

# Members Helping Members.

## A time to reflect and give back.



by **MARK STUBBS**  
General Manager

The holidays bring many things to mind. Happy memories of seasons past, good food (and expanded waistlines!), great family and long awaited gifts. And, if you're like me, the holidays bring about thoughts of giving back, spreading love and sharing joy.

Perhaps you commit random acts of kindness like sharing a cup of coffee with a friend in need, or cooking and serving food for the hungry. Maybe you give your time or money to local, national or international charities. Or perhaps you simply try to embrace the season by showing gratitude and kindness to those around you.

Here at Farmers Electric Cooperative, we believe in giving back to our local community. Members helping members, and the community, is how we give back. Our charitable foundation, Youth Tour, and scholarship program help make north Texas a little merrier year round.

Voted on by our members at the 2006 Annual Meeting, Operation Round Up was enacted to become a way for outreach into the areas we serve. Each month, participating member bills are rounded up to the next dollar amount. Some months may be a few cents more, others are a few cents less. On average, members contribute about 50 cents a month. Through the strength of the entire cooperative membership, that additional change adds up to provide meaningful help to others. This voluntary program gives members the ability to help those in need through

the support of social, charitable, and civic programs in our service area.

Farmers EC's Operation Round Up program funds: local emergency service providers; nurtures a healthy, independent lifestyle for the elderly; provides supervised and safe activities for our children; gives a helping hand to our neighbors who need financial assistance. Grant recipients this past year include Hopkins County Community Chest, all area volunteer fire departments, Hunt County Shared Ministries, Rockwall County Helping Hands, Community Seeds, CASA, United Way and Meals on Wheels Senior Services.

Grant applications and a list of recipients are available on our website at [FarmersElectric.coop](http://FarmersElectric.coop).

Supporting our youth is important. There is more pressure than ever on today's students to excel in the classroom and keep up with their peers around the world. At Farmers EC, we believe in giving back to the youth of north Texas so they can have the opportunity to make a difference in the world we live in.

One of the ways we support our youth is through our Youth Tour program. Each year, Farmers EC sponsors at least two outstanding high school students to attend the Government-in-Action Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., hosted by the National Rural Cooperative Association. The contest is open to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors in our community. The deadline for the 2016 Youth Tour is Feb. 5, 2016. Contest rules, additional information, and an application are available on our website at [FarmersElectric.coop](http://FarmersElectric.coop).

This Spring we will help high school graduates further their education by providing scholarships. The funds can be used at a college, university, or trade school. To be eligible for a Farmers EC scholarship, your parents or guardians must be a member of the cooperative at their principal residence. You must be currently enrolled as a senior in high school. You must have at least a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale.

As I noted earlier, Farmers EC believes in giving back to our local community. Members helping members through Operation Round Up and helping the community by supporting our youth is a small, but important, part of our mission to improve lives and the communities that we serve. From all of your friends at Farmers Electric Cooperative, we hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### Youth Tour & Scholarships

Each year Farmers EC sponsors two high school students to attend the Government-in-Action Youth Tour in Washington D.C.

We also offer numerous scholarships for eligible high school seniors whose parents are co-op members.

Learn more at: [FarmersElectric.coop](http://FarmersElectric.coop).

## HOLIDAY HOURS

Farmers EC offices will be closed on:

**Christmas** - Dec. 24<sup>TH</sup> – 25<sup>TH</sup>

**New Years** - Jan. 1<sup>ST</sup>

# Operation Round Up

Members Helping Members,  
and Our Community.



Voted on by our members in 2006, Operation Round Up was enacted to become a way for outreach into the areas we serve. Each month, a member's electric bill is rounded up to the next dollar amount. Some months may be a few cents more, others are a few cents less. On average, most members contribute about 50¢/month. But through the strength of the entire cooperative, that change adds up to provide meaningful help to others.

This voluntary program gives members the ability to help those in need through the support of social, charitable, and civic programs in our service area.

Yearly giving for a member:

12¢ – \$11.88 annually

Average per member: \$6/year

**KEEPING THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR COMMUNITIES  
AT HEART IS A MAIN MISSION OF A COOPERATIVE.**

**FarmersElectric.coop**



## FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Photo by Anthony Austin Grant

## CONGRATULATIONS TO LAVONE BRADDOCK

Our 2015 Annual Meeting Grand Prize Winner

Farmers EC General Manager Mark Stubbs is pictured with member LaVone Braddock who was the grand prize winner at the Annual Meeting. Braddock won a 2005 Chevrolet Malibu that was being retired from the cooperative's fleet.

## Heat More Efficiently This Winter.

### Inspect & clean your vents and replace filters.

Even if you're waiting until spring to do a floor-to-ceiling home cleanup, three cold-weather cleaning jobs can't wait.

First, clean your clothes dryer vents. A clogged dryer vent can start a fire—but a clean one helps your dryer use up to 25 percent less energy. Pull the dryer away from the wall, remove the back vent hose and vacuum it out. If it's especially clogged, a handyman with a "snake" tool can help.

Next, do the same thing with bathroom and kitchen vents. In the bathroom, remove the vent cover and suction out whatever is in it. The stove vent is a bit trickier: It's more likely to be clogged with grease than lint. And could need

to be soaked and scrubbed. The effort is worth it, as it could prevent a grease fire.

Finally, clean or replace furnace filters at least every three months. Filters get clogged with airborne debris, including dust, dirt, and bugs. A dirty filter forces your furnace to work harder to keep your home comfortable. The harder it works, the more energy it uses.

Most filters are disposable, but if yours is not, rinse it with water and brush away the dirt. Avoid using chemical cleaners, as the furnace fan could push residual toxins into the indoor air you breathe.



## CHECK LIST

- Dryer Vent
- Bathroom Vents
- Kitchen Vent
- Replace Furnace Filter



# How Much Electricity Do Christmas Lights Use

The usage can be a lump of coal in your stocking.

Understanding how much electricity Christmas lights use helps to plan which lights will work best with your home and better prepare for an increase in power bill charges. Your display size and choice of bulbs, whether incandescent or LED, will influence your energy bill the most.

So, how much electricity do Christmas lights use? It depends on which lights get used. A 100-count string of incandescent mini lights runs at 40 watts, while a 70 count of 5mm Wide Angle LEDs is approximately 4.8 watts total. In fact, because incandescent wattage is 80-90% more than LED wattage, the cost to power an incandescent can be up to 90x greater than powering an LED.

As you can see, the energy savings on the electric bill supports switching to LEDs. LED lights consume 80-90% less energy than incandescent bulbs, and last up to 100,000 hours, versus 3,000 hours for an incandescent. LEDs are the undisputed champs of holiday lighting. There is no reason to let concerns over cost of operation limit your decorating genius. You could wrap your home in LED lights, be seen from the International Space Station, and still have a pleasant power bill at the end of it all.

## Typical Light Usage Cost

When comparing outdoor Christmas decorations, the typical light user will use 1 to 3 wreaths, a garland, and a total of approximately 10 strings to wrap their outdoor trees. Electrical usage is minimal.

ITEMS	INCANDESCENT WATTS	LED WATTS
1 Wreath	21	4
1 Garland	42	4
10 Strings of Light	408	48
2 Outdoor Decorations	164	38
<b>Total Light Usage</b>	<b>635 = \$10.78</b>	<b>96 = \$1.63</b>

## Typical Heavy Usage Cost

The enthusiastic user lines their roof, yard, and driveway as well as wrapping all of their trees. They add lights to every inch of their house and create such spectacular sights as light show trees. They fill spaces in the yard with motifs and walkway trees, oftentimes animated to the sound of music.

ITEMS	INCANDESCENT WATTS	LED WATTS
500 ft C9 String on Roof	3,500	480
200 ft C9 String in Yard	1,400	192
15 Strings for Walkway Trees	612	72
30 Strings for Wrapping 2 Trees	1,224	144
1 Wreath	63	14
<b>Total Heavy Usage</b>	<b>6,799 = \$115.26</b>	<b>903 = \$15.32</b>

## Energy-Efficient Gift Ideas

This holiday season, why not give friends and family gifts that will save them money all year long? The Energy Education Council has gift suggestions that decrease energy use and increase savings:

**Energy Star products.** If you plan on buying a computer, television or home theater component, look for the Energy Star Sticker.

**Programmable thermostats.** Help loved ones heat their home strategically and save money.

**Rechargeable batteries & chargers.** End the hunt for fresh batteries for new gadgets and toys during the holidays.