



**East Mississippi Electric Power Association**

Louisville 662.773.5741 Meridian 601.581.8600 Quitman 601.776.6271 DeKalb 601.743.2641

## Our business is all about your quality of life

Another year is rapidly closing and we should be thankful. Even though many financial hardships exist in our communities, we have been spared the damage of major storms. We have often been the recipient of help from other electric cooperatives from around the country when major storms like hurricanes and ice storms have struck. But within the past year we were able to return the favor to others.

Our crews were part of a contingent of crews who traveled to Kentucky to assist with repairs from a severe ice storm. We sent two different groups of crews, about 50 men and equipment each time, over the course of a month.

What these men found were grateful people who were suffering for long peri-



*"At EMEPA...we consider it a privilege to be your electric service provider."*

General Manager Wayne Henson

ods without electricity. Upon their return, they told me stories about acts of kindness shown to them by these residents.

Even though they found themselves in a virtual winter wonderland of ice and snow, it didn't take these men long to see past the awesome beauty of

nature and recognize the human need. And our crews responded as only caring professionals can. Short-term friendships that form important memories are the results of these encounters.

Our business is not about energy; it's about people and the quality of life we help provide. People like you make our efforts worthwhile. We consider it a privilege to be your electric service provider.

We wish you a happy holiday season.



We are now on **Twitter!**

Follow @EMEPA for tips on energy efficiency and outage updates from **East Mississippi Electric Power Association.**

**Twitter**



## Do-it-yourself home energy audits

### (mini) Home Energy Audit

Clip this list and check each area of your home to see if you're using energy efficiently. Every nook and cranny holds potential inefficiencies, so it pays to be thorough! Visit [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov) for more information on what's listed below.



#### INSULATION and DUCTWORK



##### Attic

- Insulation spread evenly
- Insulation in good condition
- Attic vents are unblocked by insulation
- Attic access doors properly insulated and sealed.

##### Walls and floors

- Minimum R-value of 19 for perimeter walls
- Minimum R-value of 25 for under-floor insulation

##### Basement

- Ductwork insulated and sealed
- Hot water pipes insulated
- Water heater insulated, if in unconditioned space

*R-Value indicates an insulation's resistance to heat flow (the higher the better). Insulation should meet R-values recommended for your specific climate.*

#### HEATING and COOLING



- Air supply vents are unblocked by furniture or curtains
- Return air registers are unblocked by furniture
- Return air handler filters are clean
- HVAC system has had annual maintenance check-up
- Programmable thermostat installed and programmed

#### AIR INFILTRATION



##### Windows and Doors

- Windows close and lock properly
- Window gaskets in good condition
- Window trim sealed and painted
- Doors properly weather stripped
- Doors close and latch properly

##### Exterior Penetrations

Plumbing and wire openings sealed:

- Kitchen cabinets
- Bathroom cabinets
- Utility room

- Fireplace damper sealed tightly

#### APPLIANCES and LIGHTING



- Refrigerator condenser coils clean
- Refrigerator door gasket tight
- Unused refrigerators and freezers unplugged
- Water heater set to 120 degrees or below
- Dishwasher energy saving feature turned on
- Washing machine loads run with cold water when possible



##### Well Pump

- Operating properly
- Good pressure
- No leaks

##### Lighting

- Compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) used
- Outdoor lighting automatically triggered by motion or dark

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

One of the first steps to making your home more efficient involves understanding how it uses energy. Just as a doctor has to do a thorough examination of a patient before writing a prescription, your home will need a good inspection before most inefficiencies can be identified and corrected.

EMEPA offers a professional energy audit conducted by a trained and certified energy advisor. Our advisor provides advice on energy conservation measures, and will systematically inspect your home, creating a checklist of potential weatherization improvements.

You can easily conduct a basic home energy audit with a simple but diligent walk-through. When auditing your home, keep a checklist of areas you have inspected and problems you find. Full lists are available online—Touchstone Energy Cooperatives' Home Energy Saver (at [www.touchstoneenergy.com](http://www.touchstoneenergy.com)) and the Alliance to Save Energy Home Energy Checkup (search for it at [www.ase.org](http://www.ase.org)) are both useful—and most trouble spots can be found in a few key areas.

#### Locating air leaks

First, make a list of obvious air leaks (drafts). The potential energy savings from reducing drafts in a home may range from 5 percent to 30 percent per year, with a much more comfortable residence the result. Check for indoor air leaks, such as gaps along a baseboard or edge of the flooring and at junctures of walls and ceiling.

Inspect windows and doors for air leaks. If you can rattle them, movement means possible air leaks. If you can see daylight around a door or window frame, then the door or window has a leak; you can usually seal these through caulking or weather stripping.

On the outside, inspect all areas where two different building materials meet, including all exterior corners, siding and chimney junctures, and areas where the foundation and the bottom of exterior brick or siding join. You should plug and caulk any holes or penetrations for faucets, pipes, electric outlets, and wiring.

Also, look for cracks and holes in the mortar, foundation, and siding, and seal them with the appropriate material.

Check the exterior caulking around doors and windows, and see whether exterior storm doors and primary doors seal tightly.

When sealing any home, be aware of indoor air pollution and appliance "backdrafts." Backdrafting occurs when various appliances that burn fuels and exhaust fans in the home compete for air. An exhaust fan may pull combustion gases back into the living space. This can obviously create a very dangerous and unhealthy situation.

#### Insulation

Heat loss through the ceiling and walls in your home could be very large if insulation levels are less than the recommended minimum. When your house was built, the builder likely installed the amount of insulation recommended (if any) at that time. Given today's energy prices (and future prices that will probably be higher), your insulation might be inadequate, especially if you have an older home. Online energy audits will provide more details on checking insulation levels in the attic, walls, and basement.

#### Heating/cooling equipment

Inspect heating and cooling equipment annually, or as recommended by the manufacturer. If you have a forced-air furnace, check filters and replace them as needed. Generally, you should change them about once every month or two, especially during periods of high use. Have a professional check and clean your equipment once a year.

#### Lighting

On average, lighting accounts for about 10 percent of a home's electric bill. Examine the wattage size of the lightbulbs in your house. You may have 100-watt (or larger) bulbs where 60 or 75 watts would do. You should also consider compact fluorescent lightbulbs for areas where lights are left on for hours at a time.

More information on both do-it-yourself and professional energy audits can be found at [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov). You may also contact EMEPA at (601) 581-8600 to speak with our Energy Use Advisor.

*Article courtesy of the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy*

# Deck the halls with energy-efficient lighting

Christmas lights: from stringing them around the tree, hanging them from the eaves, decorating our landscape with them, or using spotlights in our front yards or electric candles in our windows, lights play an important role in just about everyone's holiday decorating.

They may make your holiday season brighter, but they can also make your electric bill higher. This Christmas, give yourself a gift by looking at some energy- and money-saving alternatives to traditional lights.

## Get the LED out

Many companies are now offering light-emitting diode (LED) holiday lights. The LED lights are more energy efficient than incandescent lights, using a fraction of the wattage. They also last longer by a two-to-one margin according



to *Consumer Reports*. The LED bulbs are much less likely to break than the glass bulbs used in incandescent lights. LEDs are also safer than incandescent since the

LED bulbs don't heat up no matter how long they're left on. In fact, according to *Consumer Reports*, the only category where incandescent lights come out on top is brightness, but even there, LEDs are gaining ground.

## Try some fiber

The Energy Ideas Clearinghouse at Washington State University says the fiber-optic artificial tree is another good holiday energy saver. These use a single incandescent bulb that transmits light along small fibers, which emit light on different places around the tree. Again, the

lights are cool to the touch, making them safer and more efficient, depending on the size of the single bulb used.

## Comparing the costs

While LEDs might be a little more costly up front, they'll save you money right away—and for the long haul.

## Try some today

Holiday LED lights of all kinds are available at various local retailers. Visit Energy Ideas Clearinghouse for more information on energy-saving holiday lighting at [www.energyideas.org](http://www.energyideas.org).

At EMEPA, we care about energy efficiency and helping our members save money. Have a safe and affordable holiday season.

# Invest in safety with tamper-resistant outlets

Hairpins, the building blocks for many fancy "dos," are perfect for holding back unruly tresses. But these slender, metal objects are also easy for children to manipulate. As a result, hairpins are the dominant household item improperly stuck into electrical outlets.

Each year, approximately 2,400 children—an average of seven a day—receive emergency room treatment for injuries caused by inserting conductive material into electrical outlets, according to a 10-year report released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). More than 70 percent of these incidents occur at home, with adult supervision typically present.

Hairpins are involved 32 percent of the time, followed by keys, 17 percent and fingers, 12 percent. Other common culprits include pins, screws, nails, twist ties and paper clips.

The end result? About 95 percent of the time children receive a burn, according to CPSC. Though ranging in severity, a significant number of serious and fatal burns occur, and even minor injuries can

leave emotional trauma. Pediatric burns can be particularly serious, because a child's skin is thin and offers little resistance to electric flow or heat.

The danger of electrical outlets isn't new; parents often use plastic outlet caps to cover outlets when "child-proofing" a home. Unfortunately, the Electrical Safety Foundation, Inc. (ESFI) claims plastic caps are not the safest option since they can easily be removed by a young child. Instead, ESFI suggests installing tamper-resistant outlets.

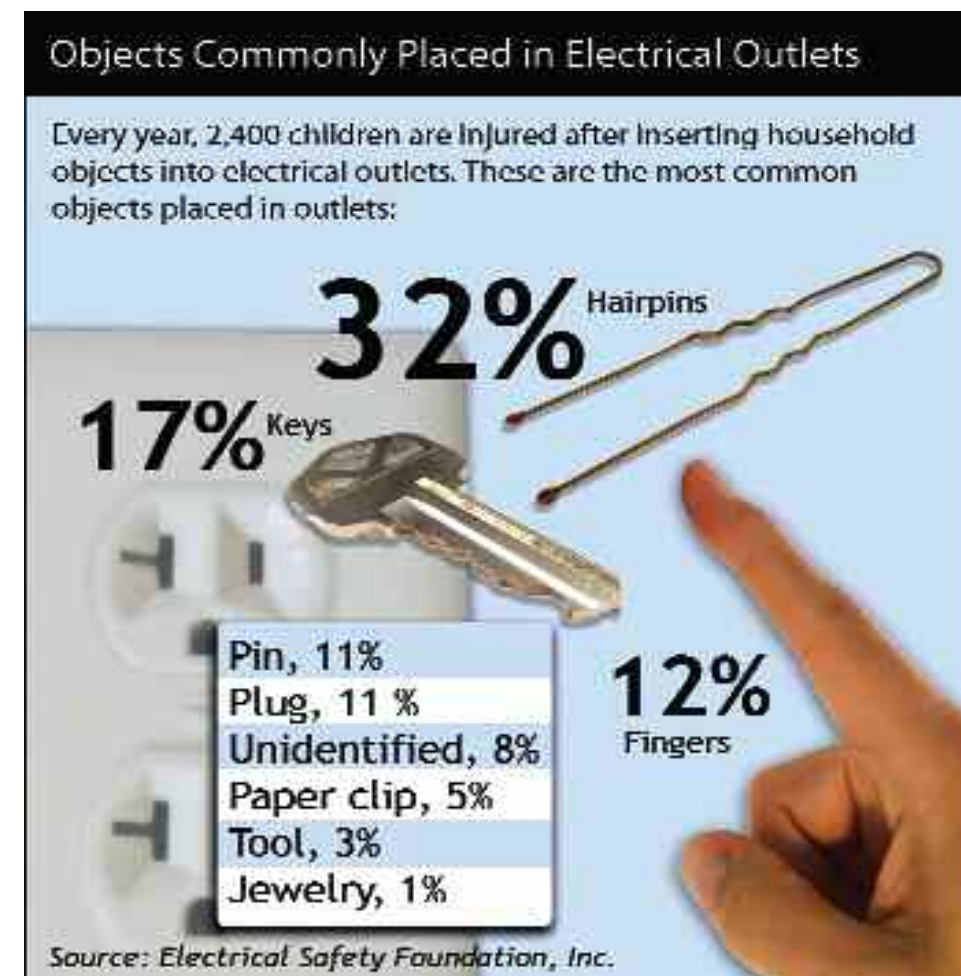
Although normal looking, these types of outlets include a shutter mechanism to protect against harm from inserting foreign objects. The spring-loaded system only allows electricity to flow when you apply equal pressure to both sides of the outlet, as happens when you plug in an electrical device. During unused conditions, both shutters are closed.

For co-op consumers with brand new homes, tamper-resistant outlets may already have been installed; the 2008 National Electrical Code requires them. However, these outlets are cheap—costing as little as \$2

at some retailers—and can easily be incorporated into older homes.

A video from ESFI explaining how these outlets work can be viewed on YouTube: <http://bit.ly/safeoutlet>.

To learn more about tamper-resistant outlets, go to [www.childoutletsafety.org](http://www.childoutletsafety.org). Source: *Electrical Safety Foundation Inc., U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*



# Calendar of Events:

## November 19-January 2

Merrohope's Annual Trees of Christmas Tours  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
\$10; special pricing for children, senior citizens and groups

## December 3

Marion Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony  
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

## December 5

Merry Meridian Market  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Downtown Meridian  
Contact Connie Royal at 601-485-1944 for more information.

## Meridian Christmas Parade

5:30 p.m. Sponsored by Meridian Downtown Merchants Association and City of Meridian  
Contact Connie Royal at 601-485-1944 for more information.

## Antebellum Christmas Tour of Homes

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sponsored by Enterprise Woman's Club and Stonewall Historical Society  
Call 601-659-3435 or

601-659-0349 for more information.

## Quitman Christmas Parade

10:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Clarke County Chamber of Commerce  
Call 601-776-5701 for more information.

## December 6

Merry Merry Merrohope Brunch  
10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.  
\$30; Reservations required  
Contact Betty Lou Jones at 601-483-8439 for more information.

## December 7

DeKalb Christmas Parade  
5 p.m.  
Downtown DeKalb

## Louisville Christmas Parade

5:30 p.m.  
"Christmas Melodies"  
Call 662-773-3921 for more information.

## December 12

Stonewall Christmas Parade  
1 p.m.  
Call 601-659-3080 for more information.

## Carl Jackson Blue Grass Concert

4:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.  
Call 662-773-3921 for more information.

## Kris Kringle Mart

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Louisville  
Call 662-773-3921 for more information.

## December 17

Cider Sipping, City Shopping Day  
All day until 8 p.m.  
Louisville  
Call 662-773-3921 for more information.

## December 19

Enterprise Christmas Parade  
Call 601-659-7971 for more information.

# Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Recommended by  
East Mississippi Electric Power Association  
and the U.S. Department of Energy

Turn off kitchen, bath, and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking or bathing. When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.



# Happy Holidays

The love of the holiday season should not come only once a year, but every day of the year.



**C**elebrating the holiday season with family and friends reminds us of the many blessings that fill our lives. We are indeed a blessed nation.

Mississippians of all ages enjoy reminiscing and creating new memories each year during Thanksgiving and Christmas. Everyone has his or her favorite holiday story to share as we gather with family and friends. As we grow older, we add to our precious memory book—and realize our caring actions this season will foster

special memories for others in the years to come.

As we celebrate this season, let us remember that the greatest joy comes from the gift of love. And, after all the decorations are packed away, let us remind each other of the wonder of God's love and rededicate ourselves to helping those in need. Let us challenge each other to continue these caring actions throughout the year.



**East Mississippi Electric Power Association**  
*will be closed*

Thursday, Nov. 26, and Friday, Nov. 27, for Thanksgiving  
Thursday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 25, for Christmas  
and Friday, Jan. 1, for New Year's Day.

*Have a safe and happy holiday season.*



## ONE SMALL CHANGE X 36,385.

Imagine if everyone in our co-op made one small change. Now, stop imagining. Flip a switch. Seal some cracks. Screw in a CFL. Install a programmable thermostat and actually program it. Doesn't take a lot of energy to save energy. But it sure pays off. For all 36,385 of us. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).



[TOGETHERWESAVE.COM](http://TOGETHERWESAVE.COM)

## Weather stripping keeps out the cold

No mistaking it: Winter has arrived. Any drafts around doors and windows that went unnoticed during fall are now downright uncomfortable—and adding to your energy bills.

Weather stripping offers a relatively quick fix for drafty doors. To determine if a door leading out of your house needs new weather stripping look for daylight. If even a sliver of daylight remains visible between the door and its frame or the floor, add weather stripping. Next, shut the door or window on a piece of paper. If you can pull the paper out without tearing it, you're losing energy.

There are a variety of weather-stripping materials available, each good for fitting different types of door and window frames. Most are made of rubber, foam, metal, vinyl or a combination of materials.

To determine the right item for the job, check the area: If any old, worn material has been previously installed, take a sample to your local hardware store or expert, such as a contractor. If no material exists as a guide, make detailed notes about the type of gap and how the door or window is installed; someone at the hardware store or your expert should be able to make a recommendation for you.

Once you have the proper materials for the job, consult any instructions that may be on the weather-stripping package. Installation techniques range from simple to technical, depending on the type of material being used. If replacing old, worn weather stripping, be sure to note how it was installed as you remove it.

Here are a few basic guidelines:

- Weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces in temperatures above 20°F.
- Measure the area to be weather stripped twice before you cut anything.
- Apply weather stripping snugly against both surfaces. The material should compress when the window or door is shut.

When weather stripping doors:

- Choose the appropriate door sweeps and thresholds.
- Weather strip the entire door jamb.
- Apply one continuous strip along each side.
- Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners.
- Use a thickness that causes the weather stripping to tightly press between the door and the door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

When weather stripping windows:

- Apply weather stripping between the sash and frame.
- The weather stripping shouldn't interfere with the operation of the window.