

4 Energy-saving tips for the modern family

If you are struck by the amount of screens, remotes, gaming controls, charging stations and cords that have become fixtures in your home, you are not alone. The typical American family is well connected and owns a variety of electronic devices.

According to the PEW Research Institute, 95 percent of U.S. families have a cell phone and 77 percent of Americans own a smart phone. Nearly 80 percent of adults own a laptop or desktop computer, while approximately half own tablets.

Consumer electronics coupled with the growing array of smart home appliances and technology have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles. The increased reliance on our many devices has new implications for home energy use and efficiency.

So how can we save energy when we are using more electronic devices than ever before?

The answer may lie with some of those same electronic devices that have become indispensable to modern living. In many cases, energy savings is a touchscreen away as more apps enable you to monitor energy use.



One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat, like the Nest model.

1. Smart Devices

From the convenience of your mobile device, smart technologies can maximize your ability to manage electricity use across several platforms—controlling your thermostat, appliances, water heater, home electronics and other devices. One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat, like Nest models. Using your mobile device, you can view and edit your thermostat schedule and monitor how much energy is used and make adjustments accordingly.

2. Energy-efficient appliances

You can also ensure efficiency by purchasing ENERGY STAR-certified appliances. Many new appliances include smart-technology features such as refrigerators that can tell you when maintenance is required or when a door has been left open. New washers, dryers and dishwashers allow you to program when you want the load to start. This means you can program your task for off-peak energy hours—a smart choice if your electric rate is based on time of use.

3. Power strips

Computers, printers, phones and gaming consoles are notorious “vampire power” users, meaning they drain energy (and money) when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off or placed on a timer.

4. Electric Cooperatives

While modern life involves greater dependence on technology, your best resource for saving energy and money remains your local electric co-op.

Regardless of your level of technical expertise with electronic devices, Southwest Rural Electric can provide guidance on energy savings based on your account information, energy use, local weather patterns and additional factors unique to your community.

For more information on energy efficiency, call us or visit our website, www.swre.com.

SWRE Manager's Report

Volunteers are the “Oyster” of our Communities



Louis & Betty Box find great joy by volunteering their time for the Frederick Oyster Fry.

Thousands of delicious saltwater oysters are harvested in a small fishing community in southeast Texas. Within 48 hours these delicious delicacies will be hand-battered, fried and served by over a hundred community volunteers in Frederick, Oklahoma.

Though this is a unique event, it is by no means a new one. The town of Frederick has been facilitating its annual Oyster Fry Festival for nearly 30 years. However, the event dates back even further to the nearby town of Manitou, where it held a previous 30-year stint as a fundraiser for the local school board.

When the event outgrew its original location, it would have ceased to exist if it weren't for servant-minded community members pulling together to keep tradition alive. Perhaps some of the most dedicated families are SWRE members, Louis and Betty Box and Dan and Twyla Elsener.

Louis and Betty were long time customers of the Manitou event but became involved first-hand when their daughter, Twyla (Box) Elsener, approached them one day with the idea to continue the festival, but this time in Frederick.

“The biggest reason the event crumbled in Manitou is because the trouble and expense of driving down to the coast became too much trouble –nobody wanted to do it.” Betty Box, said.

When Louis volunteered to donate the expense and equipment for picking up the oysters, Twyla went to work raising funds and generating excitement around town. From there the event exploded with the help of dozens of selfless volunteers and guidance from the Frederick Chamber of Commerce.

Today the event is Frederick's most revered event. The small town serves approximately 1,000 people in a three-hour time period. Oysters come fried or on the half shell and are served generously next to a helping of Manitou's original coleslaw, chips and bread.

It is people like Louis and Betty and their family that have helped create a sense of community pride and fellowship through involvement and volunteer participation.

It is this sense of community that encompasses the sixth cooperative principle of “concern for the community.” SWRE has always been a strong staple in the Texhoma communities it represents and it will continue to be so in the years to come. We are proud to serve the communities our member-owners represent. We could all take a few lessons from the Box's and their dedication and service to their community.

This year's Oyster Fry will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018. For more information visit frederickchamber.org/oyster_fry To read our extended article, check out swre.com

7 Cooperative Principles



1. Voluntary Open Membership

2. Democratic Member Control



3. Cooperation among Cooperatives

4. Autonomy & Independence



5. Member Economic Participation

6. Concern for the Community



7. Education, Training & Information

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NOTE: When paying at a bank, allow 10 days prior to the bill's due date.

What's Cookin' in the SWRE Kitchen

Oyster Stew



Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 6 cups whole milk or half and half
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- 16 ounces fresh raw oysters, undrained

Directions:

1. Heat butter over medium heat in heavy bottom 3-quart saucepan. Add diced onion and saute until tender, about 5 minutes. Grate in garlic (or mince), continue to saute for another 1-2 minutes, being watchful to not burn garlic. Add red pepper, paprika, salt, black pepper, stir to toast about 1 minute.
2. Drain oysters and reserve liquid (oyster liqueur).
3. Reduce heat to low, add milk, parsley and oyster liqueur.
4. Cook over low heat until mixture is hot and beginning to steam, and bubbles just start to appear around the edge. Do NOT allow to come to a boil. Salt and pepper to taste.
5. Add oysters and continue to cook over low heat until oysters begin to curl on edges.

SWRE News

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Warren, OK. 580.471.5129

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