

# Cooperatives Take Cue From Declaration of Independence



A NOTE FROM  
**CEO/GENERAL MANAGER DEBBIE ROBINSON**

**WHEN BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SIGNED THE DECLARATION of Independence, he is credited with saying, “We must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately.” That recognition of the need to work together may also be why, in 1752, Franklin founded the first successful cooperative in (what would become) the**

no member can buy more control than another member. This principle stands in stark contrast to investor-owned businesses, in which only shareholders have a vote in how the business is run, and even among shareholders, some have more votes than others depending on how many shares they own.

The Declaration of Independence declared the equality of rights of American citizens and that people had the right to organize to secure their futures when their rights were infringed upon. At the time the declaration was written, democracy was a fairly untested idea—but the founders of our country were determined to make it work.

The concept of popular sovereignty, the idea that the government exists to serve the people who elect representatives to express their will, is also found in cooperative principles. Cooperatives exist to serve their members and are governed by boards of directors composed of co-op members.

So when you celebrate with family and friends this year the many liberties and rights we enjoy, think about those principles that

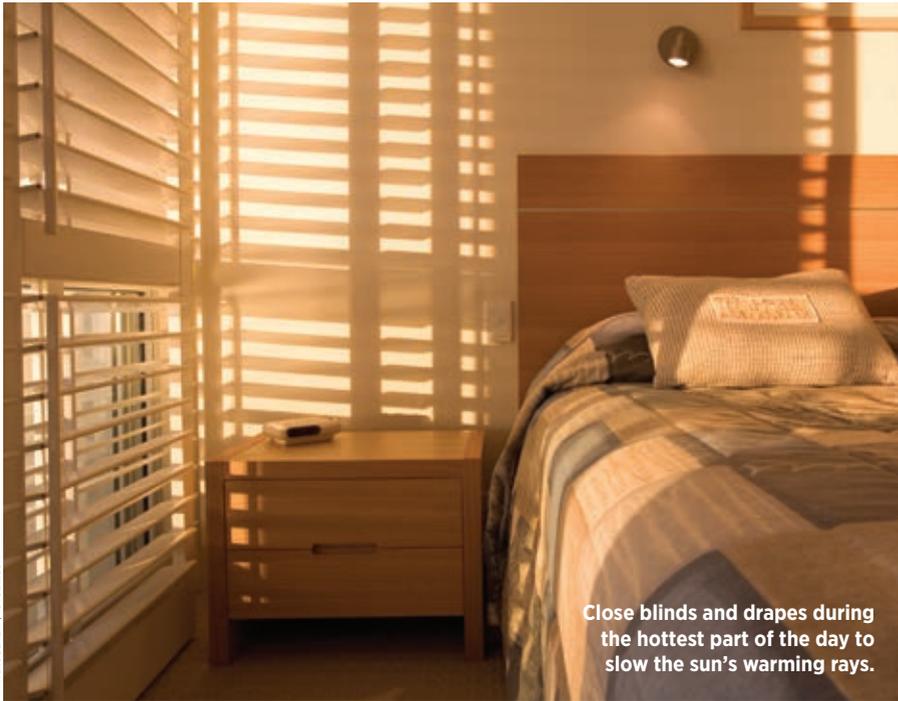


United States, the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses From Loss by Fire, which still operates today.

The principles that underlie the Declaration of Independence and form the basis of American democracy find a counterpart in cooperatives. Cooperatives are owned and democratically controlled by the people who use their services. Each member has one vote regardless of his or her stake; that is,

inspired our Founding Fathers. They also inspired the pioneers who established electric cooperatives—folks who were determined to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to secure the futures of rural communities.

Wood County Electric Cooperative has always operated under the principles of democracy, and we are dedicated to fulfilling that promise as we serve our members today and in the future. Happy Independence Day!



Close blinds and drapes during the hottest part of the day to slow the sun's warming rays.

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# Hot Days Remind Us To Use Energy Wisely

**THE HOT DAYS OF SUMMER CAN BE TAMED A BIT WITH GOOD ENERGY HABITS THAT CAN make your home more comfortable.**

It's never too late to make a few changes to help keep things cool and lower your energy costs.

**Check for loose or leaky windowpanes.** If your home still has single-pane windows, consider replacing them or adding a window film. Single-pane windows allow cool air to easily escape your home during the summer and warm air to seep out in the winter. Replacing old, inefficient windows now is an investment that will pay for itself in energy savings year-round—and keep your home more comfortable.

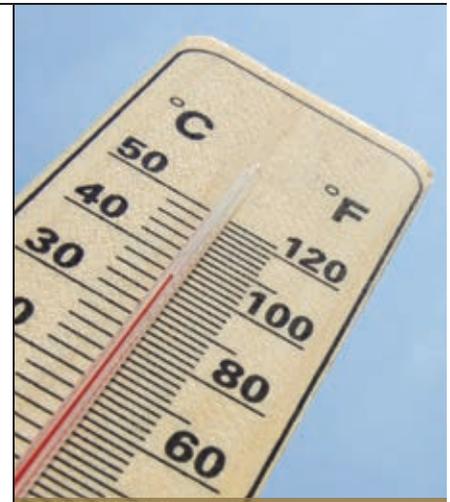
**If you still use incandescent lightbulbs, it's time to make the switch to LEDs.** These bulbs are far more energy efficient than old-fashioned bulbs, which produce more heat than light. That heat works against your air conditioner during the summer.

**When air conditioner filters get dirty, they get clogged—and air can't flow freely through them.** That forces your AC unit to work harder. Replace air filters once a month during cooling season.

**Install a programmable thermostat, which automatically adjusts the temperature so you use less energy to cool your home when no one is there.** The device can save you up to \$100 a year on cooling and heating bills.

**Move appliances and lamps away from your thermostat.** Because they emit heat, they can trick your thermostat into thinking that the house is warmer than it really is—and to work harder than it should.

**Keep drapes and blinds closed during the hottest part of the day to minimize the amount of heat from the sun that enters your home.** Consider installing solar screens or shutters to block the heat before it can get in.



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## Power Tip

**EVERY DEGREE = DOLLARS**

Don't let summer heat burn your budget. When home, set your thermostat to 78. Going out for the day? Turn your thermostat up 10–15 degrees to cut your electricity bill by up to 15%.



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# HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

Thursday, July 4

# Play It Cool

*Tips to help you stay comfortable this summer*

## **DURING SUMMER MONTHS, ENERGY**

bills tend to creep up a bit—or, in some cases, a lot—but keeping your home comfortable amid the heat doesn't have to break the bank. Some energy-saving solutions are low-cost, while others require a bigger investment. Using either strategy, you can be more comfortable and have lower energy bills this summer.

The first step is to reduce your home's solar gains—the heat energy it collects from the sun. Since most solar gains originate through your home's windows, awnings are an effective solution. They can reduce solar heat gain by as much as 65% on south-facing windows and 77% on west-facing windows. You can also try less expensive solutions on the outside or inside of your windows, like reflective films and solar screens. Heavy window coverings also work and have the added benefit of reducing heat loss in winter.

Attics can be a major source of heat gain. These areas can become extremely hot and radiate heat through the ceiling and into your living space. Adequate insulation and abundant venting through the roof, gable or eaves are the solutions.

Another important step is to seal air leaks around windows, doors, plumbing and wiring penetrations.

Excess heat can also be generated inside your home—and at your expense. **Here are some simple steps you can take to minimize this.**

- ▶ Make it a habit to turn off lights and TVs in rooms that aren't in use.
- ▶ Incandescent lightbulbs generate a lot of heat. Replace them with LEDs.
- ▶ Unplug devices when you aren't using them, including chargers, computers, monitors and other electronics. Many of these devices use phantom power that keeps them on constantly (even when they're not in use), which generates heat.
  - ▶ Maintain appliances for peak efficiency.
  - ▶ Set your water heater temperature to no higher than 120 degrees.
  - ▶ Set your refrigerator thermostat to no lower than 38 degrees.
  - ▶ Insulate your home's hot water pipes.



▶ Minimize use of your oven, and don't run the dishwasher or washing machine until it is full.

Now that you've worked on keeping heat out of your home and minimizing the heat generated inside, let's look at how to make the inside air cooler. That starts with your air conditioning system.

If you have central AC, make sure it's working efficiently. Replace filters regularly, and make sure supply registers are open. AC systems need to push an adequate amount of air into the supply ductwork to function properly.

If you do not have central AC, window units can be an efficient solution if they are Energy Star-certified and only used to cool part of the home part of the time. Make sure to seal any openings around the window unit.

The least expensive way to cool yourself is air movement. A ceiling or portable fan can make a room feel up to 10 degrees cooler, but fans cool people—not rooms. Turn them off when you're not in the room.

When the night air is cool and not too humid, exchange your hot air for cool outdoor air by opening windows and turning on fans throughout the house. A permanent (but more expensive) option is to install a whole-house fan.



# Plan for a Safe and Happy July Fourth

**THE MONTH OF JULY IS A FAVORITE TIME FOR MANY OF US. IT'S THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER, the kids are out of school and, of course, we celebrate Independence Day!** Many of us celebrate our nation's independence with grilled burgers and hot dogs, homemade ice cream and other sweet treats—and, needless to say, fireworks. It's a time for fellowship with family and friends, but at Wood County Electric Cooperative, we also want to make sure our members focus on safety.

Nothing says Independence Day like a spectacular fireworks display. The safest way to enjoy this part of the celebration is to head to a local fireworks show. **But if you want to put on your own show at home (and you've confirmed it's legal and there are no burn bans), be sure to follow these safety tips:**

- ▶ Always follow the instructions on the fireworks' packaging and never give fireworks to children.
- ▶ Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
- ▶ Make sure to wear protective eyewear when lighting fireworks.
- ▶ Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight a "dud."
- ▶ Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
- ▶ Never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.

Cookouts are a great way to bring folks together on the Fourth. Whether you are grilling in your backyard or at a community park, make sure your feast includes a generous portion of fun and a side helping of safety. **Remember to:**

- ▶ Supervise your grill at all times and use the proper tools for cooking on a grill.
- ▶ Never add charcoal starter fluid when the coals have already been ignited.
- ▶ Always follow the manufacturers' instructions when using grills.

Fireworks and cookouts wouldn't be complete without a sunny day. Here's hoping we have good weather, and if we do, make sure you are practicing sun safety by using a broad-spectrum sunscreen (and reapplying often), wearing sunglasses and drinking plenty of water.



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### MOBILE CONVENIENCE CENTER

**Monday**, First Methodist Church, *Van*  
**Tuesday**, Family Dollar, *Mount Vernon*  
**Wednesday**, City National Bank, *Hawkins*  
**Thursday**, Brookshire's, *Winnboro*  
**Friday**, Economy Drug, *Grand Saline*



**CELEBRATING 75 YEARS**