



Duct sealing technology demonstrated

The high efficiency of a modern home's heating and cooling system often isn't fully delivered to each room, due to air leakage in the duct system. Every connection, elbow and register installation creates small gaps that let heated or cooled air escape, reducing the airflow to some rooms and possibly leaking energy to the great outdoors.

Tests have shown that many homes lose 30 percent or more of the air coming out of their furnace or heat pump blower fan before it reaches the intended rooms. Contractors have become more aware of this potential energy loss in recent years and may use special tapes and sealants on the outside of duct connections to reduce air leakage. But even with a conscientious effort to seal the ductwork, a significant amount of duct loss still occurs.

A unique technology, developed by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, has been introduced to the building industry that can do a better job of sealing duct leaks in both new and existing homes and businesses. The AeroSeal company has the license to the technology, with installers located across the country.

A local demonstration was held on Aug. 4, through the efforts of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative and AeroSeal of Peoria. RECC brought Bill Wallace, the business owner, to its annual contractor appreciation dinner in March to talk about the AeroSeal



Bill Wallace (left) explains the control setup for the AeroSeal duct sealing system at the home of Kyle McNeely in Modesto.

process. The heating contractors, builders and electricians in attendance also had a chance to win a free AeroSeal installation in their own home.

The lucky winner was Kyle McNeely, an electrician from Modesto, who agreed to let RECC and other contractors watch the installation process and see the test results in his home.

When the install date arrived, it took Bill Wallace and his two technicians about two hours to prepare the home and test the airflow delivered to each register in Kyle's house. Then they blocked off every register with foam blocks and tape. Bill cut a hole into the main duct trunk in the basement and blocked the trunk going back into

the fan blower.

A plastic sleeve connected the installation fan into the supply trunk with computer-controlled airflow, sealant injection and pressure monitoring. The vinyl AeroSeal material was heated and dispersed as a mist in the airflow to the ductwork. Over about 30 minutes, the sticky sealant plugged any small openings in the dust system as the computer showed the air leakage decreasing. Only about a pint of sealant was actually used, Bill pointed out, as only the leaks were coated inside the ducts.

The test equipment showed that the air leakage in Kyle's supply duct went from about 30 percent to below 5 percent. Since the

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ductwork is in a heated basement, the energy savings for this home is not large, but Bill pointed out, "Comfort levels will be improved, with better airflow delivered to each room." Homes with an unheated basement or crawl space, or ducts running through the attic, would gain much more in energy savings, he said.

Duct sealing is one more tool that homeowners and contractors can use to reduce their energy costs today and in the future. For more information on Aeroseal and other energy-efficiency ideas, visit our website at www.recc.coop or contact our member service department!



A technician checks the tube connecting the Aeroseal system to the home's main supply air duct.

Co-op members visit Pawnee, Farmersville

A group of Rural Electric members participating in our Cooperative Communicators Committee held a mini-tour on Monday, Aug. 7 to two interesting sites. While the small group normally meets at the RECC office in Auburn for a dinner and informational presentation, this program started at the home of Rod and Kimberly Bourne south of Pawnee and ended at the GobNob wind turbine at Farmersville.

The Bournes are members of the Co-op Communicators and opened the doors of their "Sports Barn" complex to the group for a catered dinner. Rod and Kimberly have a beautiful "barn" that encloses their home, a small sports gym and large game room. They also have a manicured softball field with a fence adorned with company logo signs matching their three children's names (Avery, Mason and Reese).

After the sandwich dinner, the group drove south to RECC's GobNob wind turbine, a 220-foot tower set on a 60-foot coal tailings pile at the former Crowne I Mine just east of Farmersville. It was a great place to watch the sun



Rod Bourne (standing) and his wife Kimberly welcomed members and directors from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative to their Sports Barn home and activity center on Aug. 7.

set over the central Illinois prairie while learning more about the wind generator that has been in operation since March 2009.

The Cooperative Communicators Committee is a volunteer group that typically meets in March, November and August to learn more about the cooperative and the electric industry. Any members who may be interested in participating can contact Jeff Lancaster, Manager of Member Services at (217) 438-9101.

Luke Bryan coming to co-op country

Country music star Luke Bryan is coming to a farm near you! One of the six stops on his annual farm tour will include the Ayers Family Farm just outside of Edinburg on Oct. 6. Jimmy Ayers, long time RECC Director, will see his fields turned into a stage and parking lots for the big event. Luke Bryan has been doing farm tours for several years and his team knows how to make everything come together. A large turn-out is expected so it is advised to get your tickets now and show up early. The concert is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 6 at 6 p.m. with parking available at 2 p.m. For more information go to www.lukebryan.com/farm-tour.



New business receives energy rebate

A new retail business opened in Glenarm in August, served by RECC on Palm Road (west frontage road along I-55). Sugar Creek Trading Co. is a furniture and accessories store leaning toward a modern “country-style” theme. In addition to new pieces from furniture builders around the country, it features handmade and repurposed items selected by a design team.

Josh Fields is the owner/manager of Sugar Creek Trading and has done much of the work of transforming an empty building into an attractive retail setting. Part of his project included

upgrading all lighting to high-efficiency LED bulbs, which earned a rebate of \$6,100 from Rural Electric and our power supplier, Illinois Municipal Electric Agency (IMEA). Josh also installed six high-efficiency mini-split heat pumps in the showrooms for heating and cooling.

The store is open daily from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 10041 Palm Road, Glenarm, Exits 83 and 88 from Interstate 55. They can be reached at (217) 827-4663 (HOME) as well as at Facebook.com/10041palmroad/.



Josh Fields shows some of the furniture displayed at his new store in Glenarm.



Co-op Connections discount offer!

Sugar Creek Trading has joined dozens of other local businesses in offering a discount to RECC members through our Co-op Connection Card program! Just show your card to get a 10 percent discount on any regular-priced merchandise! See this and other offers at www.connections.coop.

Celebrate Co-op Connections® Day, October 6!

October is National Cooperative Month, and what better time to highlight a unique electric cooperative program with Co-op Connections Card Day set for October 6!

Cooperative employees and member-owners can celebrate this money saving program when they use The One Card That Does It All® at participating national and local retailers. From retail discounts to pharmacy savings and other health benefits, the Co-op Connections Card can provide real benefits for our members.

To add even more excitement, members are eligible to win prizes when they share a photo that features their Co-op Connections Card on or before Oct. 6 using the hashtag



#ImConnected. Three \$100 gift cards will be awarded nationally for entries in the social media photo contest.

So, visit your local businesses with a Co-op Connections offer by Oct. 6, and snap a photo with your card! You can see all the local as well as national offers at www.connections.coop. There's a list of local participating businesses printed on page 11 of this month's magazine, and you can

go online or ask us for a complete list to see the discount offers.

If you need a replacement card or have a business that would like to add a member discount, please contact us. Happy Co-op Connections Card Day!



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See our web page for monthly Board meeting reports.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

RECC offering \$2,000 grants for two schools

Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants

RECC is sponsoring the Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants Program again this year, and with the assistance of the lending institution CoBank, two grants will be awarded for \$2,000 each. The classroom grants will enable teachers in local school districts to carry out education enhancement projects that are not included in the school budgets.

Rural Electric is putting \$2,000 into the program for the 2017-18 school year, and CoBank is adding another \$2,000 from their Sharing Success matching program for a total of \$4,000. Public and private schools in the general service area of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative can receive a grant of \$2,000 for grades K-8.

Application forms are available on our website at www.recc.coop and are due by Nov. 3. Winners will be announced on Dec. 1, and the project must be completed by May 20, 2018. While electricity and energy are not required to be the central topics of any

project, entries that do include energy education will be weighted more favorably.

All applications should include the following details:

- A description of the project and what it will accomplish
- The estimated cost of the project
- An explanation of why outside funds are necessary to carry out the project
- When the project would be completed
- The number of people affected by the project
- If the project's goals are measurable and how
- How the project ties in with Touchstone Energy's four core values of integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community

For more information, please contact Sandy Lex, Member Services Liaison, at sandy.lex@recc.coop or 217-438-6198.

New Budget Billing amounts start in November

RECC's Budget Billing payments are reconciled each year in October, with a new budget amount calculated for the coming year and starting with the November billing statements. Any balance owed or credited on accounts in October will be calculated into the new budget amount.

If you have a balance owing at the end of the budget billing year, the amount will be divided by 12 and will be added into your budget for the next year. For example, if your new budget calculation amount is \$150, and in October you still owe \$50, that \$50 divided by 12 equals \$4.17, so your new budget amount will be rounded to \$155.

If you have a credit balance, the amount will be divided by 12 and will decrease your budget for the next year by that amount. For example, if your new budget calculation amount is \$150, and in October you have a \$50 credit, \$50 divided by 12 equals \$4.17, so your new budget amount will be rounded to \$145.

If you are participating in the Budget Payment plan, your new budget amount for the coming year will be shown on your electric bill in October. An update letter will be included with your bill. If you do not wish to participate in Budget Billing, please notify us and we will remove your account from this plan. If you have any questions, call our office at (217) 438-6197 and ask for Shelley Crocks.