

iNtouch



WITH MEMBERS OF PRAIRIE ENERGY COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Local teen selected for trip to nation's capital

Adelai Swanson of Galt recently participated in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program in Washington, D.C. sponsored by Prairie Energy Cooperative. She spent six days in Washington, D.C., with 33 peers from Iowa.

Each year in June, an action-filled week provides high school students opportunities to learn first-hand what it is like to be involved in politics, community service and today's pressing issues in the energy industry. Students met Sens. Chuck Grassley and Tom Harkin as well as Reps. Bruce Braley, Leonard Boswell, Dave Loebsack, Tom Latham and Steve King. They also saw historic sites and met over 1,500 students from across the country who participated in their state's Youth Tour program.

The Iowa Electric Cooperatives' Youth Tour has been a joint effort of local electric co-ops, such as Prairie Energy, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC), and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

In addition to taking in the sights of the nation's capital, all the state groups convened for National Youth Day, sponsored by NRECA, to learn from public figures and other inspirational speakers. This year's Youth Day agenda included Mike Schlappi, a four-time Paralympic Medalist and two-time World Champion Wheelchair Basketball champion. Schlappi shares his inspiring message for every American, young or old: "Just because you can't stand up, doesn't mean you can't stand out."

For more information on how you can participate in Iowa Electric Cooperatives' Youth Tour program, contact Energy Advisor, Don Kammrad at 888-225-8707 or dkammrad@prairieenergy.coop.

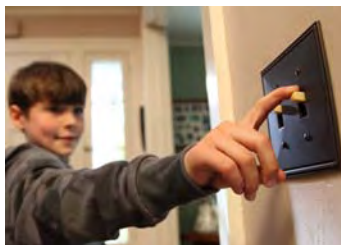
For more information about the Iowa Electric Cooperatives' Youth Tour, please visit <http://www.youthtour.coop>.

You wouldn't let the water run when you aren't using it.....so why do it with electricity?

Leaving battery chargers plugged in, lights on in empty rooms, entertainment/game stations and computers turned on when not in use is like leaving your faucet running.

Electricity, like water, is becoming a precious and costly resource. Wasting it not only costs us today, but will cost us in the future.

Use energy wisely. For more energy efficiency information, visit our Web site at www.prairieenergy.coop, or go to www.togetherwesave.com.



Adelai Swanson of Galt, in front of her favorite memorial, the Lincoln Memorial.

Thank You

"There is only one way to describe the Iowa Electric Cooperatives' Youth Tour - the experience of a lifetime! I enjoyed every second of my time in Washington D.C. I learned more about our government and found all the monuments and memorials very patriotic and interesting. My favorite memorial was the Lincoln Memorial. I was astounded at just how large the structure was! I met many new friends on the trip, and I know we will all stay very close. I cannot thank Prairie Energy Cooperative enough! It really was the experience of a lifetime!"

**Adelai Swanson, Galt
2011 Youth Tour Participant**

Prairie Energy Cooperative's office will be closed Mon., Sept. 5, in observance of Labor Day.



Complete our online survey by **Sept. 1** to be entered into a drawing for

\$150 of free electricity

(applied to your electric bill)

- www.inulierrec.coop
- www.franklinrec.coop
- www.grundycountyrecia.org
- www.humboldtrec.coop
- www.prairieenergy.coop

Watch for big screen savings

Are you in the market for a new TV, or do you want to make sure you're using your current TV efficiently? Today's televisions offer larger, thinner screens and, thanks to digital cable or satellite connections, provide a virtually unlimited number of channels.

These tips will help you tune in to big screen energy savings.

High-definition=high energy use

Although a high-definition TV (HDTV) transforms the latest blockbuster movie into a theater-like living room experience, these sets generally use more power because of better picture clarity. Also, energy consumption often relates to screen size. The larger the screen, the more electricity required.

Four types of TVs are currently available: plasma, liquid-crystal display (LCD), rear projection, and cathode ray tube (CRT). CRT televisions are the most difficult to find because they employ old technology and screen sizes rarely top 40 inches.

Plasma screens often are cited as the largest energy user—mainly because their large 42- to 65-inch screens typically draw between 240 watts to 400 watts. Most consume electricity even when turned off.

LCD TVs don't need much power to operate—111 watts on average. LCD screens range in size from 13 inches to 65 inches. These TVs fall into two categories: those with cold-cathode fluorescent lamps to illuminate the screen and backlight models employing a light-emitting diode (LED). LED units offer several benefits, notably better picture quality and thinner and lighter screens. They also use slightly less energy, at 101 watts.

Rear projection televisions tend to be the most energy efficient and boast the largest screen sizes. However, due to their overall weight, rear projection sets are not as readily available as plasma and LCD models.

Shopping for an energy-efficient television can be difficult. Television manufacturers rarely advertise energy consumption, and it almost never appears on in-store labels, though new ENERGY STAR® requirements may change that in 2012.

Tune in to savings

If you're not in the market for a new TV but want to make sure your model is operating efficiently, these tips from CNET.com may help you save energy:

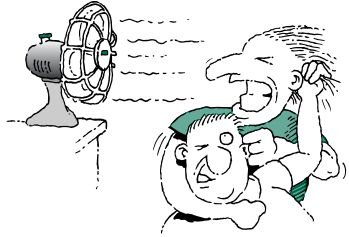
- Turn the TV and other connected devices off when they're not being used.
- Turn down the LCD's backlight. You'll save energy and still retain better picture quality.
- Turn on the power saver mode, which many new TVs offer.
- Control room lighting. While many energy-saving tips reduce brightness of the screen, you can compensate by dimming lights around your TV.

| High-Definition Television Comparison Guide | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| The power used by an active television is determined by three factors: screen size; technology type, such as plasma or LCD; and picture brightness, which nearly always depends on user-selected picture settings. | | | |
| Type of TV | Typical Size | Typical Price | Average Energy Used |
| Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) | 13-65 inches | \$200 to \$8,000 | 111 watts (standard) |
| | | | 101 watts (LED) |
| <i>LCDs are the most popular HDTVs, mainly because they're flat and available in a tremendous range of sizes and prices.</i> | | | |
| Plasma | 42-65 inches | \$800 to \$7,000 | 301 watts |
| <i>Available in a limited range of sizes (mostly big), plasma TVs outperform LCDs in tests comparing overall picture quality.</i> | | | |
| Rear-projection | 50-73 inches | \$1,000 to \$3,500 | N/A |
| <i>Rear-projection TVs are the most efficient but are getting hard to find because flat-panel models are often cheaper.</i> | | | |

Source: CNET.com (April 2010)

Keeping cool: Tips for beating the summer heat and high monthly bills

Here are some tips on keeping your electric bill in check:

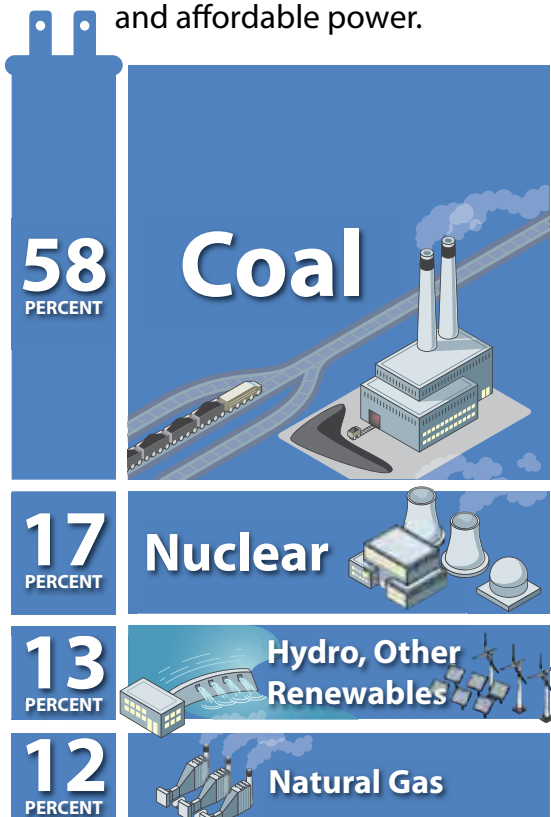


- **Adjust the thermostat.** During warmer months, raising the thermostat a few degrees can save money. Set the temperature between 78-80 degrees Fahrenheit, and you could save up to 8 percent on monthly cooling bills.
- **Be a “fan-atic.”** While they don’t replace an air conditioner or a heat pump, fans move the air so everyone feels more comfortable. On milder days, fans can save as much as 60 percent in electric bills. Fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off when you leave.
- **Regular HVAC maintenance is essential.** An HVAC professional will check the entire heating and cooling system to make sure it is running efficiently. This will help to extend the life of the system and save money.
- **Look for ENERGY STAR equipment.** ENERGY STAR models can reduce energy costs by as much as 30 percent.
- **Remember, bigger isn’t always better.** Too often, cooling equipment isn’t sized properly and could lead to higher electric bills. A unit that is too large for your home will not cool evenly and might produce higher humidity indoors.

Check out [Touchstone Energy’s energy-saving website, TogetherWeSave.com](http://TouchstoneEnergy.com), for more money-saving ideas or call the energy experts at your local electric co-op.

Sources of Power

Electric cooperatives, public power districts, and public utility districts use a diverse mix of fuels to supply members with safe, reliable, and affordable power.



Source: 2009 U.S. Energy Information Administration, Rural Utilities Service, and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association data.

Teach your child to be safe on the bus

Getting kids back to school is a busy time of the year. Here are some tips for students to make riding the bus safer for everyone.



- Always wait for the bus driver’s signal before crossing the roadway to the bus. Look both ways to make sure no vehicles are passing the bus.
- If you must walk in front of the bus, stay at least 10 feet (or 10 giant steps) ahead of the bus so the driver can see you.
- Obey the driver at all times.
- Remain seated and keep your head and arms inside the bus.
- In any accident that brings down a power line, it’s almost always best to stay in the vehicle and wait for help.

NOTHING COMPARES
to the Iowa State Fair
August 11 - 21, 2011.

NOTHING COMPARES
to the satisfaction of ownership
of your local electric cooperative – the place for innovation, accountability, integrity and commitment to community.

Touchstone Energy®
Cooperatives of Iowa
sponsoring the 4-H Exhibits Building

Iowa State Fair OFFICIAL SPONSOR

June 2011 Annual Meeting



Watts Smart Sign-up Card

I would like more information about participating in Prairie Energy Cooperative's load management program for electric water heating and/or central air conditioning.



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Please sign me up for:

- Watts Smart electric water heating
- Watts Smart central air conditioning
- Both Watts Smart electric water heating and central air conditioning
- I am willing to serve in a special survey group for conducting load management research

Sign up for Watts Smart load management program

Prairie Energy Cooperative introduces the Watts Smart load management program that will be installed later this year. Members are encouraged to sign up for the program and volunteer to be in a pilot program study group. Volunteers for the study group agree to take part in several surveys over the next few years that will help other electric cooperatives across the nation implement their own load management programs.

To sign up complete the form to the left.