

NorVal

News

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Three DIY Efficiency Projects to Tackle This Year

A New Year brings new opportunities to save energy—and money!

You may think energy efficiency upgrades require a great deal of time and expense, but that's not always the case.

If you're interested in making your home more efficient but don't want to break the bank, there are several DIY projects you can tackle to increase energy savings. Let's take a look at three inexpensive efficiency upgrades that can help you save energy throughout the year.

Trim Dryer Vent

Level of difficulty: easy. Supplies needed: tin snips, gloves, measuring tape and masking tape. Estimated Cost: about \$25 depending on the supplies you already have.

If your dryer vent hose is too long, your dryer is working harder than it has to, using more energy than necessary. The vent hose should be long enough for you to pull the dryer out a couple feet from the wall, but the shape of the hose should form a line—it should not have a lot of slack, with twists and curves. A shorter, unobstructed vent hose increases the efficiency of your dryer, dries clothing faster and reduces lint buildup, which can create potential fire hazards.

Simply measure, mark and trim the hose to the desired length, then reattach the hose to your dryer and exterior vent. If you're unsure about the hose length, check out YouTube.com for a quick video tutorial.

Seal Air Leaks

Level of difficulty: moderate. Supplies needed: caulk and caulk gun, weather stripping, gloves, putty knife, paper towels. Estimated Cost: \$25 to \$50 depending on the materials you purchase.

Sealing air leaks in your home can help you save 10% to 20% on heating and cooling bills. Apply caulk around windows, doors,

electrical wiring and plumbing to seal in conditioned air. You should also weather strip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Types of caulking and weather stripping materials vary, but ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you're unsure about the supplies you need. For more information, the Department of Energy provides step-by-step instructions for caulking and weather stripping.

Insulate Attic Stair Opening

Level of difficulty: moderate. Supplies needed (if you build the box yourself): rigid foam board, faced blanket insulation, tape for foam board, measuring tape, utility knife, caulk and caulk gun, plywood. Estimated Cost: \$50 to \$100.

A properly insulated attic is one of the best ways to optimize energy savings and comfort in your home, but many homeowners don't consider insulating the attic stairs, or the opening to your attic space. Even a well-insulated attic can leak air through the stair opening, but luckily, there's an easy fix.

An insulated cover box can seal and insulate the attic stairs opening. You can build your own insulated cover box or purchase a pre-built box or kit from a local home improvement store like Home Depot or Lowe's for about \$60. If you decide to build your own, check out these step-by-step instructions from the Department of Energy. It should also be noted, if your attic opening is located in a garage that you do not heat and cool, this upgrade will not be as effective.

Saving energy doesn't have to be hard. With a little time and effort, you can maximize energy savings and increase the comfort of your home. To learn about additional ways to save, contact NorVal Electric at 406-228-9351 or norval.coop

Statement of Nondiscrimination

NorVal Electric Cooperative, Inc., Chris Christensen, President has filed with the Federal Government a compliance Assurance in which they assure the Rural Electrification Administration that it will comply fully with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Agriculture issued thereunder, to the end that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, age or handicap, be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities. Under this Assurance, this organization is committed not to discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap, in its policies and practices relating to the application for service rates, conditions, and extension of service, use of any of its facilities, attendance, and participation in

any meeting of beneficiaries and participants or the exercise of any rights of such beneficiaries and participants in the conduct of the operations of this organization. "Any person who believes himself or any specific class of individuals, to be subjected by this organization to discrimination prohibited by Title VI of the Act and the Rules and Regulations issued thereunder may, by himself or a representation, file with the Secretary, US Department of Agriculture, the Rural Electrification Administration, NorVal Electric Cooperative, to the attention of Ms. Gretchen Boardman. Any complaint must be filed within 180 days of the occurrence. Identity of complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purpose of the Rules and Regulations."

Chris Christensen
Board of Director President



HAPPY RETIREMENT, JOE!

After 28 years of dedicated service, Joe Odom has announced his retirement. Joe started his career at Northern Electric

Cooperative and continued his career in Opheim after the merge with Valley Electric in 2009. Joe has made many career advancements while working for the cooperatives and he will be greatly missed by all of the employees here at NorVal. In retirement, Joe and his wife, Renee, have already been enjoying their time off. They have been to Oklahoma and have made many trips to Billings to see their sons and grandchildren. They are excited to see where this new adventure takes them. We wish you all the best, Joe!

NICK'S NOTES

NICK DULANEY Line Superintendent

Happy New Year!

As the new year rolls in, we will be doing our annual inventory and truck inspections. We will also be doing all necessary repairs to keep our equipment in good shape for our 2024 construction season.

In late December, we had Landis & Gyr visit us to deploy our new radio frequency meters in our Opheim substation. These meters are able to give us real-time updates on what is going on with our system and will make it easier and more efficient to find outages and what the cause could be. Landis & Gyr also went through thorough trainings with our crew and Operations Coordinator, Christina so they will be well-versed in what it takes to work this metering system.

In the crew's downtime, they will be patrolling line and making lists of what needs to be upgraded or fixed in the coming months, along with retiring services and cutting trees.

If you have any projects in mind for the future, please stop in and we will get a quote ready for you. Once the quote is paid, we will get you on the list for upcoming projects.



SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE APPROACHING!

Scholarship applications for NorVal Electric, MECA and Basin Electric scholarships must be turned into the NorVal Electric office by the end of the day February 1. All late or incomplete applications will be rejected.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed and properly insulated to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills.

Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is needed.