



## Outage Preparedness and Communications

Keeping the lights on in the Copper Valley system can be a delicate balancing act. While CVEA does everything they can to deliver your power through safe, reliable, cost-effective means, the Co-op cannot guarantee 100 percent uninterrupted power, especially considering the difficulties encountered in CVEA's challenging service territory.

Let's face it, there is no good time for a power outage. Outages not only leave you in the dark, but can disrupt communications, businesses and services, cause food spoilage, and even prevent the use of medical devices. For these reasons, it is critical for members to be prepared. Below are some basic tips to help you:

- Have flashlights ready in multiple, easily accessible locations around your home or business; LED flashlights are great because they last much longer
- Have plenty of fresh, spare batteries for your flashlights and other devices
- Have emergency candles and plenty of matches
- Have a battery operated or hand crank radio available
- Store foods that do not require refrigeration and require very little warming or cooking
- Have other means to prepare food such as a grill and grill supplies, a camping stove, or an open fire
- Have a manual can opener for opening cans of food; if you are a coffee drinker, have a french press available
- Keep your cell phone, iPads, and laptops fully charged; also have battery chargers and car chargers ready and accessible
- Keep your automobile's fuel tank at least half full
- Know how long refrigerated medications can be stored at higher temperatures and have a plan for alternate refrigeration for medications critical for life
- Keep frozen containers of water in your freezer; this will help keep food cold longer if power goes out
- Keep a supply of books, board games, playing cards and other items to stay entertained
- Sign up for local alerts
- Keep extra blankets or sleeping bags handy for warmth during the winter months
- Have CVEA's emergency contact information available

In addition to these common preparations, some members, particularly members that use special health-care equipment, like oxygen generators or dialysis equipment that require power, should notify CVEA in advance. CVEA maintains a life support list that will flag your account in CVEA's system as critical in the event of an outage or emergency.

Special consideration and notice is given to members on this list. To be added, a simple form is required. Please contact your local office to make these arrangements.



### Standby Generators

Some members prepare for the possibility of an extended power outage by purchasing an electric generator as a standby system. In some cases, these systems can provide electricity to major appliances, lights, or possibly even an entire home or business until power is restored.

There are two basic standby generation installations: portable standby generators and permanent standby generators.

Portable standby generators are typically under 8,000 watts and would most often be used to power a select number of items in your home or business. Appliances and lights are unplugged from wall outlets and connected directly to the generator utilizing electrical cords. When



using this type of generator, make sure that the generator is placed outdoors or the exhaust is vented outside to prevent hazardous exhaust gasses from entering your home or business.

Permanent standby generators are permanently connected to your home or business electrical system, range in size from 5,000 watts to more than 20,000 watts, and can provide electricity to the entire building. They can either be manually or automatically operated, depending on the type of double-throw transfer switch installed.

A manual transfer switch requires the user to physically move the switch from the utility source position to a standby generator source position. The configuration is wired eliminating the possibility of connecting the generator to the overall utility system.

An automatic transfer switch detects a utility power outage and changes from the utility source to the generator source position. During a power outage, typically less than one minute later, the automatic standby generator is powering your home or business. Once utility power is restored, it will switch back to the utility source.

Generators offer peace of mind, but can also pose serious safety hazards to you and others, including hazardous exhaust gasses if not properly ventilated, excessive sound levels, and electrical shock. To reduce these risks, members should follow all manufacturer's safety instructions. In addition to member safety, the safety of CVEA personnel working on the electrical lines is of paramount importance to the Cooperative; it is required that standby generators have appropriate safety devices to prevent connecting to the energized system or feeding energy back into the system during a utility power outage.

This requirement is addressed in the CVEA Tariff 4, Section 9.13 where it states, "Standby generation installations shall include the requirement for the installation of a double-throw switch on the consumer's side of the kilowatt-hour meter, with the capacity in either position equal to the total connected electrical load through the switch. All such installations shall be subject to prior approval of the Cooperative in order to assure the safety of the Cooperative's personnel."

Also, please be aware that members are responsible for any injuries or damage to their property, their neighbors or CVEA's, resulting from an improperly installed or operated generator.

### Outage Communications

CVEA understands that members are interested in information regarding outages; both in real-time and post-outage. The Cooperative is committed to providing members outage information. Currently CVEA provides updates during outages and

additional details are provided on [cvea.org](http://cvea.org) and through other media channels after outages.

CVEA reports real-time outage information under the following circumstances:

- For district or system-wide outages expected to last more than 1 hour
- For major distribution feeder outages expected to last more than 2 hours
- For any outage affecting more than 10 customers expecting to last more than 2 hours

Please note that members should not expect real-time outage information if an outage does not meet the criteria above. It is CVEA's priority to provide real-time outage information during extended outages so members can prepare their homes, businesses, and families to be without power for lengthy periods of time.

We ask that members recognize that the Plant Operator's FIRST priority is to assess the situation and then develop a plan to get the lights back on. The process includes locating the cause of the outage, calling appropriate personnel, bringing additional generation online as necessary and energizing distribution lines to restore service to customers.

Depending on weather, time of day, cause and location, these activities can take minutes or hours, therefore this information is not always available immediately. CVEA does provide updates as soon as information is available, so if you don't see it initially, please be patient and check back.

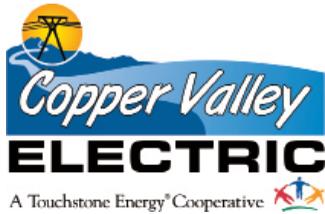
CVEA reports real-time outage updates in a variety of ways to ensure all members have access to current information. Members can call the after-hours emergency voicemail system at 1-866-835-2832; real time information is updated on the voicemail message system for those calling in as Operators are not always available to answer the phone during power restoration. Members can visit the CVEA Facebook page, where current information is posted throughout the outage, or members can visit [cvea.org](http://cvea.org); Facebook updates can also be viewed through a feed on the homepage.

CVEA members can find monthly outage information just one click away. Members can gather information on the number of outages by month and by cause, view copies of press releases sent to the local media, and find copies of Ruralite articles that focus on outages and projects related to outages.

Interested members are encouraged to visit [cvea.org](http://cvea.org) and click the Outage Communications link under Quick Links on the homepage.

If you have questions regarding outage preparedness or communications, or any other CVEA issue, please contact Sharon Scheidt, CVEA Director of Communications, at 822-5506, 835-7005 or email [scheidt@cvea.org](mailto:scheidt@cvea.org). ■





## CVEA Cares - Don't Fall Victim to Scams This Holiday Season

By Meghaan Evans and Sharon Scheidt

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

- If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a prepaid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). Copper Valley Electric will never ask you to offer up personal finance information over the phone. If you have any doubts about your utility bill, contact CVEA either in person, or over the phone at 907-822-3211 in the Copper Basin, or 907-835-4301 in Valdez.
- If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of CVEA that needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for as well:

- Government agencies like the IRS will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang up immediately.
- If you receive an email from an unknown sender; an email riddled with spelling errors and typos; or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email, and do not respond to

the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder.

- Other emails often appear they're being sent by someone you know, and are filled with information that sounds familiar and relevant at the time you receive them. Pay close attention. If it sounds outside of normal procedure, talk to the person you believe sent it to you.
  - If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer.

John Duhamel, CVEA CEO, shares his experience with a hotel scam in Anchorage in an effort to create awareness.

Duhamel was booked in an Anchorage hotel for a three-night stay for CVEA business. On night three, around 9:30 p.m. the phone rings. The caller identified himself, said he was from the hotel accounting staff, and asked for Duhamel's credit card number because his card wasn't going through. He immediately suspected this was a scam, but to confirm he began asking the person on the phone questions. Duhamel finally told the caller he would not give his credit card number over the phone, but would come to the front desk to give it to him. To no one's surprise, the caller immediately hung up, and when Duhamel went to the front desk, there was no one working there by the name given. According to Duhamel, "there were warning signs: it wasn't my checkout day, the late time of the call, and the fact that I wasn't even paying with a credit card. I was thankful I listened to them." John reminds employees and members to never provide your credit card to such a caller and went on to say, "these thieves are smart, sneaky, and without morals, so be aware and be careful!"

CVEA wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you have any questions or concerns as this relates to your electric cooperative, please contact CVEA. ■

*Meghaan Evans 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.*



## Holiday Lighting Tips

By Tom Tate

This year is rapidly drawing to a close and that means the holiday lighting season is back. If you are planning to start decorating soon, here are some tips to take your holiday style to the next level. Let's start with safety.

If your lights are ground mounted or can be installed standing on the floor or ground, you can skip ahead. However, since most decorations involve some installation at height, you need to do the following:

- Have a ground crew (one or two people) to steady your ladder and pass up the decorations...an invaluable part of safety and for keeping you supplied with untangled light strings, fasteners and encouragement.
- Remember to keep a safe distance from your overhead electric service.
- Don't overreach. If you cannot get to a point with your body completely centered between the sides of the ladder, get down and relocate it.
- Don't overextend the ladder. If your ladder is too short, rent or borrow a longer one. A ladder extended beyond its working limits is dangerous as is standing on rungs too

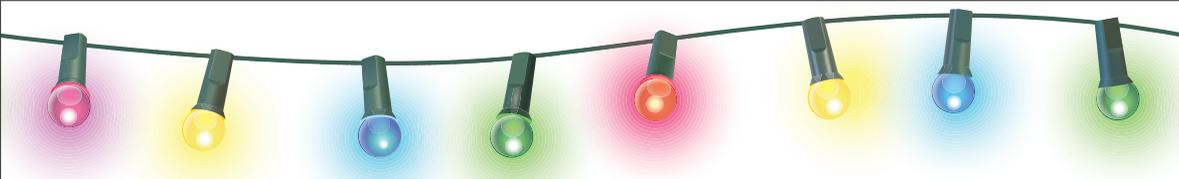
close to the top.

- Do not overload circuits by stringing more light sets together than the manufacturer recommends. Check the packaging for details.
- Check your wires for breaks and cracks in the insulation that can lead to shorts.
- Most of these tips apply equally to inside and outside decorating activities.

Truly want to manage the cost of operating holiday lights? Invest in timers to turn the lights on and off automatically. Really into gadgets? Invest in a smart plug for your lights you can program and control from your smart phone.

Once you have your design finalized and installed, it is my recommendation to leave as much of the outside portion of lights in place. No, don't be that person who leaves the holiday lights on all year. Simply disconnect them after the holidays, protecting the plugs and sockets from dirt and debris. Think of the reduced stress and risk if you set and forget your design.

*Tom Tate writes on cooperative 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.*



### MERRY, BRIGHT AND EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Decking the halls doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bill! Keep your holiday lighting merry, bright and energy efficient with LED light strands.

- Consider replacing older light strands with new ENERGY STAR LED® lights. LED strands are 70 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than the age-old standard bulbs.
- You can get the look of cozy lighting with LEDs. Just look for "warm white" on the label.
- Unlike older light strands, LED lights give off virtually no heat, making them safer for kids and pets (and reindeer).
- Save energy by setting a timer for outdoor lighting and decorations. Program the timer so the lights turn on in the evening and turn off later at night when you typically go to sleep.

*Source: Dept. of Energy*



## Cooking Up Holiday Energy Savings



*By Anne Prince*

For many of us, the best holidays involve home-cooked meals and wonderful aromas of turkey, stuffing and baked goods wafting throughout the house. It means a busy kitchen and a bustling house full of family and friends.

If this rings true for you, despite the increased kitchen activity, you still have an opportunity to save energy during the holidays.

### **Cut carbs (carbon) painlessly**

In addition to being the “heart of your home,” your kitchen could pump savings back into your wallet. According to the Department of Energy, cooking accounts for 4.5 percent of total energy use in U.S. homes.

This number, combined with the energy use associated with refrigeration, dishwashing and hot water heating means that as much as 15 percent of the energy in the average American home is used in the kitchen. So, saving energy here can have a significant impact on your household budget.

For example, when preparing side dishes, baked goods, soups and such, consider using small appliances like a crock pot, toaster oven, microwave or warming plate instead of your conventional oven or stovetop. These small appliances are a smart, energy-saving alternative, typically using about half the energy of a stove.

### **Seal in efficiency**

When using your oven, don't peek! Opening the oven door can lower the temperature by as much as 25 degrees and causes your stove to work harder (consuming more energy) to return to the desired cooking temperature. If your recipe calls for baking the dish more than an hour, it is not necessary to preheat the oven.

If your oven is electric, you can likely turn the oven off for the last five to ten minutes of cooking and allow the residual heat to complete the job. Clean burners and reflectors increase efficiency and offer better heating, so don't neglect this small but important task.



Just as keeping the oven door closed seals in efficiency and enables the stove to operate more economically, the same rules apply to the refrigerator and freezer. Keep the doors closed as much as possible so cold air doesn't escape. However, leaving the door open for a longer period of time while you load groceries or remove items you need is more efficient than opening and closing it several times.

If you are entertaining a large group, you may be able to give your furnace a brief holiday. When your oven is working hard and you have a house full of guests, the heat from the stove and the guests will keep your house comfortable, enabling you to turn down the thermostat.

### Clean up with energy savings

When it's time to clean up, extend fellowship to the kitchen, and wash and dry dirty dishes by hand. This uses less energy than a dishwasher. However, don't leave the water running continuously, or you will waste energy.

If you do use the dishwasher and rinse dishes before loading them, use cold water. Run the dishwasher with full loads only, and if possible, use the energy-saving cycle. Note that dishwashers that have overnight or air power dry settings can save up to 10 percent of your dishwashing energy costs.

By adapting these efficient practices in your kitchen, energy savings will be one more thing to be thankful for this holiday season. ■

*Anne Prince 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.*

## Five Most Popular Thanksgiving Day Traditions

Traditions are a big part of the Thanksgiving holiday, and every American family has their own way of celebrating. From stuffing the turkey to taking in a football game, here are the five most popular.

### Turkey and Trimmings

From the first Thanksgiving to today's turkey burgers, turkeys are an American tradition dating back centuries. According to the National Turkey Federation, 95 percent of Americans eat turkey at Thanksgiving. Regional twists offer variations on the traditional roasted bird, including coffee rubbed turkey from Hawaii, salt encrusted turkey from New England, and deep fried turkey from the South.

### Time Out for the Pigskin

Throughout the United States, football on Thanksgiving Day is as big a part of the celebration as turkey and pumpkin pie. Dating back to the first intercollegiate football championship held on Thanksgiving Day in 1876, traditional holiday football rivalries have become so popular that a reporter once called Thanksgiving "a holiday granted by the State and the Nation to see a game of football."

### Parading Around

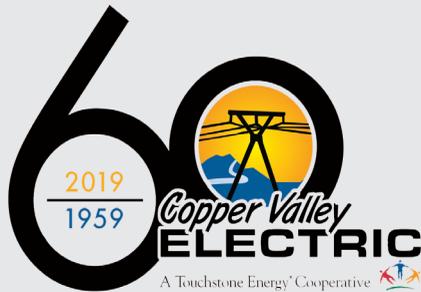
The first American Thanksgiving Day parade was held in 1920, organized by Gimbel's Department Store in Philadelphia, not Macy's as most people believe. The NYC Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade tradition actually began in 1924, and has grown into an annual event of balloons, bands, and floats, enjoyed by more than 46 million people each year in person and on TV.

### Making A Wish

Does your family fight over the wishbone from the Thanksgiving turkey? Known as a "lucky break" the tradition of tugging on either end of a fowl's bone to win the larger piece and its accompanying "wish" dates back to the Etruscans of 322 B.C. The Romans brought the tradition with them when they conquered England and the English colonists carried the tradition on to America.

### Giving Thanks

Last, but certainly not least, Thanksgiving is about giving thanks for the people and blessings of the past year. From pre-meal prayers to providing holiday meals to the homeless, the holiday is truly a celebration of thanksgiving. ■



#### Board of Directors

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Will Stark, Vice President  
Dan Stowe, Secretary  
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P.O. Box 45  
Glennallen, AK 99588  
[www.cvea.org](http://www.cvea.org)

#### Copper Basin District

907-822-3211  
Mile 187 Glenn Hwy.

#### Valdez District

907-835-4301  
367 Fairbanks Dr.

#### After hours outage line

866-835-2832

#### Important Dates

##### November

**CVEA Board Meeting:** The November meeting of the Board of Directors is 1 p.m. Thursday, November 21, in Valdez

**CVEA Offices Closed:** The CVEA offices will be closed Thursday, November 28 for the Thanksgiving Holiday

##### December

**CVEA Board Meeting:** The December meeting of the Board of Directors is 1 p.m. Thursday, December 19, 2019, in Glennallen

##### CVEA Offices Closed:

The CVEA offices will be closed Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 25, 2019, for the Christmas Holiday, and Tuesday, December 31, 2019, for New Year's Eve

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## Round Up for Your Community

The holiday season is a time for giving thanks. Copper Valley Electric would like to thank everyone who rounded up or donated to the CVEA Community Foundation in 2019, and encourage all members to begin rounding up their electric bill next year.

Consider rounding up your electric bill to the nearest dollar amount each month. It's easy and painless. Participants who round up their bill contribute between \$.01 and \$.99 monthly, an average of just \$6 a year, to the Foundation.

Individually this is not a large number, but combined with other Co-op members, it will make a difference. If half of all CVEA members round up their bills each month, the Foundation will bring in an amazing \$10,000 each year.

Money raised is used to provide scholarships for students and to help local educational, scientific, and charitable organizations in our communities start new programs and expand existing ones. In 2019, the Foundation awarded \$8,000 in scholarships and made over \$16,000 in contributions to local nonprofit organizations. Stay tuned to see what programs received funding; an announcement will be included in the next issue.

Another really easy way for members to contribute is to add a specific amount to their electric bill each month. Members can also make a one-time donation or even donate their future capital credit disbursements.

If you'd like to help your Cooperative do more for the community by rounding up or adding an amount to your bill, you can do this anytime by simply filling out the donation form located on [cvea.org](http://cvea.org) (also available at CVEA offices) and bringing it to the CVEA office in your district, sending it via email to [scheidt@cvea.org](mailto:scheidt@cvea.org), or mailing it to P.O. Box 45, Glennallen, AK 99588.

For additional information on the Community Foundation or if you have questions about making a donation, contact Sharon Scheidt, Director of Communications, at (907) 822-5506, (907) 835-7005, or email [scheidt@cvea.org](mailto:scheidt@cvea.org).