



## LEAVENWORTH-JEFFERSON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# The Powerline

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### Tip of the Month

Fall is here, and that means colder months will be here before we know it. Is your home prepared for the drafts that may enter? Tight-fitting insulating drapes or shades are a perfect way to keep the heat in and the cold out.

### FROM THE MANAGER

## Principles in Action



Steve Foss

October is National Co-op Month, the time of year when the 29,000-plus co-ops in the U.S. ensure their employees, members and the public understand the value of the co-op business. I applaud any effort that brings more attention to co-ops. My feelings are best represented by a T-Shirt slogan, "October is Co-op Month—But I Cooperate All Year Long!"

Co-ops around the world operate according to the same core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-op Alliance (ICA) they are:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Co-ops
7. Concern for Community

One of the ways co-ops demonstrate that they are different from investor-owned businesses is by actually living the principles. Cooperation Among Co-ops, is our focus this month, and there are many examples that demonstrate how co-ops do this every day. In theory this sounds so simple, answering the question, "Can't we all just get along?" As it turns out, it's easier to get along when we focus on what our personal or organizational self-interest is—and find others

who have a similar self-interest.

This is how LJEC got started. Ordinary folks realized they would be better off working together if they wanted to bring electricity to their community. Once the co-op was established, we soon realized that if we work with our sister co-ops, we can gain control of our power supply, so we formed over 60 generation and transmission cooperatives, such as Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo).

This pattern kept repeating, and soon electric co-ops cooperated to form new co-ops that offer a variety of services, such as financing, insurance, and IT services to ensure that they had ownership and control over these core products. This was done to help serve you, our members, by making sure there would be no interruption in these vital services that help us bring electricity to you.

This cooperation among cooperatives continues today, not only with co-ops directly related to the provision of electricity but in other sectors as well. Electric co-ops partner with credit unions, food co-ops, housing co-ops and others to help bring critical services to rural residents and businesses throughout the country.

So while we take special note of the value of our co-op in October, we are delighted to be a part of our community delivering vital services to you all year long.

## Winter is Coming— Cold Weather Rule

Winter doesn't officially start until December 21, but the weather will get cold long before Old Man Winter Comes to town. As an LJEC member, it is important that you understand how unpaid heating bills are managed by the cooperative.

The original Cold Weather Rule (CWR) was established by the Kansas Corporation Commission and restricted electric disconnects from November 1 through March 31, when temperature forecasts were for 35 degrees or below.

Since 1996, individual Kansas electric cooperatives have been responsible for establishing CWR's appropriate for their cooperative. At that time, the LJEC Board of Trustees opted to eliminate its CWR.

While temperature is no longer the governing factor, it does remain an important factor in disconnecting LJEC members for non-payment of accounts.

Any past due accounts are addressed on a monthly basis so that a large unpaid balance for winter heating costs is not carried forward to the summer cooling season.

If you find yourself in circumstances where you are unable to pay your full heating bill during the winter months, please call LJEC immediately at 888-796-6111. Postponing contacting LJEC could result in disconnection of your electric service.



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## Protect Your Appliances with a Surge Suppressor

A power surge is a spike in your home's electrical current. And while this spike is very brief, usually lasting less than a thousandth of second, it can cause tremendous damage to the appliances in your home.

Although lightning is a common cause of power surges, they can also be caused by other things that interfere with power lines such as birds, squirrels, trees and accidents involving utility poles.



LJEC offers surge protection for just \$5 per month. Call 888-796-6111 for more information.

### How Do I Protect My Appliances from Power Surges?

A device called a surge suppressor can help. This piece of equipment is designed to protect devices by limiting the voltage supplied to a device by either blocking or by shorting to ground any unwanted voltages above a safe threshold.

Surge suppressors come in many forms; the most common being power strips. A surge protector power strip offers protection for the appliances and/or electronics plugged into the power strip, but they do not offer protection for other appliances in your home. The surge suppressor offered by LJEC is installed in your electrical meter base, and it provides surge protection for your entire home. Surge protector power strips can still be used within the home creating an addition layer of protection.

Additionally, LJEC's surge suppressor offers:

- ▶ 40,000 Amp peak capability
- ▶ Lowest, reliable voltage clamping level
- ▶ Safety fusing
- ▶ Fireproof and explosion proof polycarbonate glass-fiber reinforced enclosure
- ▶ Sealed unit except for mounting connector wiring opening

### How much coverage will I have?

In the event than an appliance (that is covered under this program) is damaged, you are covered up to \$5,000 per item or \$50,000 per residence for repair or replacement (whichever is less).

### What is covered?

LJEC's surge suppressor coverage applies to the following appliances: washer, dryer, stove, dishwasher, refrigerator, freezer, garbage disposer and HVAC unit(s) located inside your home (see product warranty for complete coverage details). Surge devices may not be available for some pedestal meter housings.

### Cost

At just \$5 per month (no installation fee), this device will protect against surges that come through the meter location. Start protecting your investment today (terms and conditions apply).

It's as easy as calling LJEC at 888-796-6111. A designated co-op representative will inspect your home's external grounding system to verify a proper ground does exist at the location. Once that is verified, a surge suppressor can be installed immediately!

# Draft Dodgers: Weather Stripping Your Home

There is no doubt about it; the cold weather is on its way. Not only is it important to make sure that your heating unit is working properly, but you should check your home to make sure that none of that heat is escaping.

When the weather turns colder, drafts around windows and doors are constantly letting in cool air. Most people will immediately want to raise their thermostat even higher; however, that will cause you to use more energy unnecessarily. The best solution is to weather strip your home. This is typically an easy fix that will eliminate energy waste and help you save on your electric bill.

Sometimes drafts are obvious, and other times the openings are much smaller. Here are two quick ways to find out if heat is escaping from your home. For doors, look for daylight between the door and its frame, if you see even a hint of light in between the

two, you need to weather strip that area. For windows, place a piece of paper between the sash and the seal then close it. If you can remove the piece of paper from the window without ripping it, you need to weather strip.

The great thing about all of this is that weather stripping is easy! There is an assortment of materials available to you (like rubber, foam, metal, etc.) and they are all inexpensive. Once you have purchased what you need, keep the following in mind before you begin weather stripping: be sure the surface is dry and clean, measure the area more than once for best accuracy, and apply so that strips compress both sides of the window or door.

## To weather strip windows:

- ▶ Place the stripping between the frame and the sash.
- ▶ Be sure that it compresses the window when shut.

- ▶ Check to make sure that the stripping does not interfere with the moving of the window.

## To weather strip doors:

- ▶ Choose the proper sweeps and thresholds for your door.
- ▶ Weather-strip the entire door jamb.
- ▶ Make sure the stripping meets tightly at both corners.
- ▶ Use a thickness that allows for a tight press between the door and the ground, but one that does not make the door difficult to shut.

Roughly half of the energy that your home uses comes from heating and cooling. So the next time you feel an uncomfortable draft in your home, do not immediately crank up the heat. Check to find out where the draft is coming from and properly weather strip the area. This will ultimately save you more energy and more money in the end.

## WHAT WILL I NEED TO WEATHER STRIP DOORS AND WINDOWS?

There are a variety of materials available to weather strip your home. Here are a few options to help you choose:

*\*Apply weather stripping around the door frame and stop. At the bottom of a door, install a door sweep, door shoe or threshold; or apply reinforced-foam weather stripping. Apply weather stripping at the top and bottom of window sash.*

### FELT

*Reinforced with a flexible metal strip.*

*Should be stapled, glued or tacked into place.*

Cost: Low

Advantages: Easy to install and inexpensive.

Disadvantages: Low durability. Do not use where exposed to a great deal of moisture. All-wool felt is more durable but very visible.

### ROLLED OR REINFORCED VINYL

*Pliable or rigid strip gasket (attached to wood or metal strips).*

Cost: Low to moderate.

Advantages: Easy installation, various colors to help with visibility and some types of rigid strip gaskets provide slot holes for height adjustment.

Disadvantages: Can be difficult to install and very visible.

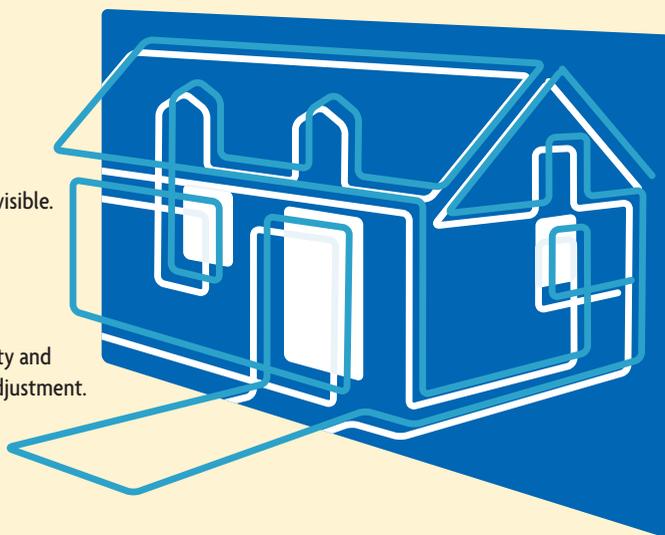
### REINFORCED FOAM

*Closed-cell foam attached to wood or metal strips.*

Cost: Moderately low

Advantages: Effective sealer, rigid, proven to work well.

Disadvantages: Can be difficult to install and very visible.



Source: Department of Energy

\*For more weather stripping options, visit <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/weatherstripping>

## Questions & Answers

### Q: How do I access SmartHub?

**A:** Simply visit [www.ljec.coop](http://www.ljec.coop) and click on the purple SmartHub logo in the lower left hand corner. If you've already registered with SmartHub, simply enter your login information to access usage information. For those members who haven't accessed SmartHub before, it's easy and it's free. The information collected during the process is never sold to outside vendors.

Android



iPhone



### Q: Is there a mobile application for SmartHub?

**A:** Yes! A free app is available for both iPhone and Android formats. You can either download the app from the iPhone or Google Play stores by searching SmartHub (all one word) or scan the QR codes at left. Once downloaded, search Leavenworth Jefferson Electric within SmartHub and set LJE as your electric service provider.

### Q: Is the mobile app secure?

**A:** Yes! All critical information is encrypted in every transaction run and no personal information is stored on your mobile device. Mobile devices do offer you the ability to store your login information for apps installed on the device. If you choose to store your information, any person who has access to your mobile device can access your account.

### Q: Do I have to pay my bill online to get access to my usage information in SmartHub?

**A:** No. You can take advantage of all the features in SmartHub and continue to pay your bill as you currently do.

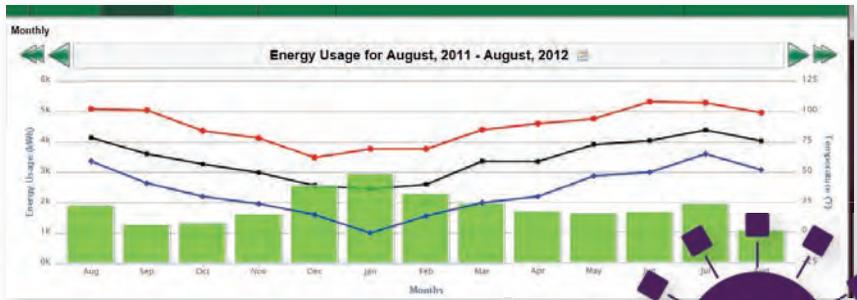
### Q: How current is the information I see in SmartHub?

**A:** The information you see in the app and on the web is updated at approximately 11:30am for the readings for the day before. For example, on Tuesday at approximately 11:30am you should be able to view your usage for Monday.

### Q: How many LJE members use SmartHub?

**A:** Currently, we have 2,346 members signed up for SmartHub. In the past 30 days, 1,835 people made payments through the website or phone app. Remember, you do not have to pay your bill online to access your usage information! We will always accept payment via mail, phone, or you are welcome to stop by the office.

## Usage Information at Your Fingertips



SmartHub allows you to view monthly usage.

You may be aware that LJE members are able to pay their bills online. What you may not realize is the wealth of information about your account(s) that is available to you without having to pay your bill.

LJE's online bill-pay program, SmartHub, not only tracks billing information, it also tracks usage information which you can access 24/7 through a safe, secure site.

SmartHub is a powerful tool in helping you educate yourself about your power consumption. You can compare day-to-day usage, month-to-month usage and even year-to-year usage. You're also able to overlay temperature information over usage so you can see how big of an effect the weather has on consumption.

You can also view your billing history (up to three years); bill comparisons month-to-month; low and peak and average use plus much more information that will allow you to



take a more active role in your consumption choices

Simply log on to LJE's website and click on the purple SmartHub logo at the bottom left hand corner of the page. Registration is required but all information collected during registration is kept confidential. There is a free smartphone app available, too. Download instructions are located at left.

In addition to viewing usage, SmartHub also allows users to:

- ▶ Pay your bill safely and securely
- ▶ Set recurring payments
- ▶ Receive text or email alerts
- ▶ Receive bill reminders
- ▶ Obtain outage information
- ▶ View multiple accounts

As always, if you have questions regarding SmartHub or any of LJE's programs or services we encourage you to contact us at 888-796-6111.



You can use SmartHub to compare your monthly electric bills based on temperatures and average usage.