

## BAYFIELD ELECTRIC AWARDED FOR 100 PERCENT ACRE PARTICIPATION

At a recent WECA meeting, CEO Diane Berweger was presented with an ACRE award on behalf of the cooperative by our very own board president, Robert Kretzschmar, who is also the state chairman of ACRE.

ACRE, or Action Committee for Rural Electrification, is the federal political committee of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. ACRE supports candidates for the U.S. House and Senate who will speak for and protect the interests of electric cooperatives and their member-owners. Contributions to ACRE are voluntary.

Bayfield Electric Cooperative's entire board of directors, management team, and employees participated in this program.



*Fewer than* **100**  
*Solar Shares Available!*

There is still time to participate in Bayfield Electric's Solar Garden. We have fewer than 100 shares available for purchase and once they're gone, we'll be sold out! You can visit our website at [www.bayfieldelectric.com](http://www.bayfieldelectric.com) or call our office at (715) 372-4287 and ask for Kim if you're interesting in learning more about solar.





# EASY STEPS TO GREATER HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a “typical American family” spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances, or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a big commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. And, you won’t have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

## Where to Start

According to Money Magazine, “improving the envelope” of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes, and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans, and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces like your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LEDs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), by replacing your home’s five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with ENERGY STAR-rated models, you can save \$75 each year.

## Wrapping Up Savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent and save you about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs, according to the DOE. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about one hour. On a safety note, the DOE recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket; the higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure your home’s heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing, or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system’s air filter lead to problems, including reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating

costs; lowered system efficiency; and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly. A simple task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

## Take Control of Your Energy Savings

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was programmed for the current season and family schedule? This is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine tune the temperature during particular hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules, and internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and make adjustments automatically. Most models come with an override option so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programming. You can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.



Changing the filter on your HVAC system helps it operate more efficiently.

*(Photo courtesy of Sarah Eckard)*

## MEMBERS EXPRESS GRATITUDE

We had a few members reach out to us this month to express their thanks and gratitude for those at Bayfield Electric who work to keep the lights on.

William Fleeson stated that we are “always so fast with responding to outages” and that we “always go out in the worst weather.”

Kathy Annis sent us a card saying, “Thank you for restoring the electric power so fast!”

We appreciate the acknowledgment of our linemen.

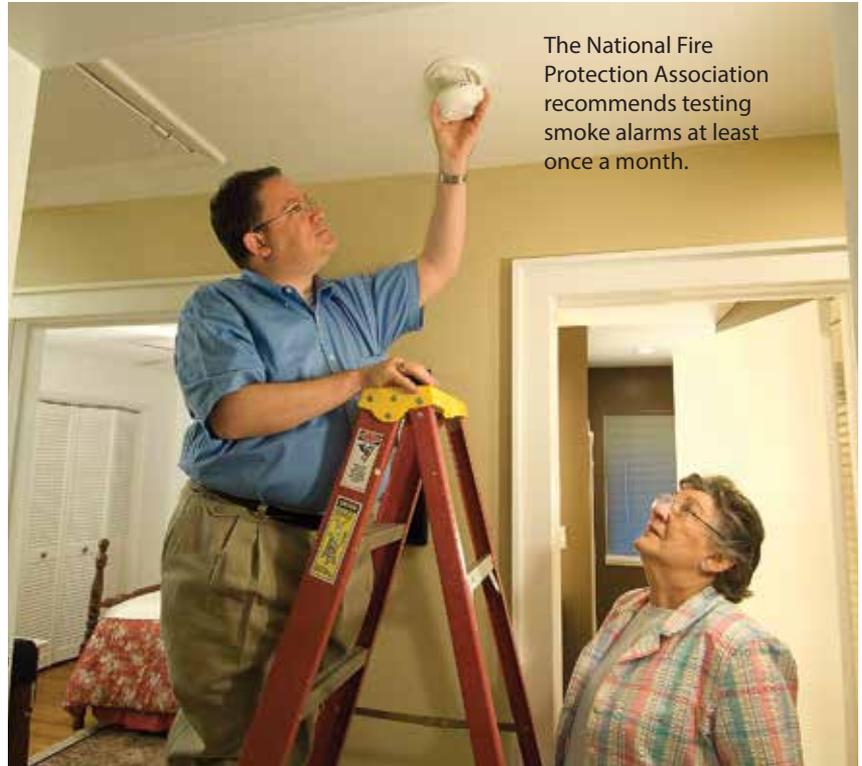


## 2017 ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES AVAILABLE

Bayfield Electric members are eligible to receive energy efficiency rebates on new Energy Star clothes washer and dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators, dehumidifiers, energy audits, HVAC solutions, CFL and LED lightbulbs and fixtures, water heaters, and more.

**Please note that rebate forms must be submitted to BEC within three months of purchase or installation.**

A complete list of available rebates and forms can be found at [www.bayfieldelectric.com](http://www.bayfieldelectric.com) by visiting the “Energy Efficiency Rebates” tab. You can also contact Larry Roecker by phone, (715) 372-4287, or by email at [larry.roecker@bayfieldelectric.com](mailto:larry.roecker@bayfieldelectric.com) with any questions.



The National Fire Protection Association recommends testing smoke alarms at least once a month.

## WATCH FOR WINTER FIRE HAZARDS

Home fires occur more often in winter than any other season because of the increased use of heating systems. Remember to test your smoke alarms. The National Fire Protection Association recommends:

- Testing alarms at least once a month
- Installing new batteries at least once a year
- Keeping batteries in alarms (never borrow them for other purposes)
- Replacing all batteries upon moving into a new home
- Replacing alarms every 10 years

In addition, SafeElectricity offers the following safety tips to help prevent fire hazards during the winter months:

- Always remember to turn off space heaters and electric blankets when not in use. Never leave one of these devices on unattended.
- Many fires start when flammable products are placed too close to heating devices, such as space heaters. Space heaters should be kept at least 3 feet from blankets, clothing, paper, and other flammables.
- Place space heaters out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface—NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
- Be aware of pets and children near heating appliances. Pets should never be allowed to sleep on top of electric blankets.
- Keep space heaters and electric blankets away from water. If they become wet, do not turn them on to dry.
- Regularly examine cords to make sure there is no cracking or fraying. Do not use damaged appliances.
- Store your electric blanket in a manner that avoids creasing. If it cannot be stored flat, loosely fold or roll the blanket in a cool, dry closet.

Sources: *Gundersen Health System and SafeElectricity*



## Month of February

Billing date: February 8, 2017  
January usage  
Bills due upon receipt  
Gross due after February 28, 2017  
Disconnect date: March 20, 2017

## CONGRATULATIONS, GARY SUO

Gary Suo (account no. 201292010) is this month's winner of a \$50 credit. Please clip the coupon below and send it in with your payment or call the office by the payment due date. The \$50 will then be credited to your account.

 <b>BAYFIELD Electric</b> <small>COOPERATIVE - IRON RIVER, WISCONSIN</small>	ACCOUNT NO. 201292010						
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## HAVE SOME WACKY WINTER FUN AT THE BAR STOOL RACES AND CHILI FEED Saturday, February 18 • Drummond

If you're looking for a fun and unusual way to spend a winter afternoon, head out to the Brian Miller Hill behind the Black Bear Inn on Hwy. 63 in Drummond for the annual Bar Stool Races and Chili Feed on February 18.

Participants decorate their bar stool-on-skis with some of the zaniest things you'll ever see, and then they set off in head-to-head competition down the man-made ski hill for thrills, chills, and lots of spills! There'll be great food, including hot, homemade chili, cold beer, and fun!

If you haven't been to this event, you don't know what you're missing! Funds raised from this event go towards snowmobile grooming in the Drummond area.

For more information about this event, call 715-739-6262 or visit [www.drummondwi.com](http://www.drummondwi.com).



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**Marissa Halvorson, Editor**



Office Hours: 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Monday–Friday  
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