

## Don't Overload Electrical Circuits

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 47,700 home fires in the U.S. are caused by electrical failures or malfunctions each year. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries, and \$1.4 billion in property damage. Overloaded electrical circuits are a major cause of residential fires. Help lower your risk of electrical fires by not overloading your electrical system.

### Overloaded circuit warning signs:

- Flickering, blinking or dimming lights
- Frequently tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses
- Warm or discolored wall plates
- Cracking, sizzling or buzzing from receptacles
- A burning odor coming from receptacles or wall switches
- Mild shock or tingle from appliances, receptacles or switches

### How to prevent electrical overloads:

- Never use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances
- All major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle outlet at a time
- Heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have a qualified electrician inspect your home and add new outlets
- Power strips only add additional outlets; they do not change the amount of power being received from the outlet

## March 5 Lillard-Shadow Scholarship Deadline

Scholarship applications are available at any VEC Customer Service Center or from high school counselors in the VEC service area. Applications are also available online at [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org).



**All application materials must be completed and delivered to VEC's Corporate Office in Decatur no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Time on March 5, 2021.**

## What is Beneficial Electrification?

This utility industry term means the innovations in energy technologies are creating new ways to use electricity instead of on-site fossil fuels, such as propane, natural gas and fuel oil, in a way that reduces overall emissions and energy costs.

In essence, by virtue of being plugged into the grid, the environmental performance of electric devices improves over time. As Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) and other utilities shift to more options that include renewable energy sources, electricity will require less fossil fuel per kilowatt-hour of energy produced.

So, here's how this concept impacts you. It means that *electric* appliances such as your water heater, clothes dryer, oven and even your lawn care equipment have the potential to become greener. When VEC takes advantage of advances in technology and the market at the generation point (how the electricity is produced), it means those efficiencies are passed along to you, our consumer-member.

For consumers and homeowners looking for more environmentally friendly options, choosing electric appliances, tools and cars over those powered by fossil fuels is an easy solution. Whether through electric lawn mowers, blowers and weed-eaters or through electric water heaters and other appliances, beneficial electrification is a means to reducing greenhouse gases and helping our environment.

We also promote energy efficiency through programs like Energy Right Residential Services. This program was developed as a partnership



Rody Blevins  
President/CEO  
Volunteer Energy Cooperative

**DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR HOME!**

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**OVERLOADED CIRCUIT WARNING SIGNS**

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**HOW TO PREVENT ELECTRICAL OVERLOADS**

- Never use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances.
- All major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- A heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have a qualified electrician inspect your home and add new outlets.
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**50%** The CPSC estimates more than 50% of electrical fires that occur every year can be prevented by Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs). To learn more about AFCIs, visit [ESFI.org](http://ESFI.org).

Only use the appropriate watt bulb for any lighting fixture. Using a larger watt light bulb may cause a fire.

ESFI.org | [www.facebook.com/ESFI.org](http://www.facebook.com/ESFI.org) | [www.twitter.com/ESFI.org](http://www.twitter.com/ESFI.org) | [www.youtube.com/ESFI.org](http://www.youtube.com/ESFI.org)

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends a temperature setting of 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for the freezer. Make sure the refrigerator doors are sealed airtight to maximize efficiency.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

## HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

Electricity is becoming cleaner every day and can save consumers money on their energy costs over time.



Did you know...

Since 2005, the carbon emissions from producing electricity have decreased, on average, by 28%.<sup>1</sup>



Did you know...

Electricity is getting cleaner and more renewable, so anything that uses electricity will have a diminishing environmental impact over time.



Did you know...

Electric vehicles are highly efficient, converting around 77% of their power into movement. Gas-powered vehicles only convert 12% to 30%.<sup>2</sup>





The VEC Customers Share program funded community service grants totaling \$21,250 in January. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, over \$7.2 million in grants has been awarded. The deadline for grant applications is the last working day of each month. For additional information, contact the Office of Marketing and Economic Development at 423-334-7051. Applications are also available online at [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org).



VEC Customers Share's Board Members Jerry Mayo and Holly Neal awarded a grant in January to The Bread of Life Rescue Mission. They are a community-supported program in Cumberland County, Tennessee providing provide three cooked meals daily, holiday help, emergency food assistance, clothing and household items, and temporary housing for the homeless. They also provide emergency help with rent and utilities.

### Organizations receiving grants in January

Shriners Medical Center, Lexington, KY	\$5,000	Hospice of Cumberland County Inc	\$1,000
Monterey Senior Citizens Center	\$2,000	Gamma Zeta Teachers Society	\$1,000
Prospect STEM Innovators	\$2,000	Midway Middle Student Council	\$1,000
Pickett County Food Bank	\$2,000	The Bread of Life Rescue Mission	\$1,000
E.G. Fisher Public Library	\$1,500	American Legion Post 203	\$750
Polk County Ramp Festival	\$1,500	Midway High School Baseball Boosters	\$200
Hilltoppers, Inc	\$1,000	Midway Youth Cheerleading Organization	\$200
Crab Orchard Care Center	\$1,000	Midway Quarterback Club	\$100

## Three Electrifying Kitchen Appliances to Save Time AND Energy

By Abby Berry

Whether your oven and stovetop are powered by gas or electricity, it is no secret that they consume more energy than smaller countertop appliances, like slow cookers and toaster ovens. In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with the cleanup.

If you are looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying appliances for your kitchen:

1. **Air fryers** are becoming increasingly popular, and consumers have a lot of good things to say about these handy little appliances. Air fryers use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food—this means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. Air fryers are small, so they will not take up much of your counter space, and with everything cooked in the fryer, cleanup will be a breeze. Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes, and prices range from \$40 to \$200+.



Photo: Hamilton Beach

*Air fryers circulate hot air (convection) to cook the food. This means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers.*

2. **Electric griddles** have certainly been around for a while, and they offer several benefits for any home chef (beyond bacon and eggs!). Griddles are convenient because you can cook everything at once—like a “one-pan” meal, and the possibilities are endless. From fajitas to sandwiches to French toast, griddles can help satisfy any taste buds. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes for griddles vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30 at your local retail stores.

Photo: Hamilton Beach



*Electric griddles consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you.*

## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME REMINDER

Don't forget to spring forward on March 14! Set your clocks forward by one hour.



3. Pizza brings people together, so why not consider a **pizza maker** for your kitchen. These compact, countertop machines are an inexpensive alternative to a costly brick oven, and they use less energy than your traditional oven. Choose your own fresh ingredients to whip up a faster, healthier pizza at home. Plus, most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas, quesadillas and more. You can purchase a pizza maker for about \$30 to \$150+ online or at your local retailer.



Photo: Hamilton Beach

*Pizza makers are compact and inexpensive, and they use less energy than your traditional oven.*

These are just a few electrifying appliance options for your kitchen. Remember, when you are cooking a smaller meal, countertop appliances can save time and energy. To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit <https://vec.org/energy-efficiency/lower-your-energy-cost/>.

*Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).*

## Tennessee Valley Authority

Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment Effective  
February 1, 2021

**1.619¢**

For the most current FCA information, visit [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org)

*Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.*

