

SWRE POWER SOURCE

A Supplement to Oklahoma Living



SHOULD YOU USE SPACE HEATERS AT HOME?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat an entire home, which can take a serious toll on energy bills.

The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home.

If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weatherstripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy.

Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1–\$1.50 per square foot. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling costs for years to come.

Perhaps your home is already energy-efficient, but you run cold and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for

your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months.

Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the portable heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure it's properly sized for the space. Most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: more than 1,700 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 80 deaths. If you must use one, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the UL Solutions label or that of another reputable certification lab.

Choose a heater controlled via thermostat to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children, pets and anything flammable well away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm, like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation and maintain warmth.



SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES IS THE CO-OP WAY

Jeff Simpson, Chief Executive Officer

As some of you might know, cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles, which guide our decisions—from how we run the co-op to how we engage with our communities.

Concern for Community is the seventh principle, and it's one of the most cherished among the employees of Southwest Rural Electric. During the holiday season, this principle seems especially important.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of supporting the communities that built them. From youth programs and scholarships to direct charitable donations, SWRE steps up to help our members, their friends and families, and neighbors.

Co-op members their part, too. Through the Operation Round Up program, members can round up their energy bills to the next whole dollar, and the extra change goes toward helping those in need, right here in our community. Learn more about Operation Round Up at [SWRE.com/RoundUp](https://www.swre.com/RoundUp).

Electric cooperatives' commitment to community extends globally too. Co-ops across the country,

including SWRE, have donated equipment and sent lineworkers to other countries—to help bring power to people who have never experienced the benefits of electricity.

So many families go without on a daily basis and struggle to make ends meet. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season.

There are many ways you can give back to the community that go beyond dollars and cents. Take some time to go through your closets and find clothes that no longer fit or you don't use. Bag them up and take them to a local charity or church clothing drive. Volunteer for a local food or toy drive, deliver meals to the sick and older adults, or simply make a meal for a neighbor in need.

No matter how great or small the act, every time we lend a hand, we strengthen our community. So take time this holiday season to think about your neighbors. If you're like me, you'll feel all the better for it.

I hope you enjoy a wonderful holiday season filled with happiness and love.



CAPITAL CREDITS: A BENEFIT OF CO-OP MEMBERSHIP

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we believe in giving credit where credit is due—to the members who shape our co-op. One of the ways we do this is through capital credits. Because SWRE operates at cost, we give cash back to our members rather than outside investors or shareholders.

HERE'S HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK:

SWRE members use the electricity we provide and pay their monthly bills, and we track their business with the co-op over time. SWRE pays all operating expenses throughout the year, and if any operating revenue is leftover, we allocate it as capital credits. When financial conditions permit, the co-op's board of directors votes to pay capital credits back to the members.

Capital credits are just one of the many benefits of co-op membership. Giving back to our local members instead of outside parties is one aspect that sets cooperatives apart from other types of businesses.

Our members guide every decision we make and are the reason our co-op exists. To us, you're more than a customer. This holiday season, we hope you're proud to be part of a community-focused co-op that puts people before profits.

MINI-SPLITS AT A GLANCE

Mini-split systems, also known as ductless air-source heat pumps, heat/cool a home through an outdoor unit that connects to one or more individual indoor air handlers, which are typically mounted on a wall. Depending on the size of your home and personal preferences, a mini-split system is worth considering when you need to replace or upgrade your heating/cooling system.

Mini-Split System Benefits:

- Zone-controlled heating/cooling
- Higher energy efficiency ratings
- Easy to install
- Good for heating/cooling home additions

Mini-Split System Considerations:

- Potentially higher upfront cost
- Appearance
- May require electrical upgrades



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

The SWRE office will be closed the following days:

December 24 (Christmas Eve) – Office Closed

December 25 (Christmas Day) – Office Closed

January 1 (New Year's Day) – Office Closed

We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

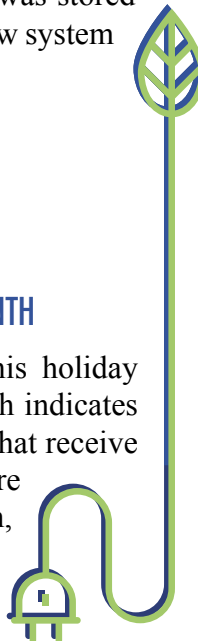
AUTOMATED PAYMENT PHONE NUMBER CHANGE: (855) 940-3943

SWRE is migrating its automated phone payment system and with this upgrade comes a new phone number. Members can call the new automated number (855-940-3943) to make a payment on their account 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Members who call the old automated number will be directed to dial the new number. Credit card information that was stored in the old system will be migrated securely to the new system for members' convenience.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you're planning to purchase electronic gifts this holiday season, look for the ENERGY STAR® label, which indicates higher energy efficiency performance. Electronics that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating are up to 25% more efficient than standard products. This holiday season, give the gift of energy savings with ENERGY STAR®-rated electronics and equipment.



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Bill Pay Options:

24/7 Bill Pay: 1-855-940-3943

SmartHub App or SWRE.com

Outage Reports:

24/7 Hotline: 1-833-590-0353

SmartHub App

SWRE is an equal opportunity provider and employer. SWRE *Power Source* is published monthly for distribution to members of SWRE and is produced by Rebecca Chambless.



**WE'RE
PROUD TO
POWER YOU.**