

# Cooperative Review

AUGUST 2022



## Tips on Saving Money with Water Heating

Whether it is spending a few extra minutes in the shower daily, leaving the water running while washing dishes, or washing clothes in hot water, many of us could benefit from learning how to improve our water consumption habits. Over time, these habits add up, so it is no surprise that water heating is the second-largest energy expense in your home—accounting for about 18% of energy bills right after heating and cooling. However, by becoming more aware of how you use your heated water and making small adjustments, you can save on water heating costs that will pay off in the long run.



According to the Department of Energy, the tips below can help you conserve hot water and reduce your water heating expenses:

- **Use Less Hot Water.** Try not to run hot water excessively while taking showers. Shortening showers by a few minutes can save hundreds of gallons of hot water each month.
- **Install low-flow faucets and shower heads.** Consider replacing old shower heads with an energy-efficient low-flow shower head that produces 1.5 to 1.75 gallons of water per minute, which is less than the standard of 2.5 to 3.5 gallons per minute.
- **Wash Clothes With Cold Water Instead of Hot.** You can save up to 40 cents per load by using cold water.
- **Check the size of your water heater.** Make sure that your water heater is sized appropriately for the size of your family. Most homes come with a standard 40-gallon tank, but if you have four or more family members living in your home, you may need to upsize the tank.
- **Insulate your hot water pipes and water heater.** By insulating the water heater pipes, water will arrive at the

faucet 2 to 4 degrees warmer, meaning you won't have to wait as long for the water to heat up, thus saving water and money.

- **Turn Down the Water Heater's Thermostat.** Before adjusting the water heater's thermostat, cut off the

power at its breaker. For most households, 120 degrees F° is sufficient. However, for those with higher thermostat settings, remember with each 10-degree reduction, you can save up to 5% on your water heating costs.

- Turn off the water heater when you're on vacation. Union Power promises to provide exceptional service to its members. That

includes looking out for you by helping you save on your monthly energy bill—that's the Cooperative difference!

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Visit [union-power.com/energysavingscalculators](https://union-power.com/energysavingscalculators) and try out our water heater calculator to estimate your annual water heater savings.



## Save a Life: Avoid Distractions While Driving

While driving, we could hear that “ding” on our phone, alerting us about a text or call, and we sometimes feel the urgent need to check it. Of course, we know we shouldn’t, but we reason that we’re going to make an exception—just this once.

So, why do we indulge in behavior we know to be wrong, dangerous, and in many states, illegal? According to AAA research, most people feel they are better-than-average drivers. After all, we have busy lives and are accustomed to multitasking. But mounds of research and thousands of deaths every year prove otherwise.

August is Back to School Safety Month. As a new school year begins with young drivers and school buses back on the road, it’s an excellent time to remind folks of the dangers of distracted driving.

Using a phone while driving creates enormous potential for injuries and fatalities. Distractions take a motorist’s attention off driving, making a driver miss critical events, objects, and cues, potentially leading to a crash.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one of every 10 fatal crashes in the U.S. involves distracted driving, resulting in more than 3,000 deaths annually. This statistic is heartbreaking, considering so many of these accidents could be easily avoided if we’d put down our phones while driving.

Distracted driving is considered any activity that diverts our attention, including texting or talking on the phone and adjusting the navigation or

entertainment system. Texting is by far one of the most dangerous distractions. Sending or reading one text takes your eyes off the road for an average of five seconds. At 55 mph, that’s like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

In addition to refraining from texting while driving, we can help keep the roads safe by moving over for first responders and other emergency vehicles. Further, if you see utility crews conducting work near the roadside, we’d encourage you to move over when possible and give them extra space to perform their work safely.

At Union Power, safety is critical in everything we do for our employees and the members of the communities we serve. We routinely remind our crews of the dangers of distracted driving. We hope you’ll have similar conversations with your teens who may be new to the roadways and susceptible to the lure of technology.

Let’s work together to keep everyone safe on the roads. But, remember: that text can wait, and waiting might save a life.





# Play it safe near grain bins.

When moving equipment, be aware of power lines and maintain at least a 10-foot clearance to ensure safety. Follow all guidelines set by the National Electrical Safety Code.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

An easy way to save energy is to seal air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls in your home. You can also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back. Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.



## EV Expectations Vs. Reality

When thinking about an electric vehicle, also known as an EV, a thought that might come to mind for most people is intimidation of the unknown. As the world of technology evolves daily, there is more conversation about EVs. However, with lots of interest in EVs, there come questions, concerns, and opinions on the matter.



**Logan Nichols**  
Communications Associate

To the uneducated mind on EVs, one might think, “Oh, that car won’t get very far before running out of battery,” or “The car must be complicated to drive.” Some questions are, what if I need to charge the car away from home? Is it worth it to me to buy one? I thought the same way before driving an EV myself.

Before driving an EV, I knew very little about it. I knew that it didn’t require gas and that you would need to charge it. That’s it. However, that changed after experiencing a drive in a Chevrolet Bolt.

EVs are vehicles that are powered strictly through batteries underneath the car, so no gas is required. They charge simply by an outlet. Although you can charge your EV in your everyday outlet, such as your toaster, for a quicker charge, you will want to install a more powerful outlet. This allows for a more efficient charge. When purchasing an EV, you want to install an EV charger into your home, whether outside or in a garage. This way, an EV owner can charge at their home and get into a healthy routine of charging the EV every night, just like you would a cell phone. In my experience, plugging and unplugging an EV is like any other outlet: simple and nothing to it.

EVs can travel farther than you think. During my 45-minute drive, I covered only 30 miles of road. The EV still had about 230 miles left to go in its charge. What do you do if you have to charge while away from your home charging station? Simple, find a public charging station. With an app on your smartphone, you can easily find where each charging station may be. The cost to charge varies depending on the charging station. However, no more stops at gas stations.

While an EV is on and running, you won’t hear a sound coming from the car. When you start driving, it’s smooth.

Very smooth. The car has speed and is easily controlled like any other vehicle. EVs are very simplistic. There are no controls that make you feel like you’re on a rocket ship, and the car’s interior doesn’t make you feel like you are from the future. It’s just an average vehicle. The only exception is; that it could make you feel too cool for school.

Nonetheless, there are drawbacks to EVs. EVs are “local” vehicles. With EVs only able to go so far until the battery runs out, halfway through your road trip, you might have to make a 1-2-hour stop to charge. Another downside is the cost of the EV itself. The EV market can be expensive, but as more people become EV owners, the hope is the price will decrease. Finally, electric vehicles are relatively new to the technological society, so for most EV developers, some kinks are still being figured out.

So, now you might ask yourself: “Is an EV right for me?” There are lots of factors to consider before purchasing an electric vehicle. You must ask all the important questions that are relative to you. Reaching out to your Co-op before making this purchase is a great idea. Union Power has great resources to help you determine if it’s the right purchase.

The best thing one could do is to become educated about EVs. Here only the bare minimum is presented about EVs, but there is so much more to educate someone about. Learning about EVs can make your expectations match reality. Happy driving!



To access our Electric Vehicle calculator, visit [union-power.com/energysavingscalculators](https://union-power.com/energysavingscalculators).



# Call 811 Before You Dig!

August 11th is National 811 Day.

**T**oday, more and more of the utility companies that supply your home or business with power, heat, water, telephone, sewer, gas, and cable television service are delivering those services underground. Unfortunately, it is also possible that these buried service lines are close to the surface, making digging a dangerous endeavor.

Fortunately, you can find out where public utility-owned lines are buried on your property. So, before starting any home improvement or digging project, at least three full days prior to digging, contact 811 by phone or online. Making this call allows time for the underground utilities to mark their lines so that you can avoid the lines during excavation. Then, NC811 contacts all local utilities that might have underground lines running through the area you plan to dig. Those utilities will have professional locators mark their buried lines free of charge, allowing you a hazardous-free experience.

Remember, it's important to know what's below before you dig—always call 811.



For more information about safe digging and the "Call Before You Dig" process, visit [nc811.org](http://nc811.org).

A black and white poster for "Bright Ideas Education Grants". It features a stylized sun logo on the left and two detailed line drawings of birds. The text "Bright Ideas EDUCATION GRANTS" is in the upper left. In the center, "EARLY BIRD APPLY NOW" is written in large, bold, yellow and white letters. Below this, it says "EARLY BIRD DEADLINE: AUG 15, 2022" and "FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$100 GIFT CARD". At the bottom left is a QR code with the UnionPower Cooperative logo. At the bottom right is the "UnionPower Cooperative" logo with the tagline "A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative".

**Bright Ideas**  
EDUCATION GRANTS

**EARLY BIRD**  
**APPLY NOW**

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE: AUG 15, 2022  
FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$100 GIFT CARD

UnionPower Cooperative

**UnionPower Cooperative**  
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# The Experience of a Lifetime

## Summer Basketball Camp Scholarships



Union Power Cooperative is proud to announce that Neeya Patel of Piedmont Middle School and Emmanuel Ubaldo Aguilera of Mount Pleasant Middle School were awarded the Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarships this past June. Neeya attended the Wolfpack Women's camp from June 19-22 at NC State. Emmanuel attended the Carolina Men's basketball camp at UNC-Chapel Hill from June 18-22.



Neeya Patel

Neeya says, "I had an amazing experience at the NC State Wolfpack Women's basketball camp! I walked in the stadium and immediately felt the school spirit. The coaches were nice and improved my play. I got better at skills like defending. I definitely grew as a player! Staying in the dorms was really fun! My favorite part was playing basketball 24/7!"

to me and to my teammates. I enjoyed my time at the basketball camp, I even got to see Michael Jordan! I hope that more kids get to experience this chance of a lifetime."

Neeya and Emmanuel were among 50 middle school students statewide to receive scholarships this year and were selected based on an application process that included academics, extracurricular activities, and an essay.

Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships are available to rising 6th and 7th graders every year and are a part of Union Power's commitment to community.



Emmanuel Ubaldo Aguilera

Emmanuel says, "I really want to thank Union Power for the opportunity that was granted to me. The basketball camp really helped and I learned a lot of new things that I can use moving forward in my basketball future. I am grateful for the opportunity. The coaches were really nice

## ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE.

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other goods and services. Looking at the price of these items, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value.



**\$6.39**

COST OF A SINGLE LARGE  
WHITE CHOCOLATE MOCHA LATTE



**\$5.51**

OUR MEMBER'S DAILY AVERAGE  
COST TO POWER THEIR ENTIRE  
HOME

For more information, visit [union-power.com](https://union-power.com).



## Electrical Safety Tips for Hunters

We encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.

- Keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located where you hunt.
- Be vigilant in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Never place deer stands on utility poles.
- Never place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment.

## Don't Sizzle This Summer!

The last thing you need during the dog days of summer is a broken cooling system. That's why Union Services is here to help keep you comfortably cool and save you money with a new Trane high-efficiency system for your home.

704-283-9047 | [savewithunion.com](https://savewithunion.com)

We are your heating, cooling, and electrical experts serving the **Union Power community**.



Scan the QR code or visit [savewithunion.com/request-estimate](https://savewithunion.com/request-estimate) to request a FREE estimate.





# Right-of-Way Clearing

During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews in your neighborhood: Vendors: ABC Professional Tree Services, Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Lewis Tree Service, Lucas Tree Experts, and Xylem Inc.

**Stanly County:** Barbee's Grove Rd, Bethel Church Rd, Big Bear Rd, Booger Hollar Rd, Bridgeport Rd, Burris Rd, Coley Store Rd, Creekview St, Crestview Ln, Ebird Rd, Frog Pond Rd, Gold Rush Tr, Graham Rd, Heavenly Path, Hinson Farm Ln, Little Creek Rd, Lorch Rd, Maple St, Meadowcreek Church Rd, Newsome Rd, Oakgrove St, Pineridge St, Quail Run Rd, Reed Mine Tr, Sam Rd, Scout Rd, St Martin Rd, Twin Oaks Cir, Wayne Dr, Woodfield Rd, Woodwinds St

**Union County:** Ansonville Rd, Antioch Church Rd, Antioch Ct, Arant Rd, Autumn Dr, Bent Tree Tr, Blakeney Rd, Bonds Grove Church Rd, Bud Plyler Rd, Canal Rd, Cane Creek Rd, Earl Griffin Rd, Eden Hollow Ln, Four Wood Dr, Foxhound Ln, George Guin Rd, Glenwood Dr, Greywood Ln, Hamilton Crossroads Rd, HB Starnes Rd, Helms Funderburk Rd, Hillside Dr, Horne Rd, Huntington Dr, Janes Ln, Kelly Autry Rd, Kensington Dr, Lake Dr, Lake Monroe Dr, Landsford Rd, Lonnie Aldridge Rd, Lucy Shortcut Rd, Macedonia Church Rd, Marvin Watkins Rd, McCall Rd, North Lake Dr, Oak Dr, Oak Forest Circle, Oakwood Dr, Old Goldmine Rd, Old Pageland Marshville Rd, Old Pageland Monroe Rd, Old Still Rd, Page-Mar Dr, Plainview Dr, Ranch Dr, Rock Hill Church Rd, S Providence Rd, Smith Town Rd, Stack Rd, Three Knotts Rd, Three Wood Dr,



Union Rd, Walden Ln, Waxhaw Marvin Rd, Whispering Hollow Rd, Wingard Rd, Wolf Pond Rd, Wood Duck Point Rd



For more information about Union Power's vegetation management program or tree trimming practices, please call 704-289-3145 and speak with Wil Ortiz (ext. 3323) or Carrie Lorenz-Efird (ext. 3291). Visit [union-power.com](http://union-power.com) for monthly right-of-way clearing updates.

# 10.08.22

## ANNUAL MEETING

LEE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

# SAVE *the* DATE

**Union Power**  
Cooperative



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

The Cooperative Review newsletter is published monthly for the members and friends of Union Power Cooperative.

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**Exec. Vice President & General Manager**

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