



BLUESTEM

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

www.bluestemelectric.com

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Bluestem NEWS

614 E Hwy 24

P.O. Box 5

Wamego, Kansas 66547

Phone (785) 456-2212

524 Dexter

P.O. Box 513

Clay Center, KS 67432

(785) 632-3111

Tune Up Your Furnace for Fall

You can save energy this fall and winter by having your furnace tuned up. Electric, gas and propane furnaces can go approximately three to five years between service calls and longer, if you change the filters regularly. Oil furnaces need to be serviced once a year, because they get dirty and need annual adjustment.

As many know, changing filters regularly is one of the key maintenance tasks to keep any type of furnace running efficiently. Make sure that you know where your furnace's filter is located and what size it is. Inspect it periodically, and replace it when it is dirty. How frequently you need to change the filter de-

pends on the amount of dirt in the house and around the furnace and also how much time the furnace runs.

Duct air leakage is one of the largest energy-wasters in your heating system. Heating contractors can check your ducts for air leakage, and seal the biggest leaks. Contractors start by sealing the larger joints near the furnace, and then work out towards the branch ducts as access allows. Believe it or not, duct tape is not a good choice for sealing ducts because its adhesive usually fails after a short time. Duct mastic, available in cans or buckets, is an effective and permanent material for sealing duct air leaks.

Source: Saturn Resource Management

Let's Celebrate Co-op Month

October is the month set aside to recognize the special nature and accomplishments of cooperative business. Cooperatives are businesses that are owned and democratically controlled by their members, the people who use the co-op's services or buy its goods, not by investors. Cooperatives return surplus revenues (income over expenses and investment) to their members proportionate to their use of the cooperative, not proportionate to their ownership. Cooperatives are motivated by service to their members, not by profit.

The nation's nearly 900 consumer-owned electric cooperatives provide



electricity for 37 million people in 47 states. But they do much more than that. Owned and governed by the consumers in hundreds of small communities, electric co-ops have been demonstrating strong commitment to their local communities since they turned on the lights in rural America in the 1930s.

Today, they generate jobs and income, support local causes through charitable contributions and volunteerism, improve the environment, support education, and invest in new community businesses.

Bluestem Trustee Nomination & Election Process

This is an excerpt from the Bluestem Electric Cooperative bylaws.

SECTION 4.05

Nomination of Trustees.

The Board shall appoint a nominating committee, on or before the first of October of each year, consisting of not less than one, nor more than five members from each district for whom a Trustee is to be elected. Board members may not serve on the nominating committee.

Only committee members from each district will nominate their own candidate. Committee members from districts one and two will meet together at Clay Center and committee members from districts three and four will meet together at Wamego. Nominating committees shall meet during the month of October. On or before the first day of November, the nominating committee shall prepare and

post a list of nominations for Trustee at the Wamego office if a Trustee is to be elected from districts three or four and at the Clay Center office if a Trustee is to be elected from districts one or two. The committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each position. Nominations may be made by petition, filed on or before the close of business, December 1, at the Wamego office for Trustees to be elected from

districts three and four, and at the Clay Center office for Trustees to be elected from districts one or two. The petition must be signed by no less than 5% of the membership of the district for whom the Trustee is to be elected. The secretary shall immediately post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations by the committee is posted. Nominations made by the petition shall appear on the ballot in

Do You Have Money To Burn?

If you were given the choice of burning money or saving money, which would you choose? The question may sound crazy, but actually it's what each homeowner faces when deciding whether or not to invest in a geothermal system.

Because a geothermal system tends to have a higher initial installation cost than most conventional systems, many homeowners view it as an expensive system. But, this is only half the picture.

As a homeowner, consider more than the initial investment when purchasing a new system: consider the monthly heating, cooling, hot water costs and the annual maintenance costs associated with each system. You may find that a fossil fuel furnace will cause you to burn money rather than save it and a conventional air conditioner will cause you to waste energy rather than conserve it.

When selecting a system always consider the pay back, cash flow, efficiency, operating costs and the system life span.

System pay back, is how long it takes to recover the difference in costs between the two systems, using the energy savings. On the average, the initial cost of installing a geothermal system can be recovered within three to five years. And savings will continue long after this recovery is made, allowing you to enjoy extra cash in your pocket without any more work or

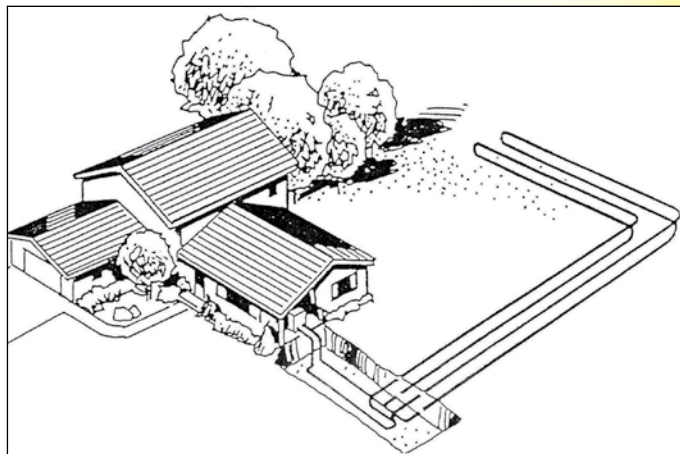
any less comfort.

Because geothermal systems deliver three or four units of energy to the home from every unit of electrical energy consumed to power the system, they rank first in energy efficiency. High efficiency is one of the reasons why geothermal systems are able to deliver long-term operational savings.

New home buyers are especially good candidates for the geothermal system, since they are already making a long-term investment in new construction, the geothermal system is the most logical choice.

With new construction, the initial cost of the geothermal system can usually be tied into the monthly mortgage payment. The monthly savings from the system easily covers the additional amount tacked on to the mortgage payment. So in effect, your geothermal system puts money in your pocket right away, this is called positive cash flow and is common in new homes.

Another cost consideration is total operating costs from heating, cooling and domestic hot water needs. The geothermal system is the total comfort system with the lowest overall operating cost. With most conventional systems, overall operat-



Above is a drawing of a ground source heat pump loop system.

ing costs are based upon the efficiency of more than one system - a fossil fuel furnace, central air conditioner and a water heater. With a geothermal system all operations are handled by one system, assuring efficiency and savings are achieved in all areas.

In addition, system maintenance and life span should not be overlooked. If you select a system based on its lower initial cost, you may achieve a short-term cost break and lose all long-term savings. For instance, conventional systems frequently require regular maintenance for each unit - the furnace, the air conditioner and the water heater. However, a geothermal system requires little or no maintenance beyond periodic checks and filter changes.

When faced with the purchase of a new heating, cooling and hot water system, you have one selection to make: either burn money with a conventional system or save it with a geothermal system. The choice is really that simple and the difference is really that clear. And, remember Bluestem has some lucrative rebates for geothermal systems and electric water heaters; also there are reduced electric rates for these systems. Now, which would you prefer?

the order received.

SECTION 4.06 Election of Trustees. The election of Trustees shall be by mail ballot. Only those nominees selected by the nominating committee or nominated by petition shall appear on the ballot. There may be write-in votes for a qualified member not named on the ballot. The ballot shall first list the name(s) nominated by the committee, then the name(s) nominated by petition in the

order received and, at the end, a place to write in a name. Failure of strict compliance with provisions of this section shall not affect the validity of any election of Trustees.

The secretary shall mail the ballots to the respective members on or before the 10th day of December of each year. On or before the first day of January of each year, ballots must be postmarked or received at the Wamego office or the Clay Center office.

Don't Forget!
The time changes on
Sunday, October 29, 2006
Turn Your Clocks **BACKWARDS**
ONE HOUR on Saturday before bedtime
SPRING FORWARD FALL BACK!