

Considering Buying an Electric Space Heater?

“Living in an age of advertisement, we are perpetually disillusioned. The perfect life is spread before us every day, but it changes and withers at a touch.” J. B. Priestly

Recently, ads for portable electric heaters claim to heat homes at half the price of conventional methods and pay for themselves in weeks. However marketed, these units can cost as much as \$400, depending on the model.

Many electric space heaters advertise that they can slash your electric bill, but what they don't advertise is that they can also cause that bill to increase significantly.

Whether it's a standard electric space heater you see at a hardware store or a specific model advertised in a newspaper flyer, the thing you need to be concerned about is how much power the unit consumes. This is most commonly given in watts. If you can't find this information on the package or heater itself, be sure to ask the retailer before making a purchase.

Many electric space heaters are rated at 1,500 watts. This rating is how much power the electric heater uses. You are billed for each kilowatt-hour of electricity you consume. A thousand watts is equal to one kilowatt, so 1,500 watts is equal to 1.5 kilowatts.

This means for each hour the electric heater is running it consumes 1.5 kilowatt hours of electricity, which costs about 16-17 cents. Doesn't sound like much, does it?

But running that heater non-stop is a surefire way to increase your bill. If you ran one 1,500 watt space heater for 24 hours a day for a single month it would cost about \$115. That's in addition to your normal bill.

So where are the savings that are often touted on such items?

An electric heater can save money, but only if you reduce the running time of your furnace or other primary heating system.

A space heater could reduce your electric bill, for instance, if you lowered the thermostat on your furnace from 72° F to 66° F and used the space heater to heat a

single occupied room up to a comfortable temperature. However, if you're using the space heater to heat an area of your home already heated with your primary source then the space heater is simply an additional cost.

Keep in mind that if you're using an electric space heater to supplement a propane or natural gas furnace, then you may see a drop in the amount of propane or natural gas you use, but your electric bill will still increase.

Electric space heaters may reduce your bill, but only if the homeowner is willing to turn down their whole house thermostat. For a short period of time, space heaters can make a small area comfortable, but you need to be careful how much they are used and where they are located.

Advertisements for infrared heaters claim occupants could lower their thermostat to 50 degrees because their units use less energy to create heat than other sources.

“Be careful with that statement,” warns Dennis Deines, Member Services for Western. “It doesn't matter where you buy an electric space heater; they all exert the same amount of heat and consume the same amount of energy.”

In other words a 1,500 watt infrared heater, priced at \$400 would produce the same amount of warmth as a 1,500 watt heater costing considerably less at your local hardware store. All portable electric space heaters produce 100 percent efficiency due to the amount of heat coming out equaling the amount of electricity going in.

Electric space heaters can provide an effective and simple means of heating for a short duration, but always keep in mind the cost of operating. For more questions or concerns contact Western Cooperative Electric at 800-456-6720 or 785-743-5561.

Remember, “buy in haste, repent in leisure.”



Solemn Pride

Saluting Our Veterans



On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 an armistice between Germany and the Allied nations came into effect. On November 11, 1919, Armistice Day was commemorated for the first time. In 1919, President Wilson proclaimed the day should be “filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory.”

In 1954, the veterans service organizations urged Congress to change the word “Armistice” to “Veterans.” Congress approved this change and on June 1, 1954, and November 11 became a day to honor all American veterans, where ever and whenever they have served.

This year, on Wednesday, November 11, veterans will again be remembered for their service to our country. Western Cooperative Electric will honor all veterans and a special recognition within this electric cooperative family. That list includes, Bob Abell, Board Trustee, Army 1951-1953; E. Jay Deines, Legal Counsel, Army 1962-1965; Dave Schneider, General Manager, Army 1970-1972; Fred Mickelson, Journeyman Lineman, Marine Corps, 1969-1971; Alan Stefek, Line Foreman, National Guard, 1968-1974; Jon Mehler, Journeyman Lineman, Navy 1966-1970; Mike Rust, Jour-

neyman Lineman, Army, 1969-1971; Jay Scott, Line Foreman, Army, 1993-1997; and Shelli Nowlin, customer service, Army Reserve, 1986-1992.

Duties and responsibilities of this elite group during their time of service included: communications, medical supply specialist, missile defense, maintenance for aircraft carriers, patrol action, infantry, rifleman, and heavy artillery operator.

Interesting facts and recollections were mentioned during individual interviews. Comments and details relived were diverse and sometimes interrupted with a quiet, emotional moment.

Reliving moments, particularly for those who were involved in combat, can be very difficult. Western interviewed each of our veterans. Each interview was concluded with a statement of individual pride and humility for their service to their country, but one ending statement was very touching.

“I was very fortunate to come home, to talk about it, some didn’t,” said one Western veteran.

A salute of honor “filled with solemn pride” to all veterans, past and present from Western Cooperative Electric and a prayer of peace and safety to our soldiers currently in the military.

Energy Efficiency— Proper Insulation

One of the simplest ways to reduce your home’s heating and cooling costs—and



improve comfort—involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides resistance to heat flow. The more heat flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements, and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls, and floors—wherever there is a difference in temperature.

During the summer cooling season, the reverse takes place. Heat flows from the outdoors to the interior of a house.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. In summer, heat gained must be removed by your cooling system. Proper insulation, though, decreases heat flow.

Heat flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulation’s effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of a multilayered installation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

Insulation effectiveness also depends on how and where it’s installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it’s important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.

Western’s Office will be Closed for the Holiday

Western Cooperative Electric wishes our members a happy Thanksgiving. We would also like to remind you that our offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 26-27, in observance of the holiday.

