuits separate from the electric co-op, should be installed by a professional.

Portable Generator:

Plug appliances directly in the outlet provided on the generator.



Set up and run your generator in a well-ventilated area outside the home. Make sure it's out and away from your garage, doors, windows and vents. The carbon monoxide generated is deadly.

Use a heavy-duty extension cord to connect electric appliances to the outlet on the generator. Start the generator first before connecting appliances.

Source: SafeElectricity.org

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Keep warm summer air outside where it belongs! Add caulk and weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.

Source: *U.S. Dept. of Energy*

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



Easy Chocolate Ice Cream

Ingredients:

1 large tub of Cool Whip, thawed
1/2 gallon whole chocolate milk
1 can of sweetened condensed milk
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
Dash of salt

Mix all ingredients together. Pour into ice cream freezer and chill until ready to freeze.

Thanks!

to **Carol Cox**,
Worth 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.