

South Carolina Living

AIKEN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Sunny outlook

Agritourism is
blooming in the
Palmetto State

CEO MESSAGE
Raise the
thermostat setting?

SC RECIPE
Asian-inspired
meals



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Cooperative, Inc.**

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The mission of Aiken Electric Cooperative, Inc. is to empower communities by providing reliable, competitively priced energy and other services desired by our membership.

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AEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Raise my thermostat? When it's this hot?

SUMMER IS APPROACHING, and for the next few months we can expect extended stretches of extreme heat. During those afternoons when temperatures are pushing into the upper 90s or even exceeding 100 degrees, we all want our homes to be a refreshing oasis.

So why would Aiken Electric encourage you to move your thermostat setting up during a heat wave?

Avoid sticker shock

In the summer, your cooling system is by far the biggest energy user in your home. On a typical summer day, your HVAC unit can account for roughly half of your power consumption. Your air conditioner's job is to close the gap between the temperature outside and the temperature you've set on your thermostat. The wider that gap, the harder your unit has to work and the more electricity it uses.

When temperatures near 100 degrees, your system might have to run constantly just to keep your home at 72 degrees. A week or more of those elevated temperatures, and you're likely to see a spike in your monthly bill. However, setting your thermostat just a few degrees higher reduces the gap between inside and outside temperatures, letting your system work less and use less energy.

We're here to help

A key factor to keeping your home comfortable (and your costs down) during the hotter months of the year is energy efficiency. That's why we offer programs and resources designed to help you manage your energy use and improve your home's efficiency.

Programs such as Help My House provide eligible members with zero-down, low-interest financing for energy-saving home upgrades completed by certified contractors. Improvements such as insulation, duct sealing, and HVAC upgrades can help homes stay cooler and operate more efficiently.

You may also sign up for Beat The Peak alerts to receive notifications during times of high electricity demand. By delaying the use of large appliances and adjusting thermostat settings during those times, you can help reduce demand on the grid and keep power costs more affordable for everyone.

If needed, our team will also help connect you with available community resources and support services. For more ways to save energy and manage summer usage, scan the QR code or visit aikenco-op.org.



Get energy tips

APRIL M. COLLINS

Chief Executive Officer

Energy-Savings Tips to Help Cut Your Energy Costs

Knowing how to conserve energy usage during the winter and summer months can make a big difference in your energy costs.



Air Conditioning & Heating
accounts for approximately **half** of your energy use.

During the winter months keep your thermostat at 68°.

- Every degree above 68° **increases** operating costs 6–8%.
- Every degree below 68° **decreases** operating costs 6–7%.



Replace HVAC air filters monthly and have your unit serviced fall and spring to ensure energy-efficiency.



Install a smart or programmable thermostat, making it easy to save by offering pre-programmed settings to regulate a home's temperature throughout the year.



Open the draperies or shades during the winter days to allow the sunlight to heat your home, especially on windows on the south side.



Lower your water heating costs. Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting of 120°F.



Caulking, installing insulation and weather-stripping keeps hot air in during the winter and hot air out during the summer.

68°

During the summer months keep your thermostat at 78°.

- Every degree below 78° **increases** operating costs 11–12%.
- Every degree above 78° **decreases** operating costs 8–9%.

78°



Replace incandescent light bulbs,

especially the ones that are on more than 1 hour a day, with LED bulbs.



Close draperies or shades during the summer days to block the sun, especially on windows that face south or west.



Use the air-dry feature on dishwashers to dry dishes.



Use ceiling fans, they move the air so it feels more comfortable allowing for a higher thermostat setting — on milder days it can save as much as 60% on the energy bill.



Cook on the grill during the hotter months to keep cooking heat outside.



Purchase a Solar Clothes Dryer (also known as a clothesline) and hang laundry to dry.

Source: TouchstoneEnergy.com, "Use Energy Wisely: Efficiency"



**Aiken Electric
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Visit aikenco-op.org, for our energy-efficiency center, to find more energy-saving tips and learn more about our energy-saving programs offered just for you.