

Prairiland High School Wins TV Station Contest

The Prairiland High School Video Technology class won the “My School Is Cool” contest sponsored by KDFW-Channel 4 in Fort Worth.

The contest was open to all schools in Anderson, Bosque, Collin, Comanche, Cooke, Dallas, Delta, Denton, Ellis, Erath, Fannin, Freestone, Hamilton, Henderson, Hill, Hood, Hopkins, Hunt, Jack, Johnson, Kaufman, Lamar, Navarro, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rains, Red River, Rockwall, Somerville, Tarrant, Van Zandt and Wise counties.

KDFW-FOX 4 and myFOXdfw.com selected 10 “cool

schools” as finalists in the “My School Is Cool” contest. All entries were judged based on excellence in overall content, production value and creativity.

The finalists’ videos were posted on the FOX 4 website so viewers could vote on which video was best. Prairiland’s entry received 40 percent of the over 65,000 votes cast.

Other top 10 schools were Billy Ryan High, Boles High, Bryan Adams High, Burleson High, Coppell High, Cross Road High, Lake Highlands High, Richardson High and Saginaw High.

KNOWING THE TRUTH CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Electricity is a wonderful product that most of us wouldn’t dream of doing without. It is the hardest-working, cleanest and safest form of energy available to us today.

But keeping electricity safe requires knowledge—knowledge of when electricity is safe and when it isn’t.

X FICTION: The fuse continues to blow; maybe I need a larger one.

✓ **FACT:** If a fuse is blowing repeatedly (or a circuit breaker is tripping), the circuit should be checked by an electrician. Replacing a fuse with one of a higher amperage could result in a fire.

X FICTION: It is safe to work on a machine or appliance if it is turned off.

✓ **FACT:** Power to the appliance should be disconnected completely—by unplugging it or turning off the circuit breaker—before any maintenance or repair is done.

X FICTION: Low voltage, such as household current, cannot hurt me.

✓ **FACT:** Low voltage can kill you. Normal household current has many times the minimum amperage necessary to render the heart and/or lungs inoperative.

X FICTION: The wire on the ground is dead if it isn’t moving, arcing, sparking or popping.

✓ **FACT:** Never be fooled by appearances. Many times wires may give every indication of being dead when the opposite is true. Do not try to move any wire using rope or wood. Stay at least 10 feet away and send someone to notify your electric cooperative immediately.

X FICTION: I can work around electricity safely if I wear rubber boots.

✓ **FACT:** Common rubber boots are almost no protection at all. Most rubber boots contain lampblack, which is a conductor of electricity.

The folks at your electric cooperative know the facts—and the fiction—about electric safety and want you to know, too.

PLAY UP OUTDOOR ELECTRICAL SAFETY WITH CHILDREN

Warm, sunny days beckon the child in us all to head outdoors to play. Your electric cooperative recommends that families review and stress to children to follow simple electrical safety rules for safe outdoor play.

Help keep your kids out of harm’s way when they play outdoors. Children often do not understand the dangers of electricity. Make them aware of overhead power lines and electrical equipment, and emphasize that they should never climb or play near them.

We recommend that children be taught these safety rules:

- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren’t touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that’s near power lines, don’t climb up to get it. Contact your electric utility for assistance.
- Never climb a utility pole or tower.
- Don’t play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment.
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason—even on a dare. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment that can kill you. Never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside. Call your electric cooperative instead.
- Water always attracts kids, but water and electricity never mix. Keep all electrical appliances at least 10 feet away from hot tubs, pools, ponds, puddles and wet surfaces.
- Make sure that outdoor electrical outlets are weatherproofed and protected by a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

Include Home Energy Savings in Vacation Plans

For consumers going on vacation this summer, the nation's electric utilities advise them to make sure their home's energy use takes a vacation as well. Simple tips can save consumers money while they are away.

AIR CONDITIONING

Set the thermostat to 85 degrees. If it is a programmable thermostat, use the "hold" or the "vacation" setting to keep it at that temperature.

ELECTRONICS

Computers, CD/DVD players, TVs, and VCRs—these and other electronic appliances use electricity, even when they are not turned on. Unplug them before leaving.

LIGHTING

Consumers can improve their energy savings, and their home's security, by using timers to operate lights each night. And by installing compact fluorescent bulbs, or CFLs, in those lamps, consumers will be saving more energy, up to 66 percent for each

lamp, and the bulb will last approximately 10 times longer than a regular incandescent bulb.

WATER HEATING

Turn the water heater's temperature to the lowest setting. Many water heaters have a "vacation" setting for this purpose. Leave a reminder to turn it back up when you return home.

Pool owners should shorten the operating time for the pool filter and automatic cleaning sweep (if applicable). A pool cover can save energy, too. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, up to 70 percent of pool water loss is by evaporation.

REFRIGERATOR

Adjust the refrigerator control to a warmer setting. If going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off. If you

do so, remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew.

For more information on how to use energy efficiently this summer, and all year round, contact your electric cooperative.



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YOUR "LOCAL PAGES"

This section of *Texas Co-op Power* magazine is produced by LEC each month to provide you with information about current events, safety, special programs and other activities of the cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the local office.

MEMBER BENEFITS:

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Remodel Your Kitchen To Save Money and Energy

DEAR JAMES: We are in the planning stages of remodeling our kitchen and we want to make it convenient to use, yet energy efficient. Do you have some tips for an efficient kitchen?

—Marjorie H.

DEAR MARJORIE: In most homes, the kitchen area is a big energy user, but creating an efficient kitchen does not require any sacrifices and can actually make it more convenient to use.

The four primary components are design, appliance selection, appliance usage and general efficiency habits. Even if you are not going to completely remodel a kitchen, you can still incorporate some of the same concepts to help manage energy use.

Start with the kitchen design layout and location of major workstations. The most accepted kitchen design utilizes the concept of a “kitchen triangle.” The goal is to have no more than 8 feet between the center of any two of the range, refrigerator and sink. They should also be located in a fairly even triangle for the most convenient use, resulting in less time in the kitchen, less lighting, less hot water running down the drain and more efficient cooking. Also consider the traffic patterns through your kitchen so you are not trying to dodge children as you are cooking or cleaning.

Refrigerator/freezers require adequate air flow through the condenser coils to operate efficiently. Also avoid locating the refrigerator in direct sunlight.

The range can be located almost anywhere to create the desired kitchen triangle. If you use natural ventilation from windows during summer, avoid locating the range near a window.

Once you have your kitchen layout completed, you should select energy-efficient appliances. The refrigerator is most important because it runs constantly. A side-by-side model may be the most convenient to use, but it is the least efficient design. Models with the freezer on the bottom are the most efficient with top-freezer models not far behind.

Now that you’ve selected the best appliances for your kitchen, use them in an efficient manner. Check temperatures in the refrigerator and freezer portions—they should be about 40 degrees and 0 degrees respectively. Periodically clean dust off the condenser coils. Use your dishwasher only for full loads. For just a few dishes, wash them by hand. Cover pots when you are boiling water and use small countertop ovens and appliances instead of the range oven whenever possible.

—James Dulley
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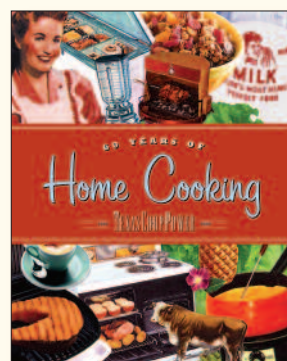
SWITCH IT OFF!



- Turn off all lights when leaving a room.
- Reduce general and overhead lighting by using task lighting.
- Turn off computers and monitors when idle.
- Shut off coffeemakers, radios, fans and other appliances when not needed.

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SAFETY AND THE FAMILY PETS

Your family pet can turn just about anything it finds into a chew toy. Let's make sure your pets don't add electrical devices to their toy chest.

Keep electrical cords away from puppies and kittens so they don't chew on them and receive a severe shock. If you have difficulty getting your pet to stop chewing on the cord, you can paint it with a bitter-tasting polish or wrap the cord in a thick plastic sleeve.

Make sure nightlights and appliances are completely plugged into wall outlets. Partially exposed prongs are a hazard for curious children, puppies and kittens.





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