



RURAL
MISSOURI

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative

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September 2014

News

Visit us on the Web - www.sacosage.com



C.Y.C.L.E.

John Barber, sponsored by Sac Osage Electric Cooperative, was among the 100 high school students from across Missouri who participated in the CYCLE program. CYCLE stands for Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience, held July 9-11, 2014, in Jefferson City.

Each year in July, three action-filled days provides high school students opportunities to learn first-hand what it is like to be involved in politics, the cooperative form of business, and being a leader. The program included nationally known speakers and a day at the Missouri State Capitol learning how a bill goes through the process to become a law. To learn more about electric cooperatives, the group was divided up into small teams that competed in various events like the "build a cooperative" game. Another highlight was hearing from the Rachel's Challenge Organization. Rachel Scott was the first student killed in the Columbine High School tragedy on April 20, 1999. Today, her family and friends speak to youth around the world about Rachel's legacy of being a positive role model to everyone she met in life.

The CYCLE program is in its 12th year and is a recipient of the National Community Youth Service award for the top youth program among all electric cooperatives in the country. For more information, please go to www.amec.org/content/about-cycle.



Labor Day

The office of Sac Osage Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Sept. 1 in observance of Labor Day.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

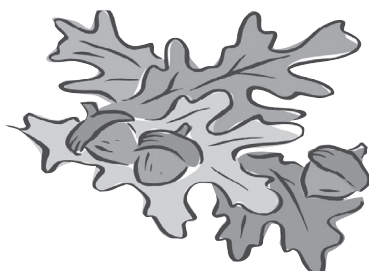
As the winter heating season approaches, learn how you can make your home more energy efficient. You can easily conduct your own basic home energy audit with a simple but diligent walk through. When auditing your home, keep a checklist of areas you have inspected and any problems you find.



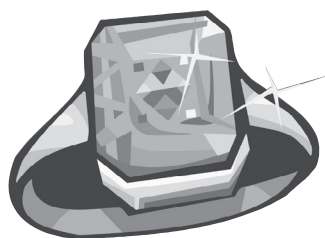
September 2014

Autumnal Equinox

This year's autumnal equinox occurs at 9:29 p.m. Central Daylight Time on Sept. 22. It is said that the wind and weather at the time of the equinoxes foretells the wind and weather during the following three months. If the autumn is warm, it is reputed that the winter will be long. If there's much autumn fog, there will be much winter snow. If the autumn is clear, the winter will be windy. If the storms of September clear off warm, however, you can expect the winter storms to be relatively warm as well.



Peaceful Sapphire



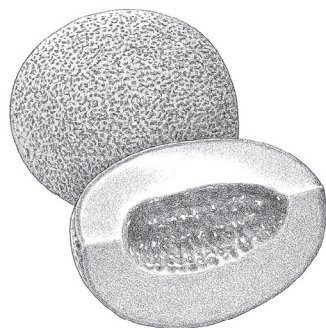
September's birthstone, the sapphire, was dedicated to Apollo, perhaps for its heavenly blue color or possibly for its extreme hardness, second only to that of the diamond. St. Jerome insisted that anyone wearing a sapphire could make peace with his enemies so, theoretically, Apollo wouldn't have needed the gem to wear into battle. For us mere mortals, the sapphire was supposed to help us gain favor with the gods. Pope Innocent III had these stones set in all his bishops' rings. The gem also was considered a guard against evil.

First Labor Day Parade

It was on a Tuesday — not a Monday — in 1882 when the first Labor Day parade was held in New York City. Peter McGuire, who had proposed the idea for a holiday to honor American workers at a labor meeting earlier that year, initiated the first Labor Day celebration. Today's Labor Day parades are a far cry from that first event, but the tribute to the contributions American workers make toward our country's social and economic achievements remains the same.

For recipes, gardening tips and weather forecasts, visit:
www.almanac.com

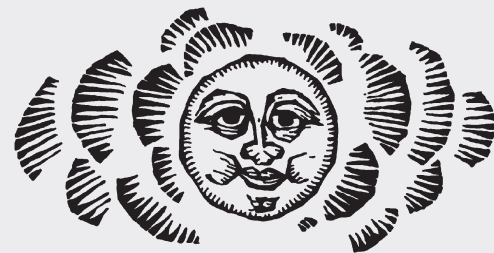
Recipe for Cantaloupe Soup



1 ripe cantaloupe, peeled, seeded and cubed
1 quart apricot juice
juice of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ginger
dash ground cloves
1 cup sour cream
sprigs of fresh mint for garnish

In a large pot, combine cantaloupe, apricot juice, lemon juice, sugar, cinnamon, ginger and ground cloves. Cover and simmer for about 30 minutes. Purée mixture in a blender and cool. Blend in sour cream and chill. Serve in chilled bowls, garnished with fresh mint. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

THE OLD FARMER'S



WEATHER PROVERBS

Fair on Sept. 1, fair for the month.

September dries up ditches or breaks down bridges.

If red the sun begins his race, be sure the rain will fall apace.

Dew is produced in serene weather and in calm places.

A rainbow in the morn, put your hook in the corn; A rainbow in the eve, put your hook in the sheave.

When a cat sneezes, it is a sign of rain.

When pigs carry straw to their sties, bad weather may come.

When the bubbles of coffee collect in the center of the cup, expect fair weather.



H O M E C O M F O R T

Time for a tuneup on your heating system

A simple heating check can save you big money

Dear Jim:
I want to keep my utility bills as low as possible. With the heating season ahead, what can I do myself to keep my heating system running at maximum efficiency and heat output? - Bob J.



by Jim Dulley

Dear Bob: Heating and cooling a home contribute to the majority of utility bills for most families.

Water heating usually is the second largest energy consumer, typically accounting for about 20 percent of the utility bill. Doing a simple heating system tuneup yourself improves its efficiency, resulting in significant annual cost savings.

Since central air-conditioning uses the same air handler (blower and ducts) as the heating system, maintaining your heating system for winter often also reduces cooling costs during summer.

Unless your furnace is malfunctioning in a significant way, you generally can't tell if it is operating at peak efficiency. One way to tell is to compare your current utility bills to previous years.

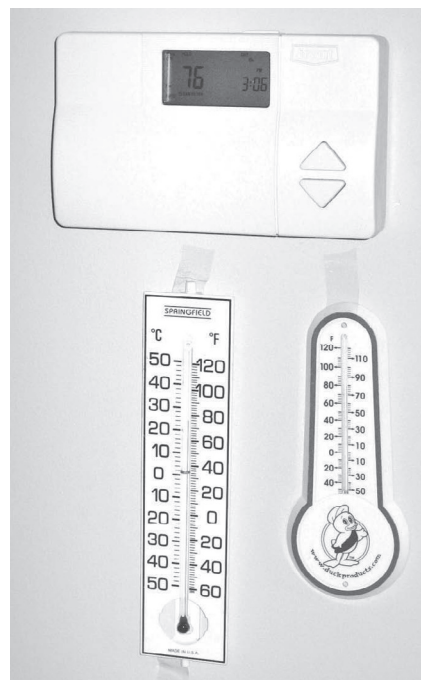
Make sure to compare the actual amount of energy used, not just the dollar amounts of the bills. Adjust the amounts accordingly for the severity of the weather measured in heating degree days for each comparison year.

Don't skip your regular scheduled professional maintenance calls just because you have done your own heating system mini tuneup. There are many areas within a heating system that only a qualified technician can evaluate and adjust properly. A rule of thumb when doing your own tuneup is, if you are not absolutely sure what a part does, don't touch it.

The first items to check are for safety. With a gas or propane furnace, put several drops of soapy water on any gas-line fittings you find. If the water bubbles at all, there are leaks. Leave your house immediately and call your gas company to have it repaired. With a heat pump, check to make sure the insulation on all of the external wiring looks good. You can inspect damaged or frayed areas more carefully once you turn the circuit



Before doing anything, turn off the electric circuit breaker to your furnace before beginning your tuneup. Remove the cover from the burner and control portion of a condensing gas furnace to inspect.



Tape a couple of bulb-type thermometers near the furnace thermostat to check temperature accuracy.

breaker off.

Turn off the electric power to the heating unit at the circuit breaker panel. Remove its side cover to

gain access to the blower. Using a vacuum cleaner brush attachment, clean any dust deposits. You may find bearing oil cups on the blower motor of older systems. Put a drop of oil in each cup.

If you can find the fan-control switch, adjust the temperature setting lower. Common settings are on at 135 degrees and off at 100 degrees. You might try using 110 and 90 degrees. This starts the blower sooner and keeps it running longer as the heat exchanger heats up and then cools down. This may cause a slightly chilly draft when it starts and stops, but it will extract more heat from the system. If you have trouble identifying the fan control switch, call a certified technician for assistance.

Replace the cover and make sure all the cabinet screws are tight. While you have the screwdriver or wrench in your hand, check the tightness of any cabinet screws you can find. Having the cabinet well-sealed improves efficiency by maintaining the proper air flow through the coils or over the heat exchanger surfaces. With a heat pump, also check the cabinet screws on the outdoor condenser unit.

Set the thermostat so the furnace

starts. Hold a lit stick of incense near all the joints in the ductwork — both return and supply air ducts — to check for air leaks. If you find leaks, dust off the surfaces and use mastic to seal around the joints.

This is a good time to change your furnace filter or clean a central air element. Consider installing a more effective filter element than the low-cost fiberglass ones that many systems use. This can help keep the air-flow paths cleaner for a more efficient heat transfer.

You also should check the accuracy of the wall thermostat. You may actually be keeping your house warmer than you realize. Tape a bulb thermometer on the wall next to your thermostat. Check the thermometer reading when the furnace shuts off and note the difference between it and the thermostat setting. Now you will know where to set the thermostat to get the indoor temperature you desire. If it is inaccurate, replace it with a new electronic setback model.

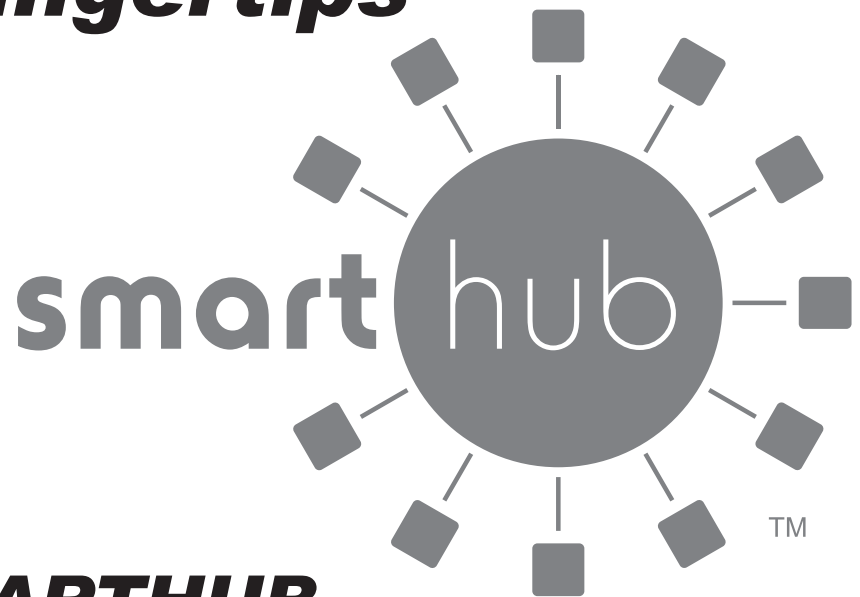
Have an energy-efficiency question for Jim? E-mail him at contact@dulley.com or write to: James Dulley, Rural Missouri, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244.



SmartHub Puts Energy Information at Your Fingertips

With the launch of SmartHub a few months ago, members have the opportunity to track their daily energy usage, resulting in a better informed consumer.

SmartHub is a great tool for members to use when they receive a bill that is higher than they might have expected. Members can pull up their usage by the day and may see that they used more electricity than normal on the days they hosted company for the holidays, or the string of days where temperature extremes, either high or low, were experienced. This tool makes it convenient for members to gauge energy usage at a glance, and help them consider lifestyle changes that may reduce their electricity bills.



USING SMARTHUB

Once you log into your account, there are several options. (To log into your account, you MUST have your account number on the initial log in.) You can make a payment by clicking on the peach colored "Make Payment" button on the lower right side of the screen. In this section, you can check your amount due, make a payment, and view your actual bill.

You can also check your usage from the home screen by

the month or day by clicking on the peach colored "Start Now" button in the center right of the screen.

- Next, click on the "Usage Explorer" box on the left and view your usage history. (See graphic.) The first graph shows your usage by month for the past year.

- To view a certain month, click on the name of the month at the bottom of the graph.

This will display a graph reflecting your daily usage during that particular billing period.

- On each of these graphs, you can also compare your usage to the high, low and average temperatures during the day, week or month by clicking "View Temperature" at the top and checking the "high," "low," or "average" boxes.

- By hovering your mouse over the dot on the line graph, you can see a popup box telling you the average temperature for that month or day. By hovering your mouse over the bar itself, you can view your exact kWh used for that month, day or hour.

- This feature also gives you the option to compare two bills worth of usage history side by side -- for example August 2013 compared to August 2014.

