

# Motivation for doing good

The poster on the wall was titled “Anyway,” and it was written in beautiful flowing script. It caught my eye while I was browsing through a store, and I couldn’t seem to get it off my mind. Later, I sat down at the computer and searched the World Wide Web for some information on the poem. In a matter of seconds, my search was rewarded with thousands of references to a poem that was originally titled “The Paradoxical Commandments” by Kent M. Keith. It read as follows:

*People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.*

*If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.*

*Do good anyway.*

*If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies.*

*Succeed anyway.*

*The good you do today, will be forgotten tomorrow.*

*Do good anyway.*

*Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.*

*Be honest and frank anyway.*

*The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.*

*Think big anyway.*

*People favor underdogs, but follow only top dogs.*

*Fight for a few underdogs anyway.*

*What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.*

*Build anyway.*

*People really need help, but may attack you if you do help them.*

*Help people anyway.*

*Give the world the best you have and you’ll get kicked in the teeth.*

*Give the world the best you have anyway.*

It turns out I’m not the only one who has been touched by the simple thoughts of that poem. The great humanitarian Mother Teresa had a framed version of the poem hanging on the wall of her children’s home in Calcutta, India. The poem has been quoted and referenced by great writ-

ers and speakers like Stephen R. Covey, John C. Maxwell, Rev. Robert Schuller and John Hagee. The poem has been reprinted in professional and motivational publications, newsletters, handbooks and in Ann Landers’ nationally syndicated advice column.

I was especially touched by the poem during this time of economic hardship, knowing the continuing struggles of folks in our communities. Why should we help strangers or folks who are suspect of our motives? Why should we be positive, kind and honest when our efforts may not even be recognized? Because it’s the right thing to do.

Our children, our businesses, our families, our organizations — our whole society — need to be reminded that we should all be involved in activities to help the less fortunate around us. There are opportunities to contribute or to volunteer and do good things everywhere you look. One that’s especially beneficial during these cold winter months is Project HELP.

Project HELP is a program to help pay the high power bills that customers have experienced since November. Many customers have contributed to the program for years. But now there are more folks in need of assistance than ever before, and bills are higher than they’ve ever been. How can you help an individual who has lost a job, an elderly couple that is struggling to afford necessary medications or a family that is going under due to continuing medical bills? You could give up one cup of coffee or a soft drink each month and contribute that amount to Project HELP.

If each Holston Electric Cooperative customer gave just \$1 monthly to Project HELP, there would be more than \$30,000 each month to make sure that everyone has a warm house to sleep in. One dollar isn’t much money by today’s standards. You might think it’s not even worth the effort to contribute just \$1. Give that \$1 anyway and see how our combined efforts can help our neighbors. Complete the enrollment form on the next page or in your February billing statement and return it to any Holston EC office. It’s a great opportunity to do good.



**Larry Elkins**  
General Manager  
Holston Electric  
Cooperative



Serving more than 30,000 customers in Hawkins and Hamblen counties.



1200 W. Main St.  
P.O. Box 190  
Rogersville, TN 37857  
272-8821 • 235-6811

Web site: [www.holstonelectric.com](http://www.holstonelectric.com)

### Church Hill office

Highway 11-W and South Central Avenue  
Church Hill, TN 37642  
357-6441

### Russellville office

Highway 11-E  
Russellville, TN 37860  
581-2066

**Office hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.**

**Monday-Friday**

### General Manager

Larry Elkins

### Board of Directors

President: Otis Munsey  
Vice President: William W. Bales  
Secretary-Treasurer:  
Danny Cockreham  
Lynn Parker  
Phil Pierce  
Danny R. Price  
William F. Young

**To report an outage or electrical emergency, call 272-8821 or 235-6811 day or night.**

# Project HELP offers a way to help those less fortunate

While times are tough in today's economy, they are even more challenging for those who were already struggling. Adding to the dilemma, coal prices jumped by record amounts this summer, which led to higher electricity costs around the nation. Furthermore, recent layoffs in the region threaten the economic security of even more homes.

"We at Holston Electric Cooperative are concerned about our elderly, disabled, and vulnerable customers during these times of financial hardship," says Holston EC General Manager Larry Elkins. "We have got to get the message out that our neighbors need our support now more than ever."

Project HELP provides emergency energy assistance to those who need it most, and Holston EC members can help by simply adding \$1 or more to their monthly bills. The program is administered by the Hawkins County Neighborhood Service Center and Hamblen County Central Services, who determine if Holston EC members are eligible for a one-time credit to their electric bills.

Holston EC customers have generously donated more than \$22,000 in the last year, with 100 percent of the contributions going directly to assist individuals with their heating bills.

These contributions have allowed Holston EC to help out more than 220 households. Nonetheless, the jobless rate has continued to steadily increase in the region, and

## Who to call for help

**Holston Electric Cooperative's Project HELP program and the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program are both available to customers who apply and are qualified by the Neighborhood Referral Service Center in Hawkins County (272-2830) and Central Services in Hamblen County (586-9431).**

there is now an even greater urgency to assist the elderly, the disabled and others — many with small children — who can't afford to pay their electric bills.

"With unemployment rates higher than 7 percent and an increasing population of aging or disabled customers, many more than 3,000 households are struggling to keep warm in our local community," added Elkins. "Holston EC realizes that times are tight for most right now, but by just giving a little, our members can help a lot."

The need is great, and Holston Electric Cooperative members can sign up today by completing the form below or one included in your February power bill and returning it to any Holston EC office.

<p>_____</p> <p>Holston Electric Cooperative Account Number</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Name (as it appears on your electric bill – please print)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Address</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Telephone Number</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature _____ Date _____</p>	<p>Please add the following amount to my monthly electric bill for Project HELP.</p> <p>_____ \$1</p> <p>_____ MORE THAN \$1 (please specify) _____</p> <p>Project HELP — neighbors helping neighbors</p>
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## High-tech thermostats offer potential savings

Keeping your home hot or cold — depending on the season — accounts for a big chunk of your annual budget. In fact, the average U.S. homeowner spends \$2,500 a year on home energy with 56 percent, or \$1,400, going toward heating and cooling costs.

Not surprisingly, savings can add up in a hurry when heating and cooling systems are tweaked for maximum efficiency. You can easily trim your energy bills in winter by setting the thermostat at 68 degrees Fahrenheit while you're awake and back a few degrees when to go to sleep or are away from home.

Even better, turning your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours can save 5 percent to 15 percent a year on your heating bill — about 1 percent for each degree. Savings may be even greater for homes in milder climates.

The location of your thermostat can greatly affect its performance and efficiency. Place thermostats away from direct sunlight, drafts, doorways, skylights and windows.

Read the manufacturer's instructions to prevent "ghost readings," unnecessary furnace or air conditioner cycling.

Installing a programmable thermostat can take the thought out of saving energy. Your heating and cooling system will



ramp up or switch off according to a preset time of day or even day of the week. Most models let you manually override the schedule without affecting the rest of the daily or weekly program.

Programmable thermostats are generally not recommended for heat pumps. In cooling mode, a heat pump operates like an air conditioner, so turning up the thermostat will save energy and money. But when a heat pump works in its heating mode, setting back the thermostat can cause the unit to operate inefficiently, canceling out any savings achieved by lowering the temperature. Maintaining a moderate setting is the most cost-effective practice.

To automatically manage electric resistance systems such as electric baseboard heating, steam heating or radiant floor heating, you will need to purchase a programmable thermostat specifically designed for the task. Of course, when shopping for a programmable thermostat, always look for the Energy Star label.

More information on what may be right for your home can be found at [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

*Source: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy*

## HEC receives NRECA safety certification

Qualifying for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association safety certification is not an easy process, which makes receiving the award even more gratifying. For the eighth consecutive three-year period, HEC met and exceeded the requirements set by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's Job Training and Safety Committee, the Rural Utilities Services and the Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program.

Certification is based on the scores the utility receives from the safety accreditation application, an on-site observation survey conducted by a team of industry professionals and documentation requested to verify the system's safety program and efforts. Holston EC received its highest score ever this past year, with a final overall score of 95.

The cooperative's board of directors and management elect to participate in the certification program because of their concern for the safety of cooperative employees,



**Scott Price, Holston EC director of safety training/loss coordinator, left, and Larry Elkins, general manager, proudly display the Certificate of Safety Accreditation awarded by NRECA.**

customers and the general public and a desire to maintain the role as an organization that upholds a standard of exceptional safety practices.

HEC is also proud to announce that 2008 was another safe year for employees with no lost-time accidents during the calendar year. Through December 2008, the cooperative has experienced 884 safe working days.

# Winter storm safety

By Chris Grammes

**S**now and ice storms are an inevitable part of the winter season. However, they can lead to downed power lines and outages. Remember the following tips to stay safe and warm should you find yourself in the dark after a severe winter event:

- Never touch a fallen power line, and assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. Call Holston Electric Cooperative at 272-8821 or 235-6811 and report it immediately. Avoid contact with overhead lines during cleanup and other activities.
- In the event of an outage, an alternate heating source — such as a fireplace, propane space heater or wood stove — may be used. Extreme caution should be taken.
- Plan to stay in an area of the home where the alternate heat source is located.
- Vent fuel- and wood-burning heating sources. Be sure to follow manufacturer's directions.
- Make sure carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors are working properly.
- Do not use a gas-powered oven for heating. A gas oven may go out or burn inefficiently, leading to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not use a gas or charcoal grill inside the home. Do not use charcoal briquettes in the fireplace.
- If you use a portable generator to power a heating source, be sure the generator is located outside your house for



proper ventilation. Do not use a generator in an attached garage. Follow manufacturer's directions for operating the generator.

- Take special care not to overload a generator. Use appropriately sized extension cords to carry the electric load. Make sure the cords have grounded, three-pronged plugs and are in good condition.
- Never run cords under rugs or carpets.
- Never connect generators to power lines. The reverse flow of electricity can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Ideally, your family will stay warm until the power comes back on. But keep an eye on family members for signs of hypothermia,

which include shivering, drowsiness and mental and physical slowness. The elderly and young children are particularly vulnerable to hypothermia. Call 911 immediately if you notice these symptoms. That means keeping at least one telephone in the house that does not depend on electricity available in the case of a power outage.

*Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Ag Safety Database.*

*Chris Grammes writes on safety issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

## Don't get burned this winter

**A**s you warm yourself and your family indoors during the cold winter months, don't get burned.

Stay safe around heaters, stoves and other hot objects. Some tips:

- Keep your space heater several feet away from yourself, your furniture and your draperies while it's turned on. And never leave a child alone in a room with an operating space heater.
- Don't try to balance a child in one arm and a cup of hot coffee or tea with the opposite hand.
- Avoid loose clothing while cooking or tending to the fireplace. Throw on a short-sleeved shirt to cut your risk of catching your clothes on fire.
- Turn pot handles away from the edge of the stove to avoid knocking the pots over.
- Puncture microwavable plastic bags and keep containers slightly ventilated while they're in the microwave oven. This prevents buildup of scalding steam.
- If you have a grease fire, don't try to move or touch the pan. Instead, turn off the heat and cover it with a lid.
- Place fireplace ashes in a metal container outside by themselves. This gets them out of the house and isolates them from flammable materials.
- Teach kids respect for fire: Let them know that it's dangerous and not something to play with or around.



# Heating and cooling efficiently with heat pumps

By Scott Gates

Managing the temperature in a home or business has the hands-down biggest impact on energy costs. In trying to keep warm in winter and cool during summer, the average U.S. homeowner spends \$1,400 annually, accounting for 56 percent of all home energy expenses.

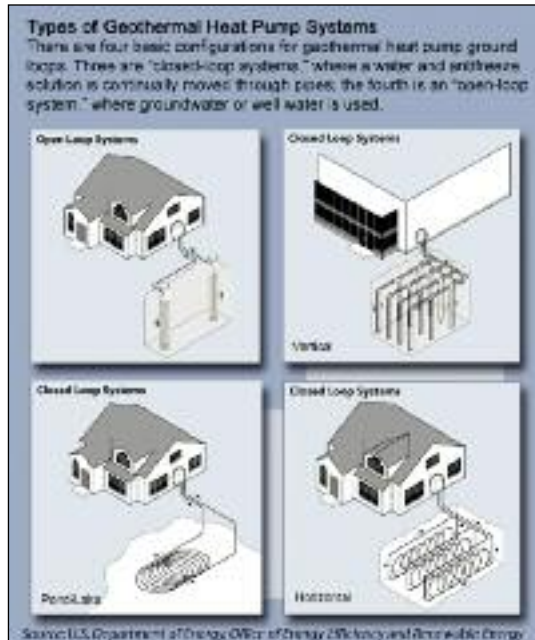
While this outlay can be trimmed by tweaking efficiency, some folks have taken it a step further and installed heat pumps, highly efficient devices that can provide both heating and cooling comfort.

As the name implies, heat pumps simply move heat from one place to another. During winter months, they collect and consolidate heat from outside sources and move it inside; during summer months, they reverse the flow and send warm, indoor air out.

The most common type is an air-source heat pump that resembles an air-conditioning unit and uses the air around it to transfer heat. Geothermal heat pumps, also known as ground-source heat pumps, use the earth itself or groundwater as a means of transferring heat.

When replacing an electric heating system, air-source heat pumps can trim the amount of electricity needed for heating by as much as 30 percent to 40 percent. Although a typical high-efficiency, Energy Star-qualified air-source heat pump comes with a substantial \$6,000 price tag, it's estimated that energy savings will offset the purchase price within five years.

Geothermal heat pumps come in two types: A groundwater (open-loop) system uses well water; an earth-coupled (closed-loop) model moves a water-and-antifreeze solution through underground pipes. They can cost anywhere from \$15,000 to \$40,000 for an average home — excavation, installation of underground pipes and (with a groundwater heat pump) well-drilling account for much of the price tag. But annual geothermal energy savings average between 30 percent and 71 percent, according to



the Geo-Heat Center, a part of the Oregon Institute of Technology, and provide a fairly rapid pay-back. Even better, Energy Star versions use up to 60 percent less energy than their standard air-source counterparts.

“Heat pumps — whether they’re geothermal or air-source — can be tricky to put in,” explains Brian Sloboda, senior adviser with the Cooperative Research Network, an arm of Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. “A good rule of thumb is to get a North American Technician Excellence (NATE)-certified installer. They’ve passed

a comprehensive test and will know what they’re doing.”

Sloboda adds that air-source heat pumps work at maximum efficiency in moderate climates where the outside temperature rarely drops below 30 degrees Fahrenheit. “Although cold-climate heat pumps are under development, if you live anywhere in the U.S. north of St. Louis, you might want to consider other options. A dual-fuel system could do the trick, for example, where an oil, natural gas or propane furnace supplements the heat pump during the coldest months.”

Homeowners considering a heat pump should discuss their payment options with Holston Electric Cooperative employees who work with the heat pump financing program. Six-percent financing of heat pumps is available to customers who qualify. It is also important to learn the ins and outs of available technology. State and federal rebates may be available for some systems.

*Sources: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; Cooperative Research Network; OIT Geo-Heat Center; U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Scott Gates writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*