

# Wake ElectriConnection

For members of Wake Electric Membership Corporation



"The power to make a difference"

SEPTEMBER 2009

## Electric co-ops fight for fair climate change policy

**E**lectric cooperatives, with support from consumers across the country, are seizing opportunities to improve climate change legislation being considered by the U.S. Congress. Last June, the partnership bore fruit when the U.S. House of Representatives listened to co-op concerns and revised its climate change bill, H.R. 2454.

Among the revisions: future impacts on co-op consumers' electric bills were reduced by more than \$3 billion over the next 10 years, and possible federal financing will be available to co-ops for nuclear power plants.

"The bill still needs a lot of work, but it could have been much worse. By staying engaged in the process electric co-ops had a measureable impact," says Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

At the core of the climate change proposal lays a cap-and-trade system to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Under cap-and-trade, greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and other sources would be required to stay below a set limit—the cap. All emissions would then have to be accounted for by allowances issued by the federal government, which could be swapped and sold—the trade.

Electric cooperatives and NRECA pushed for changes to the House bill with support from the Our Energy, Our Future™ campaign, which gives consumers a voice through its Web site at [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop). The effort was enough to reshape H.R. 2454.

"As originally written, H.R. 2454 distributed allowances in an unbalanced and unfair way," argues English. "Without supporting the bill, co-ops were able to reduce the impacts on co-op consumers' electric bills where the inequity was the greatest."

English stresses that the U.S. Senate must make climate change legislation fair, recognizing regional differences in how electricity is produced; it must be affordable for all Americans; and its goals must be achievable—when they take effect, the technology needed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions should be commercially viable at each step of the way.

"Rest assured that if Congress loses sight of treating all co-ops fairly and fashioning affordable solutions to America's energy and climate change challenges, we will not hesitate to fight against a bad bill for co-ops."

## Classroom Technology grants available—Deadline is Sept. 11



Funding for community projects is made possible by Wake Electric member-consumers and Wake Electric employees through the Operation Round-Up® Program.

Wake Electric seeks applicants for its Classroom Technology Awards grant program. The company will award grants to North Carolina teachers serving grades K-12 and area community colleges to be used during the 2009-2010 school year. Grants will be awarded in any discipline for specific technology such as computers, digital cameras, scanners, and software. The technology must benefit the students in the classroom. Public school teachers in Durham, Franklin, Granville, Johnston, Nash, Vance and Wake counties are eligible to apply. The final deadline to submit grant applications is Sept. 11.

To learn more or apply go to [www.wemc.com](http://www.wemc.com) or contact Angela Perez, Public Relations/Communications Specialist at [angela.perez@wemc.com](mailto:angela.perez@wemc.com) or call (919) 863-6376 or (800) 474-6300.

 Wake Electric  
Membership Corporation

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Regular office hours: M-F, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Telephone hours: M-F, 7 a.m.-9 p.m., 863.6300 or 800.474.6300

Underground locating service: Call 811

# Why use compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs)?



CFLs use significantly less energy than traditional light bulbs (75 percent less). If every home in America replaced just one incandescent light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified CFL, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes and

prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to that of 800,000 cars. CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury—an average of 4 milligrams in each bulb. No mercury is released when the bulbs are intact or in use.

And even though CFLs contain a small amount of mercury that could ultimately end up in the environment, that amount is significantly less than the amount of mercury avoided as a result of the energy savings.

## WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE WHEN USING CFLS IN MY HOME?

CFLs are made of glass and can break if dropped or roughly handled. Be careful when removing the bulb from its packaging, installing it, or replacing it. Always screw and

unscrew the light bulb by its base (not the glass), and never forcefully twist the CFL into a light socket. If a CFL breaks in your home, follow the clean-up recommendations below. Used CFLs should be disposed of properly.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH A CFL WHEN IT BURNS OUT?

EPA recommends that consumers take advantage of available local recycling options for compact fluorescent light bulbs. Wake Electric offers CFL recycling at each of its branch offices. EPA is working with CFL manufacturers and major U.S. retailers to expand recycling and disposal options. Consumers can contact their local municipal solid waste agency directly, or go to [www.epa.gov/bulbrecycling](http://www.epa.gov/bulbrecycling) or [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org) to identify local recycling options.

## CLEAN-UP AND DISPOSAL GUIDELINES FOR CFLS

Mercury is an essential element in the operation of fluorescent lighting, and it allows the bulbs to be an efficient light source. Because CFLs contain trace amounts of mercury, it is important to educate yourself on proper use, recycling and disposal

of these products. EPA recommends the following clean-up and disposal guidelines:

### Before Clean-up: Air Out the Room

- ★ Have people and pets leave the room, and don't let anyone walk through the breakage area on their way out.
- ★ Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
- ★ Shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system, if you have one.

### Clean-Up Steps for Hard Surfaces

- ★ Carefully scoop up glass fragments and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
- ★ Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass pieces and powder.
- ★ Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place towels in the glass jar or plastic bag.
- ★ Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.

### Clean-up Steps for Carpeting or Rug:

- ★ Carefully pick up glass fragments and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
- ★ Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
- ★ If vacuuming is needed after all visible materials are removed, vacuum the area where the bulb was broken.



## Energy Efficiency

## Tip of the Month

Keeping your tires properly inflated improves gas mileage for the average vehicle by around 3 percent, saving up to 20 gallons of gasoline per year.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy

- ★ Remove the vacuum bag (or empty and wipe the canister), and put the bag or vacuum debris in a sealed plastic bag.

#### Clean-up Steps for Clothing, Bedding, etc.:

- ★ If clothing or bedding materials come in direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder from inside the bulb that may stick to the fabric, the clothing or bedding should be thrown away. Do not wash such clothing or bedding because mercury fragments in the clothing may contaminate the machine and/or pollute sewage.
- ★ You can, however, wash clothing or other materials that have been exposed to the mercury vapor from a broken CFL, such as the clothing you are wearing when you cleaned up the broken CFL, as long as that clothing has not come into direct contact with the materials from the broken bulb.
- ★ If shoes come into direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder from the bulb, wipe them off with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place the towels or wipes in a glass jar or plastic bag for disposal.

#### Disposal of Clean-up Materials

- ★ Immediately place all clean-up materials outdoors in a trash container or protected area for the next normal trash pickup.
- ★ Wash your hands after disposing of the jars or plastic bags containing clean-up materials.
- ★ Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your area.

To learn more, visit  
[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

## Bright Ideas application deadline is Sept. 18



**T**eachers! The deadline to submit a Bright Ideas grant application is September 18. Wake Electric has earmarked \$50,000 for classroom-based projects through its funding of the Bright Ideas education grant program for the 2009-2010 school year. Teachers can apply online at [www.ncbrightideas.com](http://www.ncbrightideas.com).

Certified K-12 teachers in North Carolina are eligible to apply for a Bright Ideas grant. The Bright Ideas education grant program is currently the only program in the state exclusively for classroom educators.

For more information, contact Angela Perez at (919) 863-6376 or [angela.perez@wemc.com](mailto:angela.perez@wemc.com).

Bright Ideas grant money is made possible by voluntary contributions by members and employees to Operation RoundUp. Through the program, participants allow their bills to be rounded up to the next whole dollar and that money to be used to fund community programs.

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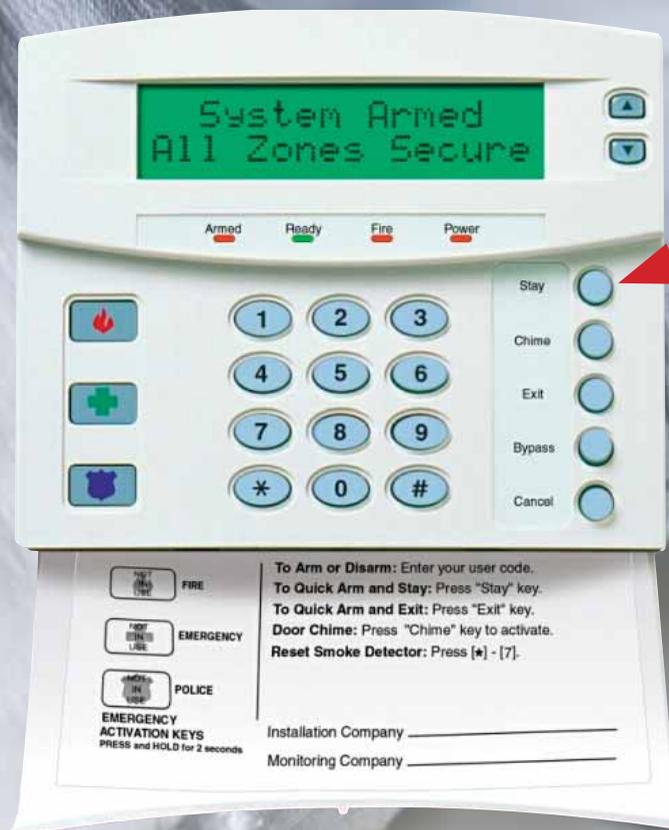
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