

# Wake ElectriConnection

For members of Wake Electric Membership Corporation



"The power to make a difference"

JULY 2010

## Why Some Products Are Energy Star-rated, Others Not

Lots of Americans are cutting down energy use, improving a home's insulation, turning lights off, or exchanging traditional lightbulbs for more efficient lighting options. So when consumers shop for new appliances it's common to focus on finding a product with an Energy Star rating.

But how do appliances get this rating? And why don't all appliances have them? The answer may surprise you.

Computers and monitors were the first products to receive an efficiency rating from Energy Star, a program launched in 1992 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy. Since then, more than 60 product categories have been added, from dishwashers to windows and DVD players. According to the program, Energy Star-rated products deliver the same or better performance as comparable models while using less energy and saving money.

"We're recognizing the top performers when it comes to energy efficiency," explains Katharine Kaplan, Energy Star program manager. She notes the initiative works closely with folks in a wide variety of areas, including industry experts, governments, non-profit organizations, and utilities. "We agree on a fair way to test products. Manufacturers test products using that procedure, submit the data to us, and we say, 'These are the top performers. This is how much energy



you can use to be considered a leader by Energy Star.' Generally, that means you're in the top 25 percent."

For example, qualified refrigerators must be at least 15 percent more efficient than the minimum federal efficiency standard. Energy Star-rated TVs consume 3 watts or less when switched off, compared to a standard TV, which consumes almost 6 watts on average. By pushing for the manufacturing of more efficient products, Energy Star estimates the rating system saved businesses, organizations, and consumers \$19 billion in 2008 alone.

Consumers are taking advantage of the program. A survey by the

Consortium for Energy Efficiency—a group including members like the quasi-governmental Tennessee Valley Authority and Bonneville Power Administration, a federal power marketing administration in the Northwest—discovered 76 percent of American households recognize the Energy Star brand. Of these consumers, 73 percent purchased an Energy Star-labeled product within the last year.

But not all products are rated by Energy Star. The program gauges the average energy efficiency of different appliance technologies and evaluates whether there's potential for increased efficiency—generally

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Wake Electric  
Membership Corporation

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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# TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

## Together We Save offers online tools to help you save on energy bills

Flip the light switch. Insulate your attic. Change the setting of your thermostat. These are all easy tasks you can do around the house in just a few seconds. And your small investment of time can add up to big savings on your electric bill.

That's the idea behind **Together We Save**—that's your Touchstone Energy Cooperatives' national campaign to help co-op members like you reduce every day energy consumption.

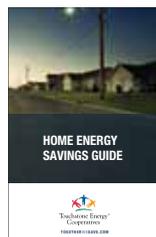
By now, you have probably seen the "Together We Save" logo on the home page of Wake Electric's website at [www.wemc.com](http://www.wemc.com) or you have seen it in member newsletter ads. And the reason we're providing these energy savings tools to you is so you know that you can count on Wake Electric to help manage your energy use.

At **TogetherWeSave.com** consumers can learn simple steps to take immediate actions to start saving money.

The Together We Save website's resources include:

- ★ How-to videos
- ★ Tips for various rooms of the home
- ★ An interactive house tour that makes cost saving estimates for particular energy saving ideas.

### Free Guide Online



Be sure to go to Wake Electric's Web site where you can get dozens of home energy savings tips. Just go to

[www.wemc.com](http://www.wemc.com)

and click on the "Home Energy Savings Guide" under the My Home section.



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I'm saving \$105 a year by shutting down all the way. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

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At [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com), you can access interactive applications that give you ways to make changes one step at a time.

To learn how to add up savings in every room in your house, be sure to click on the "Add Up Your Savings" button on the Energy Savings Home Tour.

## “Why Some Products Are Energy-Star-rated, Others Not”

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at least 25 percent higher than minimum standards. According to Energy Star, the most efficient electric resistance water heaters on the market have an Energy Factor of 0.95, about 5 percent more efficient than the minimum federal standard. Since there's little room for improvement, Energy Star does not have a category for the product.

“The technology doesn't qualify for the Energy Star program—not because it's not efficient, but because it's already as efficient as possible,” remarks Steve Koep, a regional manager for REEM/Marathon Water Heaters. “When it comes to purchasing an electric water heater, consumers should consider durability and energy factor [EF], a mandatory evaluation done on all water heaters regardless of fuel source. EF takes into account fuel use, standby energy loss, and insulation under simulated actual conditions.”

Last October the New York Times revealed some manufacturers of household appliances were testing products for Energy Star certification internally instead of using independent laboratories. In response, Energy Star ramped up oversight of product ratings and by the end of the year had revoked the Energy Star label for some refrigerators while raising the bar for the efficiency expected from TVs.

Federal energy efficiency tax credits for appliances and home heating and air systems typically require qualifying products to be Energy Star-rated. To learn more about the Energy Star program, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

Source: Story by Megan McCoy, who writes on energy efficiency for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

### An [Energy] Star is Born

Energy Star, a voluntary, international standard for rating energy-efficient consumer products, was created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 for home computers and monitors. Since then, the program has expanded to cover more than 60 categories and been adopted by Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the European Union. Devices carrying the Energy Star logo, such as computers and electronics, kitchen and household appliances, residential lighting, and homes, deliver the same or better performance and use 20 percent to 30 percent less energy on average than comparable models.

Since 1992, Americans have purchased more than 2 billion Energy Star-qualified products; the number of qualified homes tops 1 million. Here are some highlights:

**2005-2010** Battery chargers, power adapters, commercial dishwashers, and ice machines included.

**2002** Hotels rated and more than 100,000 new homes earn rating.

**2001** Supermarkets, acute care hospitals, dehumidifiers, ventilation and ceiling fans, small commercial heating and cooling equipment, and commercial freezers, refrigerators, and washing machines rated.

**2000** Water coolers and traffic signals rated; label extended to schools.

**1999** Audio/DVD equipment, roof products, and compact fluorescent lightbulbs rated. Label extended to office buildings.

**1998** TVs, VCRs, windows covered.

**1997** Residential light fixtures, scanners, and washing machines rated.

**1996** Exit signs, insulation, boilers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and room air conditioners rolled into the program.

**1993-1995** Energy Star for homes launched. Copiers, fax machines, printers, heating and cooling products rated.

**1992** Program begins with computers and monitors.

Source: Energy Star

The Energy Star program evolved from a rating system for computers in 1992 to a way for office buildings, schools, and hospitals to demonstrate energy efficiency. Source: NRECA

## Sign up for bank draft and paperless billing by July 16 and enter to win a \$50 bill credit!

### WHAT IS BANK DRAFT AND PAPERLESS BILLING?

With the bank draft option (which we call Handi-pay), your payment is automatically drafted from your bank account each month. That means no more keeping up with your electric bill or mailing in payments. Wake Electric takes care of that for you.

Go one step further and sign up for paperless billing. Once you sign up for paperless billing, you'll no longer receive a paper bill in the mail. We'll email you a notice each month that your bill is available for review through the Wake Electric website. And because you are already registered for an online account, you can go online ANYTIME to review current or past bills.

### HOW DO I SIGN UP AND ENTER THE CONTEST TO WIN A \$50 BILL CREDIT?

- ★ To sign up for paperless billing and bank draft (which automatically enters you into the contest), simply call our customer service department at (800) 474-6300 or (919) 863-6300 or email [information@wemc.com](mailto:information@wemc.com).
- ★ An email confirmation will be sent to you within 3 business days once you are entered.\*

And that's all there is to it! An added bonus is that by helping Wake Electric cut down on the use of paper bills, you also help conserve natural resources and reduce our carbon footprint.

With bank draft and paperless billing, paying bills has never been simpler or more convenient!

\* Be sure to allow [wemc.com](http://wemc.com) in your e-mail spam filter list.

# 10 Hot Tips For Green Summer Cooking

**K**eep your cool this summer when preparing meals. You can save money and reduce your carbon footprint with these 10 easy tips for going green when cooking summer meals (and year round, for that matter).

- ★ Cook outdoors when possible to reduce the load on your air conditioner. Try a solar cooker or oven. Solar cookers and ovens are by far the most energy-efficient cooking appliances. They require no fuel, reduce unwanted summer heat in your home by taking cooking outside, and can accommodate any food a slow cooker can. Some solar ovens can reach 500 degrees. To learn more, visit [www.solarcooking.org](http://www.solarcooking.org).
- ★ Toaster ovens, convection ovens, and slow cookers get the job done with less energy than conventional stovetops or ovens, especially when preparing smaller meals.
- ★ Use as small a pan, as little water, and as little pre-heating time as possible.



Solar cookers and ovens are by far the most energy-efficient cooking appliances. They reflect heat from sunlight to a central area to heat food or water.

Source: Solar Cookers International

- ★ Bake in glass or ceramic ovenware instead of metal. You can turn the temperature down by 25 degrees, and foods will cook in the same amount of time.
- ★ Avoid thawing food in the microwave. Thawing food in the fridge is far more energy efficient, contributes to the fridge's cooling, and is safer than thawing food on the countertop.
- ★ Don't open the door and peek in the oven. Use the oven window instead!
- ★ Clean burner pans (the pans under the burners that catch grease) regularly. They'll more effectively reflect heat to the cookware. Dirty burner pans absorb heat and reduce efficiency.
- ★ Use flat-bottom cookware that rests evenly on the surface of electric coil burners, solid-disk elements, or radiant elements under smooth-top ceramic glass.
- ★ Use residual heat. Turn the stove or oven off before cooking is done to allow cooking to continue while reducing energy use. An electric burner element can be turned off two minutes before removing the cookware, since it remains hot. Ovens can be turned off 20 minutes before cooking's done.
- ★ Consider substituting one or more stovetop burners with an induction cooker. The typical efficiency of an induction cooker is 84 percent, gas stovetops are 40 percent efficient, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. What's more, induction cookers (which require magnetic cookware such as cast iron or enameled steel) produce as much heat as gas and are less costly to operate than a conventional electric burner. Visit [www.theinductionsite.com](http://www.theinductionsite.com) to learn more.

Source: John Bruce, a freelance writer who writes on energy efficiency for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Solar cookers are utilized in developing nations or areas without available electric power. These cookers are being used in a Bolivian community.

Source: Solar Cookers International

## Wake ElectriConnection

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