

BACK TO SCHOOL



As the **KIDS** get ready to return to school, why not **TEACH** some **SIMPLE CONSERVATION TIPS**:

Lunch Break:

Pack kid's lunches in lunch pails or canvas bags instead of throwaway paper bags. Consider reusing plastic sandwich bags or only using durable plastic containers.

Start with the Basics:

Remind kids to turn off the lights in the bathroom or cloak room when leaving, throw away trash found on the school playground, use both sides of the paper and save unused chalk, pens or art supplies.

Check Out School's Recycling Programs:

Ask whether recycling bins are accessible and if the kids are encouraged to use them.

Make Your School a Toxic Free Zone:

Changing over to non-toxic cleaners (which impact indoor air quality), as well as providing organic food and juice, as well as rBGH-free milk. Make sure your school is not using toxic pesticides in or around the school, which can pose significant health risks to your children if exposed.

Buy Smart, Drive Less

A recent book, *The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices* (Three Rivers Press, 1999), analyzed all the many things that consumers buy and do. It concluded that "personal use of cars and light trucks is the single most damaging consumer behavior." Not only does car use cause many types of air pollution and a large share of the greenhouse gases contributing to global warming, but indirectly it is a major source of water pollution (through manufacturing of cars, gasoline production, and runoff from highways) and ecologically harmful land use (for the road network).







What steps can we take to reduce this environmental damage? In terms of our personal lives, there are many possible actions we can take, but most of

them boil down to driving less and purchasing an environmentally friendly car. A complete list of "green vehicles" is available at www.epa.gov/greenvehicles.

Even a small difference in gas mileage can make a big difference to the environment. For example, if you buy a minivan that gets 24 miles per gallon rather than one that gets 20 miles per gallon, that will represent a 20% improvement in gas mileage and a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. If you were to drive the minivan 15,000 miles in a year, you will use 125 fewer gallons of gasoline and produce 2,500 fewer pounds of carbon dioxide, the main contributor to global warming. No matter what car you're driving, follow these tips to maximize its performance and fuel mileage.



Tips:

-  **Maintain your car well.**
Regular tune-ups, changing the oil frequently, and keeping car emissions controls in good shape all reduce air pollution significantly.
-  **Don't top off the tank.**
Topping off can spill gas on the ground and it release harmful gas vapors into the air.
-  **Maintain proper tire pressure.**
Under-inflated tires reduce your car's gas mileage.
-  **Combine errands.**
According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, a car that's been sitting for more than an hour pollutes up to five times more than when the engine's warm. If you do your errands one after another, you will keep the engine warm and the air pollution emissions down.
-  **Slow down, even a little.**
As a rule of thumb, you can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.20 per gallon for gas.
-  **Use air conditioning wisely.**
Air conditioners are efficient on the highway but can increase your fuel consumption by up to 12 percent in stop-and-go traffic.

- Watts Happening
- Half-price Golf
- Your Electric Meter
- Pole Testing
- Solar Hot Water

Your Electric Co-op's Newsletter



FEATURE ARTICLE: **Small Steps**[™] Co-op Takes Energy Efficiency Message to the Airwaves... and Beyond



CFL bulbs use about 75% less energy and last up to 10 times longer than standard bulbs.

You don't have to spend a lot of money or change your lifestyle to reduce carbon emissions and save energy. That's the message your Co-op is sending in a new campaign called **Small Steps**.

At the heart of the **Small Steps** campaign is our belief that together,

we can take small steps that make big strides towards a better energy future. In television commercials debuting this month, a new section on our website and other public education initiatives, the Co-op is stressing the importance of simple, inexpensive measures that can add up to significant change.

Small Steps is the most visible part of our effort to foster greater social and environmental responsibility.

We've launched several other initiatives that back our words with actions, including:

- Rebate offers of up to \$1,500 on installation of solar hot water systems



Use cloth bags for shopping instead of plastic.

- Rebate offers of up to \$3,000 on installation of small wind generators
- Free home energy audits to 50 members
- Distribution of 1,000 free home energy kits
- Conversion of all NHEC facilities to energy-efficient lighting
- Installation of solar hot water at Plymouth headquarters facility
- Joined 25x25 Coalition (www.25x25.org)
- Began conversion of NHEC fleet to hybrid and ultra low sulfur diesel vehicles

We hope you will take the **Small Steps** message to heart and join the growing number of people who understand that together, we can make a difference. To learn more about the **Small Steps** campaign and our portfolio of programs and services, visit the Co-op's website at www.nhec.coop.



For member service please call
1-800-698-2007 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



Coming Soon to a Pole Near You...



If you see two guys taking an unusual interest in the utility pole near your house, that's just Steve and Kyle working their summer jobs.

As part of its effort to provide reliable electric service, the Co-op has embarked on a multi-year effort to test each one of its 80,000 poles.

Using a bread box-sized device called a Polux Pole Tester, Kyle Turmelle and Steve Thompson insert probes into each pole testing for moisture content and fiber strength. The results have been encouraging – the vast majority of poles tested thus far are in good shape.

At a pace of 10,000 poles per year, testing will be continuing for the next seven years.

Golfer's Discount



1/2 Price for Members Only. Sunday October 21, 2007. Shotgun start at 10 a.m. **CALL NOW** to reserve a spot at 1-888-OWL-NEST. Present this coupon or Co-op bill to receive discount. For information about Owl's Nest Golf Club, visit them online at www.owlstneggolf.com.

Co-op Power Set For October Increase

A seasonal adjustment in the cost of wholesale power will result in a modest increase effective October 1 in the rate members pay for electricity (the Co-op Power line item on your bill).

The rate change is the result of an increase in the price of natural gas, which is the primary fuel used to generate electricity in New England. Demand for natural gas is greater in winter, triggering a corresponding increase in prices.

A small change is also expected in the Regional Access Charge (also a separate line item on your bill) which covers the costs NHEC pays for use of the regional bulk transmission system to deliver Co-op Power to our local distribution facilities at 36 locations throughout the state.

The amounts of these changes were undetermined at the time this newsletter went to print. More information will be made available in your October newsletter and online at www.nhec.coop.

HIGH Bill? It's Probably Not Your Meter

"There's no way I'm using that much electricity!"

"There must be something wrong with my meter."

At the Member Solutions call center, we hear these statements frequently from members who are unpleasantly surprised by their monthly usage. Before we offer you some solutions, here are some facts about your electric meter:

- *Results of member-requested meter tests show 99.6% of Co-op meters are accurate.*
- *If an electric meter is not functioning properly, it will typically slow down, not speed up.*
- *The Co-op conducts a random test of one percent of its meters each year.*

If you think your electric usage is too high, call the Co-op and we'll try to help. We've got a number of options – from online energy audits that break down your home's electric use by appliance, to home energy audits for members who use electric heat, to income-qualified state programs that can save you up to 70% on your electric bill.

If you're still convinced there's a problem with your electric meter, the Co-op will test it for a fee of \$70.

WATTS HAPPENING!

Board of Directors Meetings

The NHEC Board of Directors meets once a month at the Co-op's 287 Highland Street, Plymouth facility. Unless otherwise noted, the Board meets on the second to last Tuesday of each month. Meeting dates and times will be posted online at the Co-op's website at www.nhec.coop, or contact Sharon Yeaton at 536-8801.

Place Your **FREE** Classified Ad

Co-op members are buying and selling online at nhec.coop. Want to reach over 80,000 people with your ad? Place your free Co-op Classified today. To get going, log on to nhec.coop. If you've already registered as a new user, follow the links to the automated ad posting tool. If you're a first-timer, register as a new user and you'll be good to go. Ads are posted on the Co-op Classifieds for one month, at which time you can repost. There is no limit to how many ads you can post.

Solar Hot Water Let the Sun Do the Work



Co-op member George Chaite says he installed his solar hot water system "because it was the right thing to do," but saving hundreds of dollars on his oil bill was a nice side-benefit.

GroSolar of White River Junction, Vermont, outfitted Chaite's home in Sunapee with two solar panels, which capture the heat of the sun and transfer it to the water he and his family use every day. Thus far, it's been a good relationship between the Chaite's and the sun.

An oil-fired system acts as a back-up to his solar water heating, but Chaite says it's been seldom needed this summer.

"It's nice to go downstairs after two or three people have already taken a shower and not hear that oil-fired heater running," said Chaite, who estimates he'll save between \$200 and \$300 per year on oil.

With federal tax credits and rebates of up to \$1,500 on qualified installations from the Co-op, it's easier than ever to get into hot water the solar way. For more information about the Co-op's Solar Hot Water program, visit us online at nhec.coop or call **1-800-698-2007**.

What Makes a Marathon Water Heater GREEN? (and the competition GREEN with envy?)

- Lifetime warranty non-metallic tank
- Highest energy efficiency ratings in industry
- Lowest stand-by heat loss of any tank-type water heater
- First in industry to use Envirofoam® insulation – CFC and HCFC free
- No combustion by-products

Buy your Marathon direct from NHEC and save with members-only pricing.

1-800-698-2007

www.nhec.coop



Clear A Path, Help a Meter Reader



With winter right around the corner, it's a good time to remind members to keep a path clear to your electric meter. If a meter reader cannot access your meter, you'll receive an estimated bill which may not reflect your actual usage. Your account will then be reconciled the next time a reader can gain access to your meter and may result in an unexpectedly high bill. Keeping open access to your electric meter saves all members money and avoids the need for estimated bills. Thanks for your cooperation!