

Keep those resolutions simple

As we enter a New Year, we all aspire to change and better ourselves so we make New Year's resolutions. In fact, 50% of all Americans make a New Year's resolution.

According to researcher Richard Wiseman, 88% of all those resolutions fail. That is 156 million failed resolutions and disappointed people every year. It all boils down to will power and we just don't have strong will power.

Here are a few simple ideas to replace your failed resolutions and save you money.

Feel the need to check that dish in the oven? Every time you open the oven door, the temperature inside decreases by up to 25%. Hold off on peeking inside so that your oven doesn't have to work harder than necessary.

Give your oven and stovetop a break. Use small kitchen appliances, such as your slow cooker, microwave and toaster oven when possible. This will help save energy.



Take advantage of heat from the sun. Open your curtains during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.

Find and seal all air leaks. Check areas near pipes, gaps around chimneys, cracks near doors, windows and any unfinished places.

Eliminate "vampire energy" waste. When you are not using an appli-

ance or an electronic device, unplug it to save energy. Power strips are definitely a good investment for your home.

While we might not be able to keep our resolution to get in better shape or lose weight, maybe we can do some simple things to improve the comfort and efficiency of our homes and save a few dollars on our energy bill in the New Year.

SmartHub more than just a way to pay your bill

SmartHub, Shelby Electric Cooperative's new member portal launched back in 2013 to replace online bill pay, allows members to pay their bill via a free app on their smart phones and tablets as well as on a computer.

SmartHub brings your account information right to your fingertips and allows you to manage all aspects of your account; you can view your electric use, quickly pay your bill, communicate with your cooperative and even report an outage.

"That is one feature we are excited about and hope our members start to utilize is the outage-reporting feature. When a member

loses power they can notify us via SmartHub," said cooperative spokesperson Kevin Bernson. "Be on the lookout for some other features to be added in the near future," added Bernson.

Visit www.shelbyelectric.coop and click on the online bill pay icon.

iOS users access SmartHub in the Apple iTunes App store and

Android users access SmartHub in the Android Market. Creating a SmartHub account is easy, just enter your profile information, choose your provider and you are ready to begin.

iOS Users



Scan this QR code to access SmartHub in the Apple iTunes App Store.

Android Users



Scan this QR code to access SmartHub in the Android Market.



Your Power – Your Plan – Your Choice

UPay - a Prepaid Electric Service from Your Cooperative

Real power solutions to fit your way of life.

Have you ever wished you could take control of your energy consumption? Now you can with **UPay**, a prepaid energy solution from Shelby Electric Cooperative.

UPay works best for members wanting to take control of their electric use and monitor consumption. Research has found using the prepaid method of buying electricity can actually save you money by reducing your consumption.

UPay allows you to:

- Control your energy use and budget
- Pay for energy as you use it
- Purchase electricity on your schedule
- Monitor and reduce energy use
- Pay as you go, no monthly bills
- Have greater flexibility with seasonal homes
- Pay and manage a family member's bill
- Control your budget if you are on a fixed income
- Control and manage electric consumption on rental property
- Enjoy savings with reduced consumption



Optional In-Home Display



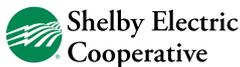
UPay prepaid from Shelby Electric Cooperative gives members the control to monitor their electric consumption on a regular basis which allows the member to notice patterns in their day-to-day use. The beauty of the **UPay** program is that it fits YOUR budget. You can buy enough electricity to last until payday or you can buy enough to last several months. The choice is yours!

Contact Shelby Electric Cooperative to learn more about this prepaid option by calling 1-800-677-2612.

The SEC phone payment and e-bill options for checking or savings accounts will not be made available to members who have had NSF or returned funds with SEC within the past 12 months.

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



They're out of sight, but don't forget about your air ducts. Taking care of them can save money and energy. Check ducts for air leaks. Take care of minor sealing jobs with heat-approved tape, especially in attics and in vented crawl spaces. Call the pros for major ductwork repairs.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Cooperative to phase out of water heater program

Cold shower blues...

The US Department of Energy, as a part of the National Appliance Energy Conservation Act, issued Final Rule energy efficiency mandates in April 2010. These new updates, which will go into effect April 2015, will require higher Energy Factor ratings on almost all residential gas, electric and oil water heaters.

Let's break this down ...

The coming energy efficiency mandates are pretty intense for all water heaters, but especially for larger (55+ gallons) electric models. When it comes to electricity use in the home, water heating is the 2nd largest energy consumer, accounting for nearly 17% of your home's total electric bill. Nearly 97% of households in the United States heat water using storage-tank hot water heaters (49% electric/48% gas; according to an Energy Star water heater market profile from 2009). Due to the coming mandates, many manufacturers have already ceased production of residential heaters greater than 55 gallons. Those who haven't will do so beginning in April of this year.

Homeowners who utilize water heaters of 50 gallon or less will be fortunate as several manufacturers have ramped up production of upgraded water heaters in these sizes. Added insulation and technologies have increased efficiency levels to meet new standards in these heaters. As for larger water heaters greater than 50 gallons, homeowners will have to choose between multiple smaller units, switching to gas or a heat-pump water heater when the time comes for replacement.And yes, though many of these new technologies will reap savings in energy efficiency, all these added technologies equal greater up-front cost to the end consumer. If you're in the market for a new electric water heater and enjoy the conven-



nience of a tank size greater than 55 gallon – now is the time to buy.

How does this impact Shelby Electric Cooperative? ...

For many years, Shelby Electric members have been able to participate in a water heater control program. The program allowed members to receive a discounted water heater by allowing the cooperative to “control” the electric load it used during peak alert periods. The program as a whole greatly aids in reducing the cooperative's load during peak use time among residential accounts. Currently, over 600 electric water heaters are in this program at Shelby Electric. Since mandates will inevitably remove these water heaters from the consumer market, Shelby Electric has had to reassess this program. For members currently on the program, SEC will continue to utilize the control functions as long as possible. But as these water heaters age out and different replacements enter the market, eventually the cooperative will phase out utilizing

this form of load-shed as there are currently no program opportunities to utilize other styles of water heaters in conjunction with a load management program.

The cooperative has also sold Marathon water heaters for several years out of our main office (some have utilized the control program while others have not). Due to changes in the manufacture and cost of these water heaters, the cooperative has also elected to stop selling water heaters once our current stock is sold out. For consumers who have purchased Marathon water heaters in the past, warranties will continue to stand for these heaters. Parts carry a 6-year warranty from the date of purchase. Tanks carry a life-time warranty as long as the original purchaser owns the heater; for tanks in homes that have been sold the warranty is reduced to 15 years from the date of purchase or date of manufacture (whichever is documented).

Shelby Electric Cooperative will continue to assist members who have purchased water heaters needing warranty replacement. For those with water heaters less than 55 gallon, Marathon will continue to manufacture these water heaters with even higher efficiency ratings to meet the new standard. For water heaters larger in size, warranty replacements will be available as long as these sizes remain in the warehouse. Once larger water heaters are no longer available, similar sizes and commercial grade water heaters will be considered for warranty replacement or a refund will be issued.

Please call the office with any questions regarding your Marathon water heaters and we will assist you. For more information on the Department of Energy's energy efficiency rulings with regard to resistance water heaters visit www.Rheem.com/ReadywithRheem for informational videos, helpful links and more!

Cooperative to award three academic scholarships

Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) will once again be awarding three academic scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. Scholarships are awarded to a son or daughter of a current SEC member who is receiving electric service from the cooperative at the time the scholarship application is submitted. *

In 2014 the winners were Audrey Hoene of Sigel, Brandon Butcher of Blue Mound and Abbey Burgener of Moweaqua. “We are pleased to be able to provide these students with an opportunity to be awarded a scholarship as a way to give back to the communities we serve,” said Heidi Hall, who coordinates this program for the cooperative.

High school seniors pursuing a college education in the United States are eligible to participate in the program. Scholarships may be used for educational costs at any two-year or four-year accredited college or university, including vocational/technical schools.

Candidates are chosen based on academic and community accom-



plishments, character and financial need as demonstrated in the application and essay. Friday, March 13th is the deadline for receipt of completed applications for 2015. Scholarship winners will be notified in June.

Applications can be obtained by visiting SEC’s website www.shelbyelectric.coop and clicking on the “Our Community” menu



tab or by calling Heidi Hall, Member Services Representative. The telephone numbers for the cooperative are 217-774-3986 or 1-800-677-2612.

Applications are also available from area high school guidance counselors.

** Sons/daughters of Shelby Electric Cooperative employees and Board members are not eligible to apply.*



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