



### Your Voice Matters

We were pleased to receive 3,188 completed surveys from our members. This represents 12% of our membership. The wealth of information you provided will help CEC’s Board and Management to identify areas of concern that should be addressed in the coming year.

We encourage you to watch for future articles in the Rural Missouri and bill inserts where your questions will be answered. In addition, watch for progress reports on programs and services you may have suggested.

Thank you for all the compliments and constructive criticism. As a member-owner, you have a voice, and we appreciate whatever you have to say.

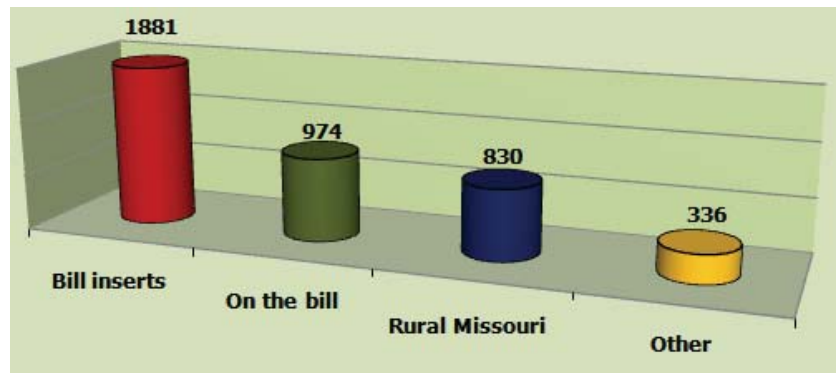
#### Survey Winners Announced

Congratulations to the following members who were randomly selected to win \$50 for their participation in the survey:

1. Faye Berkbuegler, Perryville
2. Kenneth Hoehn, Perryville
3. Carrie Quick, Perryville
4. Alan Normann, Ste. Genevieve
5. William Moll, Perryville

### We asked, “What is the best way to communicate with you?”

Many members selected more than one way. The category “bill inserts” was selected the most, followed by “on the bill”, Rural Missouri Magazine and other (direct mailing, phone, email and in person).



Some of you expressed concerns about the cost to produce bill inserts and the Rural Missouri Magazine. They are both relatively low-cost methods to communicate with our members. The cost of each bill insert is less than seven cents, and it does not increase postage costs for bills.

The Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives (AMEC) allows us to “piggy-back” onto their front and back pages of the Rural Missouri Magazine for 35¢, which is less than the cost of postage to send a letter.

Printing messages on bills is free, but the number of characters allowed is very limited. Email is an efficient and timely way to correspond with members, and we encourage you to provide your email address if that is the best way to communicate with you.

If you wish to opt out of receiving either publication, please let us know. We don’t want you to miss out on important information, but both CEC publications are archived on our website at [cecmo.com](http://cecmo.com).



**Best wishes to you and your family as we join in celebrating Christmas and the New Year. CEC’s offices will be closed on December 24, December 25 and January 1. In case of an electrical emergency, please call 1-800-286-2251.**

## Energy-Saving Cooking Tips

When the electric bill arrives in January, it's easy to forget how much extra electricity may have been used for cooking and baking over the holidays. Here are 10 simple tips to remember:



1. Slow cookers, electric skillets, toaster ovens and microwaves use considerably less energy than conventional ovens and range tops.
2. You can reduce the oven temperature by 25°F when using glass or ceramic baking dishes.
3. Match the size of the pan to the size of the heating element. Using a 6-inch pot on an 8-inch burner will waste 40% of the energy used.
4. Keep pots and pans covered to prevent heat loss, and use the lowest heat setting as possible.
5. Pre-heating the oven is not necessary for foods that cook for several hours.
6. Limit the times the oven door is opened to prevent losing as much as 25°F each time.
7. Bake several batches of cookies at a time rather than preheating the oven multiple times.
8. Clean burners and reflectors provide better heating and help save energy.
9. Turn off an electric burner a few minutes before cooking is complete. The heating elements will continue cooking after the electricity is turned off.
10. Use the "self-cleaning" function on the oven immediately following baking while the oven is still hot.

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## Clean furnace filters improve efficiency and air quality

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, indoor air is two to five times more polluted than outdoor air. Efficient furnace filters and air conditioner filters are your primary defense against indoor air quality problems.

Changing the furnace filter regularly is an easy task you can perform on your own, and probably one of the healthiest things you can do for your family.

The air filter removes dirt, dust, carpet fibers, pollen, pet hair and dander from the air. When the filter becomes clogged, it makes your furnace work harder, like trying to suck a really thick milkshake through a straw. Therefore, when your filter is kept clean, it will help extend the life of your unit, ensuring that the compressor coils located within the system remain unclogged and help your furnace run easier.

During the cold winter months, the furnace filter should be changed on a monthly basis. While it might seem unnecessary to change the filter so often, take one look at your dirty filter, and you'll be glad the filter caught the debris, rather than your lungs.

There are basically six types of filters you can choose from: electrostatic air filters; pre-cut media air filter pads; pleated air filters; HEPA air filters; activated carbon air filters; and fiberglass panel filters. Some are very efficient and reliable, while others provide less than desirable results.

Pleated air filters provide the best value for your money and are available in a wide range of efficiencies and designs. Some are manufactured with charcoal or carbon fibers to help control odors. Electrostatic filters are the best value when it comes to reusable filters, and the best of these will have a lifetime guaranty.

Throw-away fiberglass filters are not very efficient and will only trap the largest of dust particles. Electrostatic and HEPA filters cost more but claim to **remove over 97 percent of household allergens** from the air that passes through them. While you will pay more for the filters, you may pay less for maintenance and operating costs in the end.

Complimentary furnace filter whistles are available at CEC's offices (while supplies last). This device will alert you when it's time to change or clean your furnace filter. Snap it onto your furnace or air filter and the whistle will sound when it needs your attention.

