

Be Prepared if Your HVAC  
Bails on Holiday Dinner

CUT ENERGY USE  
IN THE KITCHEN

# JEMCOnews

A PUBLICATION FOR JACKSON EMC MEMBERS

November 2015



Light Up  
the Holidays



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# Thankful

Thanksgiving comes along once a year, offering a chance for us to pause and take stock of those things we are thankful for. My list is long. I am thankful for God’s many blessings – good health, loving family and friends, and a wonderful job at a fantastic cooperative!

I recently returned from a family fishing trip and it reminded me of my many blessings. The trip is an annual pilgrimage for us off the coast of Louisiana to Chandeleur Island. Our weekend fishing group includes dads, sons, brothers, uncles, cousins and a few family friends mixed in. The trip is important to me and my family. It gives us time together and time for us to appreciate nature, made easier when our cell signals slowly fade as we head 42 miles offshore.

We had a successful trip by any measure. We caught enough fish to keep the tall tales going all weekend. The ones that got away were more spectacular than ever. The only injury came from a hook through the finger; I’m thankful it wasn’t mine. We experienced 10-foot seas on the four-hour boat ride home. That made me thankful for dry land.

I’m also thankful I get to come home to Jackson EMC. It’s a great place to work filled with many amazing people. The men and women who work beside me are the hardest workers I know, and they’re happy to be here to serve you, no matter the weather outside.

I’m thankful for the members involved in this co-op. I’m especially thankful for our members’ commitment to community. Kudos to our members for empowering Operation Round Up,<sup>®</sup> to significantly impact the lives of those in need. In 10 years together, you’ve given \$10 million to those individuals and organizations who used your change to make a change in so many lives.

I’m thankful for the members who reach out to me. I appreciate your letters, emails and phone calls that let me know when we are doing a good job, and when we aren’t.

I’m thankful for those members who support our employees. The kindness shown through a warm cup of coffee after a long night working on a power line, a holiday cookie delivered to our office or a smile shared when you visit our office mean more than you know.

While many of us take note of the blessings that enrich our lives on a daily basis, Thanksgiving gives me, at least, a reason to write it down.

When my family sits down to dinner on Thanksgiving, I’ll be hoping you are with your family too.

Thank you for your support. Happy Thanksgiving from all of us here at your electric cooperative. ▲

## JEMCO news

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10 Years.  
\$10 Million.

Since 2005, Jackson EMC members have chosen to participate in Operation Round Up<sup>®</sup> and have the change from each month’s bill rounded up to the nearest dollar amount. Those pennies have been put to good use, all \$10 million of it. Read more about the impact member donations make in our community at [www.jacksonemc.com/foundation](http://www.jacksonemc.com/foundation).



**LED bulbs** are making light strands more versatile than ever with thin wire lights like those illuminating these bottles. LED bulbs also use less electricity, last longer and are safer.

**Cost \$17.99 to buy and run lights for 10 seasons vs. \$122.19 for traditional bulbs.**

\*Department of Energy

**AppLights** are controlled by a smartphone application. The app turns the lights on or off and can change the color and theme for more than 140 total effects for a completely customized spectacle. These lights come in icicle (shown), spotlight and candy cane, to name a few.

**Cost \$60 a strand.**

**Battery-powered bulbs** offer limitless options for decorating places where there's no outlet. Think wreaths, centerpieces or ugly sweaters.

**Solar power** can cut cost and allow you to light areas not easily accessible to an outlet. Small solar panels store energy in batteries so lights can burn during the night. Available in stake lights, strings, or even decorative jars like this that you can carry with you on an evening stroll.

**Timers** come with a variety of options. Indoor/outdoor, dial/digital, single-plug or power strip, but the idea behind them is the same: automate your light symphony. Timers save electricity because you decide exactly which hours to burn the bulbs, and they turn on and off whether you fall asleep on the couch or not.

**Cost \$11-\$30.**

**Photocell light timers** are activated by a darkness-sensing cell that triggers lights to turn on at dusk and off at dawn, or after a set amount of time (1-9 hours).

**Cost \$30.**

**Send us a photo of your holiday wonderland.**

Share your photo with us on Facebook or send us an email to [asorrow@jacksonemc.com](mailto:asorrow@jacksonemc.com).

# Festival of Lights

**Planning to deck the halls? Check out these products designed to save electricity and time.**

## Keep this in mind when you start to decorate the tree:

- For every 1 foot of tree height, you need 100 lights.
- One extension cord should connect a maximum of 3 mini light sets or 50 screw-in bulbs.
- Place extension cords next to the wall so no one will trip, but don't run cords under rugs.
- Indoor and outdoor extension cords are different.



# Cut Energy Use in the Kitchen

by April Sorrow

The proper appliances, cookware and preparation can save time and energy in the kitchen.

The winter holidays are upon us. If you're like me, you'll be spending some serious time in the kitchen preparing delicious food for friends and family, or just using the holidays as an excuse to cook your own favorite dishes. Whatever your reasons for standing at the stove, check out these tips to cut your energy use this holiday and all year round.

## BE SMART WITH APPLIANCES

When I think energy efficiency in the kitchen, my first thought is appliances. Choosing appliances that are energy efficient is a great place to start, but how you use them can save you too.

- **Don't peek!** It's tempting to open the oven door and gaze at your beautiful food while it bakes, but because the hot air contained in the oven is an important part of the cooking process, frequent peeking is self-defeating. Every time the door opens, the temperature in the oven drops by as much as 25°, forcing it to work harder (and use more electricity) to get back to the proper temperature. Check on a dish through the oven window instead.
- **Skip the preheat.** Unless you are baking breads or desserts, recipes that need to bake for longer than one hour don't need to cook in a preheated oven. And, if your oven is electric, you can usually turn it off 5-10 minutes before the dish should be done and the built-up heat will finish the job. Just keep the oven door closed.
- **Don't forget your slow cooker.** Or your toaster oven, or griddle. Most of us have a cabinet full of small kitchen cooking appliances that we rarely use. Putting them to work more often instead of the oven or stovetop can mean significant energy savings. The average toaster oven can use up to half the energy of the average electric stove over the same cooking time.
- **Nuke it!** Microwaves are good for more than popcorn. Use this energy saver to steam veggies, heat soups and even cook casseroles (see this month's recipe).
- **Use convection.** On average, you'll use 20 percent less energy a month running your convection oven, as compared to a standard oven.

- **Self-clean.** If you have a self-cleaning oven, run its self-cleaning cycle only once a month and always after you've used the oven. You'll use less energy because the oven will start out hotter.
- **Unplug the extra fridge.** How much food do you actually need to keep cold at one time? Unplugging the extra refrigerator or freezer at your home can save hundreds of dollars in just a few years. If that ice box is in a room with an uncontrolled temperature (garage or carport) you're paying even more because the temperature outside is causing that appliance to work even harder.

## NOT ALL COOKWARE IS CREATED EQUAL

- **Toss out warped pans.** Flat-bottomed cookware allows for more contact with heating elements, which in turn more effectively heats your pan. A warped-bottom pot could take 50 percent more energy to boil water than a flat-bottomed pan.
- **Conductivity is king.** Copper-bottomed pans heat up faster than regular pans. In the oven, glass or ceramic dishes are better than metal. In a glass or ceramic dish, you'll be able to turn your oven down about 25° and your meal will cook just as quickly.
- **Size matters.** When cooking on the stovetop, using the right size pan matters. Placing a 6" pan on an 8" electric burner wastes more than 40 percent of the heat produced by the burner. Also consider covering your pans as you cook. It makes the food cook faster and keeps the kitchen cooler.
- **Make it shine.** If you have an electric stovetop with those shiny metal reflectors underneath the burners, you probably detest cleaning them. Sorry. For your stovetop to function effectively, it's important that those reflectors stay free of dirt and grime. If your reflectors are of the less expensive variety, next time they need cleaning, you may consider replacing them. But don't skimp – the better reflectors on the market cannot only decrease stovetop cooking times, but also save energy in the process.

### PREPARATION IS KEY

When it comes to saving energy in the kitchen, knowing your rhythm is half the battle. Slicing vegetables, seasoning fish and trimming steak should happen before you turn on your appliances. Having everything ready to cook will not only help you save energy at the stove, it will also keep you from burning your onions as you furiously chop to catch up.

- **Double up.** If possible, prepare double portions of your meal and cook them together. Freeze the extra for later. It takes a lot less energy to reheat food than to cook it twice. Using a microwave can use as much as 80 percent less energy when reheating than a standard oven.
- **Lighten up.** Use LED lights in recessed fixtures to reduce electricity use and unnecessary heat in the kitchen.
- **Give your heat pump the day off.** Winter's holiday parties are a big part of the season, and most of us find ourselves with a houseful of people at least once between now and the New Year. If your next party involves a lot of work for your stove, think about turning down your thermostat to compensate. The heat of the oven - and all those guests - will keep the temperature comfortable, and your heat pump won't have to work so hard.

### DYK?

**Did you know that cooking accounts for 4.5 percent of total energy use in U.S. homes?** And that figure doesn't include the energy associated with refrigeration, hot water heating and dishwashing. Added together, that means that as much as 15 percent of the energy in the average American home is used in the kitchen.

Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires during the holidays in the U.S.

### FREEZER STORAGE TIMES

Meat	Months	Fish	Months	Basics	Months
Steaks	6-12	Lean	6	Cooked Rice	6
Chops	4-6	Oily	2-3	Bread	3-5
Joints	9-12	Breaded	18	Cakes	6
Mince	3-4	Cooked	1-2	Pizza	1-2
Bacon	1	Smoked	9-12	Herbs	1-2
Sausages	1-2	Shrimp	6-18	Nuts	6-9
Soups & Stews	2-3			Tofu	5
Ground Beef	3-4	<b>Dairy</b>	<b>Months</b>	Juice Carton	12-24
Luncheon Meat	1-2	Butter	9	Fruit	4-6
		Margarine	12	Vegetables	8
<b>Poultry</b>	<b>Months</b>	Ice Cream	2	Leftovers without Meat	1-2
Whole	12	Cheese	6	Leftovers with Meat	2-3
Part	6-9	Yogurt	1-2	Fruit Pies	8
Quiche	2-3				

Source: USDA

### FYI:

Don't keep bananas, potatoes, onions and garlic in the fridge.



### HOW TO STACK YOUR FRIDGE

#### Dairy, Cheese, Butter, Eggs, Yogurt



Don't overfill: let air circulate through shelves.

#### Deli Meat, Cooked Food, Leftovers



Be cool: never put warm food in the fridge.

#### Raw Meat, Seafood, Raw Fish



Put raw food on a plate or in a tub to catch drips.

#### Vegetables



#### Fruit



Keep fruit and vegetables in separate fridge drawers.

### FYI:

Cream, milk and mayonnaise do not freeze well.



## Mercy Health Center

**M**ercy Health Center, located in Athens, is a faith-based free health clinic that increases public access to health care.

“At Mercy, no matter how you got here – car, bus, on foot – and no matter what you wore, we think everybody deserves the same respectful care,” says Executive Director Tracy Thompson. “God’s mercy was shown to us, so we treat our clients with that same mercy.”

Patients are provided with quality care and quick service, thanks to what Thompson terms an “army of volunteers” at Mercy Health Center. Of the 800 volunteers, about 150 are clinical professionals – doctors, nurse practitioners, dentists, nurses, physician assistants, dental hygienists and the like – who volunteer one day or night each week. A part-time physician, full-time registered nurse and full-time nurse practitioner are on staff.

Along with primary health care, services in 15 different specialties are available along with a pharmacy and pharmacy counseling, health education, nutrition and exercise services, spiritual care, behavioral health and social services.

“What sets us apart is that most free clinics don’t offer anything but basic primary care,” says Thompson. “At Mercy, we provide what we call whole-person care.”

Their services bridge the gap between children who receive Peach Care and senior citizens eligible for Medicare, according to Thompson, who says the three health problems treated most frequently at the center are diabetes, hypertension and COPD. Most patients could be classified as “the working poor,” she adds.

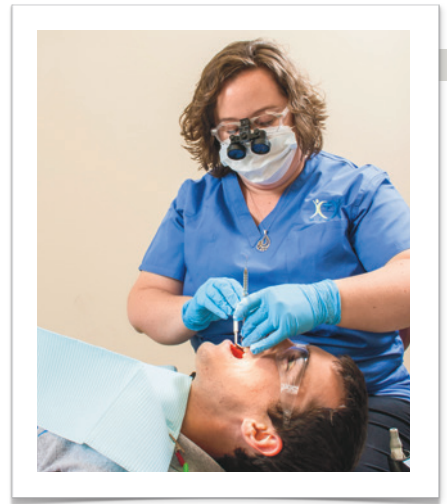
Along with providing much-needed medical attention, Mercy Health Center has become a training ground for University of Georgia pharmacy and nutrition students who shadow doctors

as they volunteer at the clinic. “Mercy was started to help patients, but it’s also about students, staff and volunteers all working together in a learning environment,”

says Thompson. “Students here learn how to treat the poor with respect and dignity.”

Mercy Health Center received its first Jackson EMC Foundation grant in January 2006 with funds targeting the center’s dental clinic. Since then, Foundation grants have funded everything from facility renovations to a dental hygiene program. In 2013, a Foundation grant helped the center equip and furnish its new facility at 700 Oglethorpe Avenue in Athens. Most recently, the Foundation granted \$12,500 to Mercy Health Center at its September board meeting to provide a part-time dental coordinator at the facility and to purchase equipment and supplies to provide dental care to the more than 2,200 patients.

“By investing in Mercy Health Center, the Jackson EMC Foundation is investing in their community. We are eternally grateful for all the Foundation does for us. Representatives of the Foundation come to see us and tour the clinic,” says Thompson. “They care about where their money’s going. They have been a terrific partner, a stalwart of ours, and we are grateful.”



## operationroundup

### Jackson EMC Foundation awards \$67,972 in grants

The Jackson EMC Foundation board of directors awarded a total of \$67,972 in grants during its September meeting, including \$64,472 to organizations and \$3,500 to an individual.

#### **Organizational Grant Recipients:**

**\$15,000** to the **Piedmont Regional Library System** to cover its electronic book system fee and hosting costs, and purchase additional e-books, providing a quality selection of e-book titles and free access to technology they might not be able to afford.

**\$14,010** to **Adult Literacy Barrow** for computer equipment, supplies and instruction to offer GED and college entrance instruction to former inmates now on probation, helping them become employable and productive members of the community.

**\$12,500** to **Mercy Health Center**, an Athens ministry using a community of professional and lay volunteers to provide primary and specialty medical care, dental and pharmacy services for low income uninsured patients, to help provide a part-time dental coordinator/hygienist and purchase equipment and supplies to expand dental care access.

**\$10,462** to **Interlocking Communities**, a grassroots community service organization in Lawrenceville, to upgrade computers, purchase equipment and materials, and employ an

instructor for English as a second language classes that enable students to better communicate with their children’s teachers, sustain employment and become more productive citizens.

**\$7,500** to **Angel House of Georgia**, a Gainesville recovery residence for women with alcohol and/or drug addiction, to cover program fees that will enable indigent women to participate in the twelve-month program.

**\$5,000** to the **Partnership for Gynecological Cancer**, an all-volunteer Hall County nonprofit that provides direct

assistance to women experiencing financial difficulties during their treatment for gynecological cancer, for assistance with gas and groceries.

#### **Individual Grant Recipients:**

**\$3,500** to repair the leaking roof of a woman disabled by a stroke.

*For more information about the Jackson EMC Foundation, and to learn how to apply for a grant, visit [www.jacksonemc.com/jemcfoundation](http://www.jacksonemc.com/jemcfoundation).*

# Clockwise in the Winter

Ceiling fans don't just keep you cool. Reverse the blades in the winter to circulate warm air throughout the room. Running the blades clockwise at a low speed will create a gentle updraft, pushing warm air down along the walls and back to the floor. This will make the room feel warmer, so you can lower the thermostat temperature. According to the EPA, **this can save as much as 15 percent off your heating bills.** If you adjust the rotation on a remote or with a switch on the wall, choose "reverse" to set the blades in clockwise motion. Or, look for a toggle-switch on the motor housing just below the blades and flip the switch up or to the right.



## smartconnections

Notoriously, the HVAC will fail in the heat of the summer or dead cold of winter, sometimes on a holiday just for fun. Don't get caught in the cold without a plan. If you need to replace your heat pump this winter, keep these things in mind:

**Check out our list of preferred contractors to get started.**

[www.jacksonemc.com/contractors](http://www.jacksonemc.com/contractors). Get multiple quotes to be sure you get the best price.

**Buy as much energy efficiency as you can afford.**

A SEER rating of 15 and HSPF greater than 8 is considered very energy efficient.

**Have your contractor check out the ductwork too.**

Over time, the insulated tubes that carry conditioned air to the rooms of your house can become folded and cramped or lose insulation.

**Don't forget the rebate.**

Jackson EMC will give you \$400 if you replace your heat pump with one that is at least 15 SEER and ENERGY STAR® rated.

If you need assistance with financing, we have **3 percent and 5 percent loans** available to qualified members.

**If your unit is older than 10 years**, make sure you have a plan. This is an average lifespan.



## Jackson EMC Offices

1000 Dawsonville Highway  
Gainesville, GA  
(770) 536-2415

85 Spratlin Mill Road  
Hull, GA  
(706) 548-5362

850 Commerce Road  
Jefferson, GA  
(706) 367-5281

461 Swanson Drive  
Lawrenceville, GA  
(770) 963-6166

EMC Security  
55 Satellite Blvd., NW  
Suwanee, GA  
(770) 963-0305 or  
(706) 543-4009

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## WHAT'S COOKIN'?

"Leftovers are even better the next day. My husband loves this recipe. Enjoy!" -Elaine Moore - Winder, Ga.

### Easiest Squash Casserole Ever

#### Ingredients:

4-5 yellow squash  
1 onion  
1 sleeve Ritz Crackers  
2 handfuls grated cheese  
(I like sharp)  
¼ cup water  
Salt and pepper to taste  
¼ stick butter (more or less,  
your choice)

#### Instructions:

Wash and cut up squash and onions into a microwave casserole dish.  
Add salt, pepper, butter and water.  
Cover with plastic wrap and poke hole in center to vent.  
Microwave about 8 minutes on high or until tender.  
Remove, do not drain, add cheese and stir until melted. Take Ritz crackers and crush in sleeve before opening. Cut slit and sprinkle onto top of squash mixture. If your oven is on, put into oven uncovered at 400° until bubbly, or put back into the microwave uncovered for about 5 minutes on high.  
Let set about 5 minutes before eating.



### Squash Dressing

#### Ingredients:

2 cups cooked, drained and mashed squash  
2 cups crumbled cornbread  
1 10.5 oz. can cream of chicken soup  
½ cup margarine, melted  
1 small onion, chopped  
Sage to taste  
Salt and pepper to taste  
3 large eggs, lightly beaten

#### Instructions:

Combine squash, cornbread, soup, margarine and onions.  
Add sage, salt and pepper. Taste and add more if needed.  
Stir in eggs.  
Pour into lightly greased 2-quart baking dish.  
Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes, or until golden and firm.  
Makes 8 servings.

"I watched my grandmother make this recipe. I was 16 when I asked her to measure the ingredients so I could make it. I've always enjoyed it, and I hope you do too."

-Mrs. Talmadge Cofer  
Nicholson, Ga.