

# INTER-COUNTY ENERGY



www.intercountyenergy.net

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## Look up to bring down electric bills

*Stop ceiling air leaks to keep your home comfortable and energy efficient this winter*

Cooler days and rustling leaves are sure signs that it's time to begin preparing your home for the winter ahead. Make sure this year's fall fix-ups include projects that can help lower your electric bills.

Where to start? Look up, suggests April Burgess, residential energy advisor at Inter-County Energy.

"On cold winter days, leaks in the ceiling of your home let heated air escape and cold air enter," says Burgess. "By repairing common ceiling leaks, up to one-third of a home's overall energy loss can be prevented."

She suggests scouting these common culprits for ceiling air leaks:

- **Recessed lights.** Older lights installed in rooms below an unheated attic can allow big air leaks. Consider replacing them with lights designated as I.C.A.T. (insulated cover, air tight) to prevent some heat loss.
- **Bathroom fans.** Use high-temperature caulk to seal gap between fan and drywall.
- **Chimney.** A chimney that runs from the basement through the attic should be sealed at both the basement ceiling and attic floor.



- **Sewer vent pipes.** A sewer vent pipe that runs vertically from the basement through the attic should be sealed at both the basement ceiling and attic floor.
- **Pull-down doors.** Install latch bolts and weather-stripping to make attic access doors and stairs airtight. Add an insulated cover to the back of the pull-down door.

As home improvement projects go, sealing air leaks in your ceiling is relatively easy and inexpensive. Inter-County Energy owner-members can access step-by-step instructions for preventing ceiling leaks at [togetherwesaveky.com](http://togetherwesaveky.com). Togetherwesaveky.com, a service of Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, offers energy efficiency information, resources and an energy tip library.

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ENERGY COOPERATIVE

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# It's only October: Should you turn on the heat?

It's tempting to declare the first downright chilly evening of the autumn the official first day of heating season. Before you turn the heat on at home, however, consider:

- Bundling up in layers of clothing, a sweater or a cozy throw while you're watching TV in the evenings.
- Throwing a couple of extra blankets on each bed to keep everyone toasty warm overnight.
- Running ceiling fans in the bedrooms. If you reverse the spin of the blades to clockwise, they will push warm air—which rises—back down into your room.
- Opening the drapes/curtains/blinds on sunny days to let the sun's warmth into your rooms. The fabric on furniture and carpets will absorb and retain some of the heat into the evenings. Close the window coverings once the sun goes down, though, so cool air can't get into the house.

- Gathering everyone into a single room for some family fun and running a space heater in that room only.
- Wearing socks or shoes indoors. Keeping your feet warm will help your whole body feel warmer.
- Doing household chores after dark. The movement involved with the work will keep you warm. And running your dishwasher, washing machine and clothes dryer after dark will add a bit of heat to the air.
- Resisting the temptation to warm up your home by lighting a fire in your wood-burning fireplace. Most of the heat it produces goes up the chimney, along with any warm air that's already in the house.

Don't turn on your heater until you really need it this fall. Instead, conserve some energy by keeping your family warm in other ways.



NEW AFRICA/ADBE STOCK

## Levelized Billing

### As Easy as 1-2-3!

Inter-County Energy offers Levelized Billing as a way to even out your monthly electric payments (for members with service 12 months or longer at your current location). You will be able to smooth out the high and low seasonal fluctuations in your electric bill. It also assists you in budgeting your monthly electrical expense.

Find out more at [www.intercountyenergy.net](http://www.intercountyenergy.net).  
(859) 236-4561 or 1-888-266-7322



# Avoid a Halloween decoration disaster

Pumpkins, witches and ghosts, oh my! About half of U.S. homeowners say they plan to celebrate Halloween with spooky outdoor lighting and decorations. If you're among them, don't forget to prioritize safety.

Dan Hitchcock, vice president member services, offers these ideas for avoiding a decoration disaster while creating frighteningly festive lawn displays.

**Buy the right lights.** Lights and decorations should be rated for outdoor use, meaning they are waterproof or water resistant.

**Inspect closely.** Discard old decorations that have cracked or frayed wires, broken or bare sockets, or loose connections.

**Read first.** Read the manufacturer's instructions regarding proper installation and maintenance. Find out how many strings can be connected together. *Tip:* When using quality LED lights, you can safely connect 20-plus light strings together.

**Use the right extension cord.** Use an extension cord that's rated for outdoor use. For strings of lights, use 16-gauge

extension cord for light runs of 25 feet or less. Go with a heavier 14-gauge cord for runs over 25 feet.

**Attach carefully.** Use zip ties or insulated staples to fasten electric lights securely to trees, porches or other firm supports. Don't use nails or tacks that can puncture cords.

**Plug into GFCIs.** Plug electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).

**Light walkways.** Install rope lights to provide well-lit walkways for trick-or-treaters.

**Avoid a trip hazard.** Don't run extension cords across doorways or sidewalks. Tape down or clearly mark where electrical cords are located.

**Prevent fires.** Set up electric decorations a safe distance from anything flammable like dry leaves. Have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it.

**Turn it off.** Turn out all lights and decorations before leaving home or going to bed. *Tip:* Use a timer to automatically turn lights on and off.

However you decorate your home for Halloween, keep it safe to ensure a "boo-tiful" night of festive fun.



# Why maintaining your furnace is important

Thinking about saving a few bucks by skipping the pre-winter service on your heating system? Too busy this fall to bother with a maintenance visit before it gets really cold outside?

Time and money spent on preventative maintenance now could save your family from a cold overnight if your heating system has a problem in the dead of winter.

Here are four benefits of annual furnace maintenance:

1. A well-maintained heating system typically operates with more energy efficiency than one that must work harder to overcome any problems you're ignoring. An efficient furnace will use less energy, which could save

you money on heating bills.

2. If your furnace is relatively new, your warranty could require regular maintenance.

3. Your HVAC technician can identify and repair problems now that could cause a breakdown later—when you least expect it. Dealing with an emergency is far more costly, time consuming and inconvenient than having a tech come to your house for



an hour or so to do some preventive maintenance.

4. Furnaces don't last forever, but you can extend the life of yours if you keep it tuned up.



## The cooperative difference

### OUR MISSION

The mission of Inter-County Energy Cooperative is to provide long-term valued electrical energy and services to our members through a culture of safety, accountability, innovation, integrity, and commitment to community.

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### OFFICE HOURS: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

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Though the people who founded Inter-County Energy in 1937 worked incredibly hard and overcame many obstacles to bring electric service to your area, in one respect they had it easier.

It was easier for the first consumer-members of Inter-County Energy to see the difference the co-op made in their lives because it was the revolutionary difference they had just witnessed, literally a transformation from darkness and light, from drudgery to modern conveniences, from primitive labor to innovative progress.

Of course, the cooperative difference was more obvious in the first generation of existence because everyone could remember what it was like before our electric co-op existed.

Now the hard part. In 2022, your membership in Inter-County Energy is just as relevant and important as it was for our grandparents and great-grandparents in 1937. But it's not as obvious because electric service is nearly universal in America today, and it has been for as long as most of us have been alive.

You have probably read or heard the phrase: "Inter-County Energy is a member-owned cooperative," but what does that even mean? When folks move into our service area from places that are served by an investor-owned utility, they can sometimes find the concept of "member-ownership" confusing or hard to believe.

As a cooperative business, our main goal is to provide safe, affordable and reliable electricity to you, the co-op member.



Not only does Inter-County Energy belong to the people we serve, we are also led by a democratically elected board. Our board of directors are not out-of-town shareholders selected because of their stock portfolios. Our board members serve to represent you and your interests.

That is why Inter-County Energy works so hard to keep rates as low as possible, and why we sometimes ask you to speak up as a co-op member so policymakers and energy regulators in Frankfort and Washington understand what impacts our ability to provide electric service as reliably, safely and economically as possible.

In short, we are your consumer advocate.

There are many special interest groups with a wide variety of missions and campaigns that sometimes are not in the best interests of our membership. As your co-op, Inter-County Energy is committed to serving you.

We hope you enjoy this special *Kentucky Living Member's Guide*. We are truly all in this together.