



SHAWN DORFLINGER
MANAGER

Path to Power

What it takes to keep power safe and reliable

When you flip a switch and the lights come on, it seems simple enough. But the journey electricity takes from generation facilities to the meter at your home is anything but simple. It's a complex process that relies on proper engineering, safety systems

and yes — your help — to keep it safe and reliable.

Electricity begins its journey at a power generation facility, often miles away. From there, it travels across high-voltage transmission lines to substations where the voltage is reduced for distribution. Finally, it makes its way through lower-voltage distribution lines that feed into neighborhoods and homes. Along the way, the process is monitored and managed to maintain stable voltage ranges and address potential issues.

As with any complicated process, things can go wrong. Some issues can be controlled, but some can't. Lightning strikes, tree limbs, animal interference or equipment failures can cause momentary voltage fluctuations or outages. Our substations and distribution lines are protected with breakers, fuses and voltage regulators to minimize those effects. However, once power reaches your home, you play a key role in protection.

Proper grounding

One of the most overlooked elements of home electrical safety is proper grounding. Grounding ensures that in the event of a surge or fault, electricity has a safe path to follow to ground. Without it, energy can take unexpected paths — damaging appliances or even endangering your family. Every home's electrical system should be grounded according to code, and a licensed electrician should periodically verify that the grounding is intact and effective.

Voltage delivered

to homes is kept within a standard operating range, but sensitive electronics and appliances can still be affected by fluctuations, especially during storms. That's why surge protection — both at the device level and at your main

panel — is highly recommended. It's an investment that protects other investments, like your HVAC system, refrigerator or home office equipment.

Every day, we invest in keeping our system safe, smart and secure. But the electrical system is a partnership — from generation sources to your meter. We encourage you to take simple steps:

1. Inspect your grounding;
2. Consider surge protection; and
3. Contact Ouachita Electric at (877) 252-4538 if you notice flickering lights or other irregularities.

Electricity is a modern miracle that requires maintenance and respect. Working together, we can keep it flowing safely and reliably to power your lives.

Protecting your Home

Proper grounding ensures electricity has a safe path to follow in case of surges or faults.



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HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU



step 1
Generation
Electricity is generated from various sources.



step 2
Step-Up Transformer
Voltage is increased to push the electricity over long distances.



step 3
Transmission Power Lines
Lines carry electricity over long distances.



step 4
Transmission Substation
Voltage is lowered so electricity can travel across the local system.



step 5
Distribution Substation
Voltage is lowered further for safe distribution.



step 6
Distribution Power Lines
Electricity travels across these lines in your community.



step 7
Final Stop
A transformer reduces voltage a final time, and electricity is sent to your home.



NRECA



Ouachita Electric
Cooperative Corporation

STAY IN THE KNOW!



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**PHONE
NUMBER**



**MAILING
ADDRESS**

Please ensure that all contact methods on your account are current to receive important notices and updates. To update contact information, please call 877-252-4538.



ADDRESS

700 Bradley Ferry Road
Camden

BOARD MEMBERS

Danny Adams
Kelly Belt
Lisa Hendrix
Sheila Johnson
David Kelley
Dr. Corbet Lamkin
David McLeane
Beau Morgan
Walt Pigott

CONTACT US

(877) 252-4538

PAY BILL

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(877) 252-4538

REPORT OUTAGES

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**OUACHITA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE**

**Our offices will
close on Monday,
Sept. 1, in
observance of
Labor Day.**

Be Responsible

Never shoot power or fiber lines



It is illegal to shoot power lines, fiber-optic cable, insulators or other electrical equipment. Shooting at lines can cause significant damage and service interruptions and is punishable by law. It is a Class D felony, punishable by up to six years in prison, with fines up to \$10,000.



Bath Math

Hot water habits drain electric budgets fast

BY MITCH ROSS

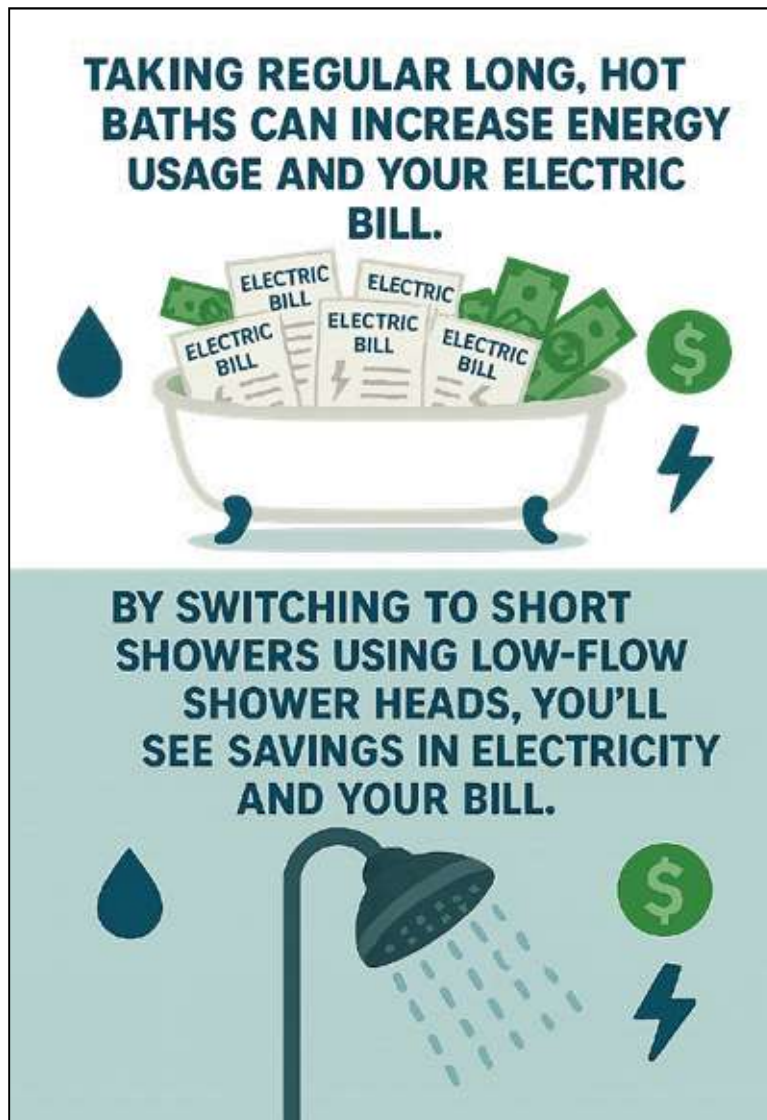
A friend asked me to help diagnose his home's recurring high electric bills. After an audit, we found things that could have been a bit better, but nothing that quite explained his problem. It wasn't until we started talking about how his family uses hot water that the culprit became apparent.

His family was accustomed to taking baths only, preferring them over showers. On top of that, they often enjoyed soaking in the tub long enough to require filling it with additional hot water. I began doing the math.

Their bathing habits alone were adding about \$175 per month to their electric bill. By switching to a more economical option — using a 1.5 gallons-per-minute (GPM) shower head and taking 10-minute showers on average — his family would only spend about \$50 per month, saving \$125 per month or \$1,500 per year!

For the typical household, hot water is the second highest category of energy expense. Luckily, there are several cheap and easy ways to lower this portion of your energy bill.

- Take short showers instead of long showers or baths.
- Use 1.5 GPM shower heads.
- Use .5 or 1 GPM faucet aerators for sinks.
- Use cold water to wash clothes. Modern detergents don't require hot water to get most clothes clean.
- Lower the temperature setting on your water heater. Around 120 degrees is recommended, but try to find the lowest temperature setting that works for your home.
- Install pipe wrap on both pipes coming out of the top of the water heater and all the hot water lines.
- Don't prerinse dishes with hot water before placing them in the dishwasher.
- Don't use a circulation pump. If you feel you must, have it on a timer running as little as possible.
- Consider installing a heat pump water heater. Heat pump water heaters are the most cost-effective way to heat water. They can potentially save \$400 or more per year.



By implementing all these changes in my own home (including a heat pump water heater), my family spends less than \$80 per year to heat water for our home, as verified by a metering device I have installed on my water heater.

My friend has since implemented several changes to how they use hot water, and he has seen his bills go down. He is planning on installing a heat pump water heater later this year, leading to even greater savings for his family.

Mitch Ross is the energy efficiency manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.