

BEARTOOTH BULLETIN

Energy-Saving Resolutions For 2017

Traditionally, the New Year is a time for making resolutions to improve your life. Two perennial favorites are dieting and saving money. Homeowners can combine these two by going on an energy diet. By adopting these easy, low-cost strategies, you can save on energy costs all year long. Let the ten simple resolutions that follow serve as your guideline for saving energy year-round and living a more sustainable lifestyle.

- **Lower your thermostat.** Our recommendation for winter heating is 68°F and for cooling in the summer 78°F.
- **Switch to energy-efficient lighting.** Conventional incandescent bulbs that do not meet new federal energy-efficiency regulations will be slowly disappearing from store shelves. Now is a great time to switch to light-emitting diode (LED) lights.
- **Plug energy leaks.** Install weather-stripping around doors and windows to ensure that they are properly sealed. Check for and seal air leaks in the attic, basement, and around plumbing and wiring access points.
- **Conserve hot water.** Maintain the temperature of your water heater at 120°F or lower, and take quick showers instead of baths. Low-flow shower heads and aerated faucets can increase savings.
- **Adjust temperatures.** Properly adjust the thermostat when your home is unoccupied to avoid heating or cooling an empty house. A programmable thermostat can add convenience and optimize savings.
- **Heat and cool naturally.** Take advantage of natural sunlight and window shading to provide no-cost heating and cooling.
- **Wait for a full load.** Save energy by only running the dishwasher and clothes washer when they are fully loaded.
- **Air dry the laundry.** Clothes dryers are big energy users; air dry clothing when possible.
- **Power down.** Turn off or unplug computers, battery chargers, or other electronic equipment when they are not in use. Use advanced power strips—see, *Ward Off Vampire Loads with the Right Power Strip*, on the back side of this insert, and also see your January 2018 *Rural Montana* magazine for more information on power strips.
- **Focus on energy efficiency.** Whenever possible, replace older appliances and equipment with high-efficiency ENERGY STAR rated products.

It is no secret that New Year's resolutions can quickly go by the wayside. To help you stay on track, set goals that are specific and measurable. How do you measure your progress? Simply compare your monthly energy bill with those of previous years by logging into ebill on our website. The money that you save should provide enough incentive to keep you going all year long.



Outage Safety Tips— What To Do During A Power Outage

Take practical steps to keep you and your loved ones safe during a power outage.

- Stay away from all downed lines or sparking equipment, and keep children and pets away from fallen lines and anything the lines may touch.
- Never remove debris that's within ten-feet of a power line.
- Unplug major appliances during and outage to protect them when power comes back on.
- Leave a light turned on so you know when the power is restored.
- Refuel heaters, lamps, and generators outside, and stay away from any flames or sparks. Wipe up fuel spills immediately.
- Let us know if you're using a generator – this protects you and our line workers as they work to restore power.
- Never operate lanterns, heaters, or fuel-fired stoves without proper ventilation.
- Never burn charcoal indoors. It releases poisonous carbon monoxide.
- Do not let children carry candles or oil lamps.

LIEAP - LISD - LIDD - OPERATION ROUND UP

ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO HELP LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WITH ENERGY BILL PAYMENT

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LIEAP (MT & WY)
Call the toll-free phone number at:
1-866-674-6327
email: energy@ncat.org

BEC LOW INCOME SENIOR DISCOUNT (LISD)

Call the BEC office
406-446-2310 or
800-472-9821

BEC LOW INCOME DISABILITY DISCOUNT (LIDD)

Call the BEC office
406-446-2310 or
800-472-9821

BEC OPERATION ROUND UP

To apply for a grant, call the BEC office
406-446-2310 or
800-472-9821



Budget proposal for 2018: stable rates, plant improvements, and a safe financial position

Arleen Boyd, Trustee District 5, Board Secretary/Treasurer, Risk Management Committee Chair
Article from Rural Montana magazine, January 2018 edition, page 6.



What's Happening

JANUARY 2017

The 2018 budget aligns with the BEC seven-year forecast model that shows no projected member rate increases, assumes a 20-year capital credit rotation, takes a \$500,000 cash level forward each year and maintains financial ratios above required standards. The 2018 expenses include office and technology improvements and major capital investment in necessary meter system upgrades that begin in the fourth quarter of 2018 and are completed in 2019. The 2018 budget plans for \$324, 653 in capital credit retirement payments.

The budget reflects two major cost advantages that also underpin the positive seven-year forecast numbers: consecutive five-year power supply contracts beginning in late 2017 with excellent fixed-price, load-following terms and this year's move to a BEC standalone model that reduces current administration and general (A&G) expenses significantly.

Plan to attend the January 9, board meeting. The 2018 BEC budget process gathered information, examined numbers, weighed alternatives and involved members. Manager, Kevin Owens presented a zero-based budget outline at the October risk management meeting. The BEC Board approved a review and approval process at their October 31 meeting and, as required in BEC bylaws, notified members and alerted them to the availability of budget information. A series of review sessions provided input for the final budget proposal that Owens will present for board approval on January 9. Members are encouraged to attend.

The BEC commitment to risk management analysis is firm. With some major efforts behind us, we expect to report bimonthly, with the frequency depending on the level of risk management activity. Analysis work and reporting will increase with the planned examination at BEC of how to best address rates fairly as the projected period of low growth in energy use unfolds. We always look for feedback and your suggestions for methods to inform and reach you.

Budget Information is available at the BEC office or on our website at <http://www.BeartoothElectric.com/node/442>.

1	NEW YEAR'S DAY BEC OFFICE CLOSED
9	BEC REGULAR BOARD MEETING - BEC OFFICE 12:00 NOON
11	HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY
15	MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
26	AUSTRALIA DAY
27	COMMEMORATION VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST
30	BEC REGULAR BOARD MEETING - BEC OFFICE 12:00 NOON

Fun Facts—

This month in History:

- New Year's Day is the most celebrated holiday around the world.
- January 1, 1776—During the American Revolution, George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America.
- January 29, 1919—The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution-Prohibition ratified until December 5, 1933.
- January 30, 1968—The beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam
- January 28, 1984—The U.S. Space Shuttle Challenger exploded 74 seconds into flight.

Among other things, December is:

- Birth Defects Prevention Month
- Cervical Health Awareness Month
- National Blood Donor Month
- National Glaucoma Awareness
- National Mentoring Month

Birthstone:

- Garnet

Flower:

- Carnation

WARD OFF VAMPIRE LOADS WITH THE RIGHT POWER STRIP

Your neighbor's annual New Year's Eve bash has started; music is blaring, and most of the party crew has arrived. You quickly snatch your smart phone, unplugging it from its charger, and dash out the door. You think you've stopped drawing electricity since you unplugged your device.

Though your phone is no longer charging, electricity is still being consumed at the plug. This phenomenon, called "vampire load," silently sucks up unneeded power. You must unplug your charger from the outlet to stop the flow of electricity. This can become quite a chore for all your favorite gadgets, gizmos, game consoles, DVRs and TVs.

Finding the right power strip can ease this burden for you. There are many to choose from that offer features like timers, remote switches and more. These are known

as advanced power strips. [Energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov) recommends using this type in your home, where many devices can be plugged into one strip. You'll need to find the one that works best for your habits – do you keep your laptop docked, do you want manual or automated control of the strip, would one with a timer work best?

Your entertainment center, game room or home office are good places to consolidate, using one strip to reduce the amount of energy used by your electronics. Be sure to check out the infographic in your January *Rural Montana* magazine highlighting how much wasted energy can cost you. You don't want to let vampire loads suck the life out of your electricity bill.



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