

New Hampshire Electric Co-op

TODAY

DECEMBER 2008

- Youth Tour Trip of a Lifetime
- Newsletter Classifieds
- Holiday Safety Tips
- We Did It!
- Dreaming of a Green Christmas

Your Electric Co-op's Newsletter

FEATURE ARTICLE:

Youth Tour: The Trip of a Lifetime

Attention High School Juniors! If you're the child of a Co-op member or attend a school served by the Co-op, you're eligible to win the trip of a lifetime - a free five-day visit to Washington D.C. in June as part of the 2009 National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

While representing New Hampshire in our nation's capital, you'll join 1,500 other students from 48 states for a week of sightseeing, visits with New Hampshire's Congressional delegation and group activities that will prepare you to be leaders in your communities. One of the winners will represent New Hampshire at the 2009 Youth Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. and the 2010 Annual Meeting of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in Atlanta, Georgia. The 2009 Youth Tour is June 12-18.

To enter, students will write a formal letter, approximately 400 to 500 words, to an elected official. Students, this is the perfect opportunity to voice your personal opinion to your elected officials on any issue that's important to you. In the letter, the topic of concern should be stated and thoroughly discussed. If appropriate, students should also suggest a course of action they wish the elected official to take. The letter should be addressed to the respective local, state or federal official in formal letter format.

Letters will be judged on their originality, persuasiveness, neatness, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Students should send their letters to their intended recipients and send a copy to the Co-op for entry in the Youth Tour contest. All entries should include student's name, contact information and school. Finalists will be selected based on the letters, and personal interviews will be conducted to select the winners. **The deadline for submitting contest entries is Friday, January 30, 2009.**



The 2008 Youth Tour crew from New Hampshire (L-R): Lucie Worthen, Chris Plankey, Kelsey Mattson, Jessica Gealy, James Haskell in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington D.C.

Send contest entries to:

Audrey Simpson, Youth Tour Director
579 Tenney Mountain Highway
Plymouth, NH 03264
Entries can also be emailed to simpsona@nhec.com.

Teachers—the Youth Tour letter writing contest makes a great class project!

Holiday Safety Tips

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, you can greatly reduce the chances of a holiday fire casualty.

- **Selecting a Tree for the Holiday**

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out and is a fire hazard.

- **Caring for Your Tree**

Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

- **Maintain Your Holiday Lights**

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation,

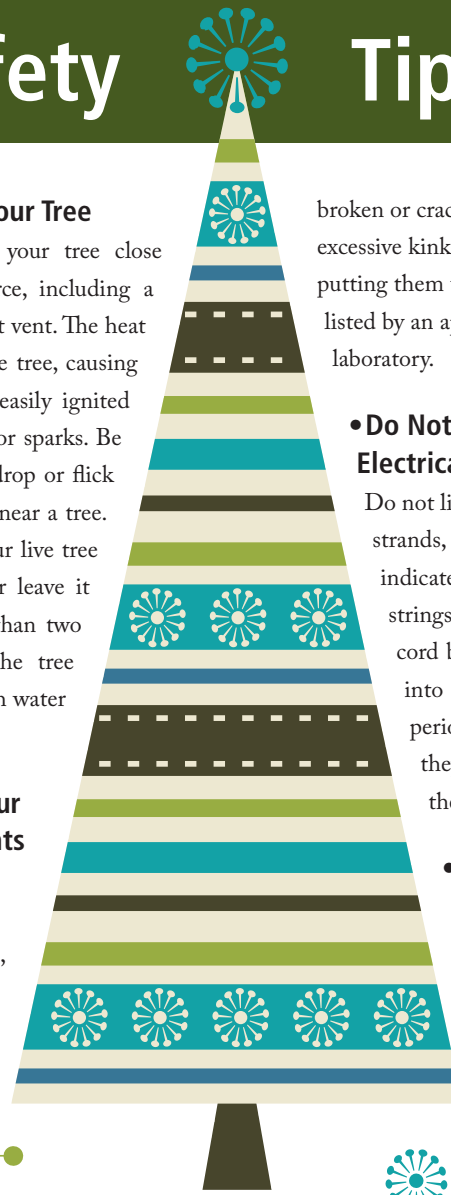
broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

- **Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets**

Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.

- **Shelter Plugs**

Avoid possible short-circuiting from rain, sleet or snow by locating plugs and connector joints in sheltered areas.



We Did It!

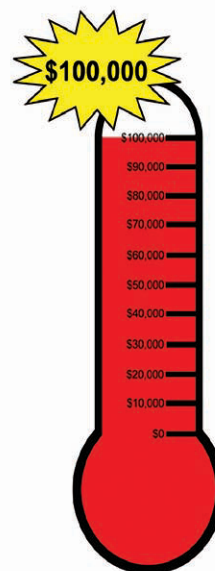
Co-op Food Bank Challenge Nets \$100,000

Thanks to the generosity of Co-op members and its partners, the Co-op was able to present a check last month to the New Hampshire Food Bank for \$100,000.

The donation was especially welcome at this time of year, when the services of the Food Bank are needed the most. The NHEC Foundation and NHEC matched \$50,000 in donations that were received from individuals, member businesses and business partners in just four months.

“We issued the challenge and our members responded like we knew they would,” said NHEC President/CEO Fred Anderson. “It’s a tribute to the generous spirit of New Hampshire folks that we were able to meet this goal.”

On behalf of NHEC and the New Hampshire Food Bank, thank you for your help!



*Thank You
Co-op Members
and Partners!*



What Happened to the Newsletter Classifieds?

You've probably noticed that your monthly newsletter no longer includes classified ads from members. At the Co-op's annual meeting this year we heard that the ads have been missed...read more to find out why the ads were removed from the newsletter and how you can still place your classified ads for free.

In 2006 when energy prices began to increase dramatically and the number of classified ads more than doubled, the Co-op discontinued its newsletter ads in order to provide more space for important information designed to help members save energy and money. At the same time, we replaced the newsletter ads with an online classified ads forum on our web site: www.nhec.coop. Unlike the restrictions that applied to the placement of newsletter ads, online ads are offered free of charge with no limit to the number of ads a member can place. Since 2006, more than 2,000 free ads have been placed by members in the online Co-op Classifieds. Still, we understand that some members miss the newsletter classifieds or don't have the ability to get online to view or place the ads.

The NHEC Board of Directors recently reviewed the issue and made the following findings:

- Energy efficiency information and detailed communications about rates is a high priority and should continue to be featured in the Co-op newsletter.
- Adding additional pages to the newsletter or including an additional insert with your bill in order to include classified

ads would add \$18,000 per month in postage costs due to the increase in weight.

- Any additional cost should not be passed on to members.

All members, even those without Internet access, are able to place free classified ads online. If you have Internet access:

- Go to www.nhec.coop.
- Register as a New User in the Secure Log-in box at the top left of the home page; enter your NHEC account information.
- Receive validation e-mail and click on the link to activate your online account.
- Click the link to 'Place Free Classified Ad.'

If you do not have internet access, it may be available at your local library or you can stop by Co-op Headquarters in Plymouth and use our internet access to submit your ad.

The benefits to the online classified ads include: a greater viewing audience (members and non-members); ads can be reviewed as long as they remain online (unlike a paper copy which can get misplaced) and everyone gets the same opportunity to review potential "finds" regardless of when you receive your newsletter. Be sure to check out the latest ads today. Bookmark this link for quick access to the Co-op Classifieds online forum: <http://www.nhec.com/classifieds.php>.

Got a Generator? Let Us Know!

If you've installed a generator anywhere in Co-op service territory, your Co-op needs to know about it.

A generator is a handy tool to have in the event of a power outage, but it can present a safety hazard for our lineworkers. If not properly installed, a generator can energize the power line outside your home – maybe while our crews are working on it.

The Co-op offers a free inspection of any generator installed on our system. We'll come to your property and make sure the transfer switch is wired properly to meet national electric codes. In addition to helping us update

our records, you'll also be keeping our lineworkers safe.

If you have a generator, please call the Co-op at 1-800-698-2007 to notify us. And don't forget to ask about our free inspection service. Thank you!



WATTS HAPPENING!

Board of Directors Meetings

The NHEC Board of Directors meets monthly at dates and locations that are available on the Co-op website at www.nhec.coop/boardofdirectors, or by calling Sharon Yeaton at 603-536-8801.

Seeking Candidates for Board of Directors

Four seats on the 11-member Co-op Board of Directors will be up for election to three-year terms in 2009. In a cooperative, the members themselves elect candidates they feel will best represent them on the Board of Directors. Voting takes place by mail ballot in May 2009 with board members installed at the June annual meeting. The Co-op seeks broad representation from a diverse group of individuals and encourages all qualified members to consider running for one of the open seats. You must be a Co-op member in order to run for a position on the Board. For more information about how to get your name on next year's ballot, contact Sharon Yeaton at 603-536-8801, or nhechq@nhec.com.

The BACK PAGE

Giving the Gift of GREEN

We scanned the Internet for some of the more unusual green gifts that, although they may not save the world, will help reduce that big Christmas carbon footprint. All of these items are profiled on the web site treehugger.com, a leading media outlet dedicated to driving sustainability mainstream.



Eco-Camp Kit

Make your outdoors lover a happy camper with the Eco-Camp Kit. With accessories like a solar shower, an organic cotton roll-up bed and a water-powered digital alarm clock, it makes the perfect gift. You can also take it a notch higher with the Luxury Eco-Camp Kit.

http://www.treehugger.com/files/2006/05/happy_camping_w.php



Solar Golf Bag

For those that love the golf course, a Solar Golf Bag might be just the gift. It has built in solar panels with charging tips that can connect

to cell phones and handhelds. You can also purchase an additional tip to charge an iPod.

http://www.treehugger.com/files/2006/01/solar_golf_bag.php



Crazy Crayons

Through their Crayon Recycle Program, Crazy Crayons accepts old crayon stubs and melts them down to make new ones. They come in 26 different shades and are packaged in a recycled cardboard box which includes tree-free scribble paper. A straw grass ribbon completes the gift.

http://www.treehugger.com/files/2006/02/crazy_crayons_d.php

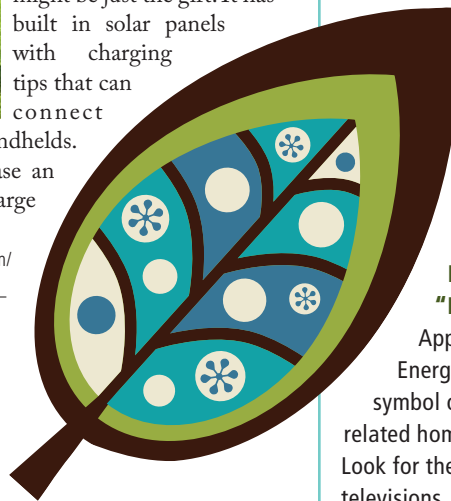


Fuel Cell Car Kit

For those 12 & up, consider a Fuel Cell Car & Experiment Kit from Thames & Kosmos. In a nutshell, it's a toy car that runs on water

but introduces the concept of solar technology as well.

http://www.treehugger.com/files/2006/04/fuel_cell_car_k_2.php



Dreaming of a Green Christmas

The holidays are a time of giving. It's also a time of mass consumption. The amount of household garbage in the United States generally increases by 25 percent between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, from 4 million to 5 million tons, and electricity consumption increases by 27 percent. You can do your part to reverse that trend by shopping smart and shopping green.

COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS

Give someone something that takes a lump of coal OUT of their stocking.

LED HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Each Light Emitting Diode bulb with this new technology uses only 0.04 watts and is up to 90 percent more efficient than its incandescent counterpart. They also last more than 20 years.

DECORATE YOUR HOME WITH "ENERGY STARS"

Appliances and electronics with the Energy Star label – the government's symbol of energy efficiency – can cut related home energy bills up to 30 percent. Look for the Energy Star on computers, televisions, washing machines, refrigerators, dishwashers and room air conditioners.

CARBON OFFSETS

Let's say you really want to fly to the West Coast for Christmas, but you're feeling a little guilty about the emissions you are using. What can you do about it? You can pay someone to offset them by funding the development of renewable energy projects in countries around the world.



FRED SAID:

Recycling your Christmas tree saves landfill space and provides a great source of mulch and compost!

Who is Fred? He's Fred Anderson, President & CEO of the Co-op and he's big on energy efficiency!

you

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

For member service please call

1-800-698-2007
Monday-Friday, 8-5:00
or visit us online at
www.nhec.coop

To report an outage please call

1-800-343-6432

New Hampshire Electric Cooperative
579 Tenney Mountain Highway
Plymouth, NH 03264