

# energy update



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## Scholarship Apps



**Due February 28<sup>th</sup>**

ACEC is excited to announce two scholarship opportunities available to local students.

**Applications for both scholarships are due February 28, 2026.**

### **Dairyland Power Cooperative Careers Scholarship**

The Dairyland Power Cooperative Careers Scholarship was established to support one post-secondary education student annually. Preference is given to students who are pursuing studies for careers found in electric utility settings (engineering, IT, communications, economics, human resources, public relations, finance/accounting, etc.). Students' parents or legal guardians must be ACEC members.

### **Hauschild Memorial Scholarship**

Graduating high school seniors entering a course of study in the electric field (electricians, line workers, electrical engineers, etc.) are encouraged to apply for an ACEC Hauschild Memorial Scholarship. Students' parents or guardians are not required to be ACEC members but must reside within the boundaries of our service area.

To learn more about ACEC scholarships and download applications, visit <https://acrec.com/youth-opportunities-acec>

### TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

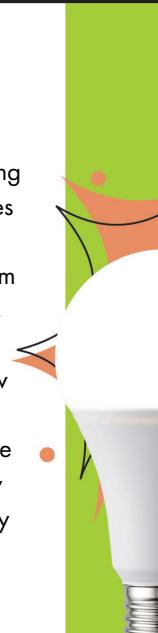
Enrolling in autodraft payments can help prevent certain types of utility bill scams. If a scammer contacts you with fake disconnection threats, you can rest easy knowing your bill is paid automatically through a pre-arranged, secure channel. Autodraft payments also eliminate the risk of exposing checks and personal banking info through the mail. If your utility offers autodraft payments, consider enrolling to stay on track and avoid certain scams.



Source: AARP

### **ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH**

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating - these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.



## Should I use a space heater or turn up the heat?

Drafty room? Before reaching for your space heater, consider whether it's better to plug it in or simply turn up the thermostat.

Space heaters are designed to warm small, targeted spaces – not your entire home. If you find yourself relying on one often, it may be time to address your home's energy efficiency.

### Fix efficiency first, then supplement with a space heater

Improving your home's efficiency helps it retain heat, reduces drafts and reduces your energy use. Many solutions are affordable and DIY-friendly, such as:

- Seal air leaks. Use caulk and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors to prevent drafts.
- Add insulation where it matters. Attic insulation has the biggest return on investment, and loose-fill insulation is an affordable option.
- Check your heating system. Schedule regular service for your furnace or heat pump. If it's outdated or struggling, it could be time for an upgrade. Check with your utility for potential rebates and incentives.
- Use programmable thermostats. These can help reduce energy waste by heating only when and where needed.

Once your home is sealed and insulated, a space heater can be used to increase comfort and warm specific rooms, like a home office or bedroom, without turning up the heat for the whole house.

A space heater is like a ceiling fan; it can improve comfort in a small area, but it's not a whole-house solution.

### Use space heaters efficiently:

- Heat only the room you're currently in.
- Close doors and keep heat contained.
- Choose the right size – too small and it won't warm you; too big and it wastes energy. Check manufacturer sizing guides.
- Use a heater with a thermostat and timer to avoid overheating the room or wasting electricity.

### Stay safe while staying warm:

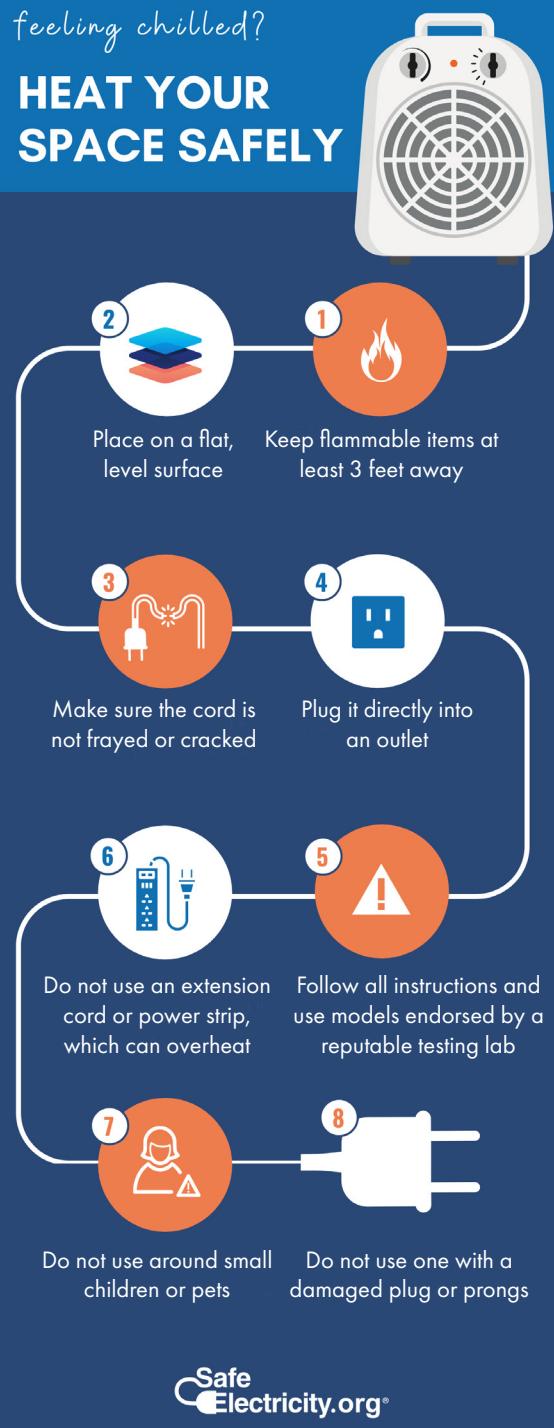
- Place the heater on a solid, flat, nonflammable surface – never on carpets or rugs.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use extension cords or power strips.
- Keep children, pets and anything flammable, such as curtains or bedding, at least 3 feet away from the heater.
- Choose a heater with built-in safety features including:
  - ◊ Overheat sensor
  - ◊ Tip-over shutoff switch
  - ◊ UL, ETL or CSA International certification label.
- Never leave a space heater unattended, especially around children or pets.
- Turn off the heater when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Unplug it when not in use to prevent electrical hazards.



Replace furnace filters as needed to maximize efficiency.

feeling chilled?

## HEAT YOUR SPACE SAFELY



Safe  
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### Winter Energy-Saving Tip!

Make the most of your home heating system by replacing or cleaning filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy, so make sure vents and radiators aren't blocked. These tips can help you stay warm all winter long and avoid having a costly repair bill.