



CENTRAL ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION

A tradition of dependable, hometown service since 1937

CARTHAGE: 601-267-5671 | PHILADELPHIA: 601-656-2601 | RANKIN: 601-829-1201 | SEBASTOPOL: 601-625-7422

107 EAST MAIN STREET • CARTHAGE, MS 39051

Get smart about home lighting



by Abby Berry

Gone are the days when a simple flip of the switch was the only choice for illuminating our homes. While we still have this tried-and-true option, we've entered a new era of innovative and intelligent technologies, which includes smart lighting. Smart lighting connects to Wi-Fi and offers an array of cutting-edge functionality and convenience. Let's look at the main benefits of smart lighting options.

Smart lighting is energy efficient

Most smart bulbs utilize LED technology, which is much more efficient than traditional incandescent lighting. Additionally, smart lighting gives you more control over how and when you light your home, ultimately resulting in less energy used for lighting.

Smart lighting provides convenience and control

Most smart bulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa. You can conveniently control lighting settings from anywhere in your home or when you're away. Whether you want to set a schedule for lighting or adjust brightness levels, these smart options offer effortless control from the comfort of, well, anywhere!

Photo Credit: Freepik.com

Smart options empower you to personalize home lighting

Whatever mood you want to create, smart lighting can help. For a more traditional look, try dimmable white bulbs. If you want to create the perfect ambiance for movie night, look for bulbs that can be adjusted for a variety of vibrant colors.

To use a smart bulb, the wall switch it's connected to must be "on" so the bulb receives power, which enables it to connect to a Wi-Fi network.

If you need additional options to operate the lights, consider a smart light switch. Today's smart switches tend to play nicely with smart bulbs. If you want to control your smart bulbs with a physical switch (in addition to using your phone and voice commands), look for smart switches that include a built-in feature that allows both.

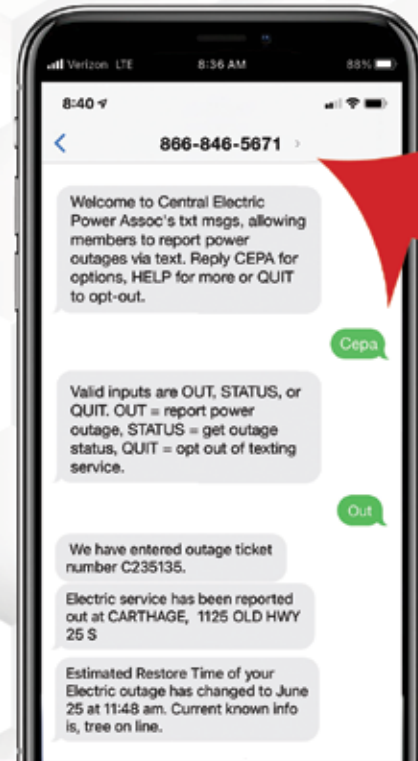
If you're looking to take the plunge and integrate multiple smart bulbs to your home lighting system, your best bet may be a kit, like the Philips Hue Starter Kit. Most kits include several bulbs and any additional tools you'll need to get started.

Whether you're looking for more convenience, colorful options or better ways to manage energy use, smart lighting can provide multiple benefits. Determine which smart lighting features are most important for your needs, then start shopping!

Photo Credit: Philips


Have an outage...**TEXT US!**


To sign up for texting power outages, please visit www.centralepa.com. Once you have enrolled, you will receive outage updates. Simply text the word "**OUT**" to 866-846-5671 to report your power outage.



Remember, there are **THREE** ways to report an outage:

 **PHONE**
601-267-3043

 **WEBSITE**
www.centralepa.com (Click on **Report an Outage**)

 **TEXT**
Once enrolled, simply text '**OUT**' to 866-846-5671



Providing Your Own Power **DURING AN OUTAGE**

by Paul Wesslund

If you're wondering whether to buy a home generator in case of a power outage, you're not alone. Backup power sources have gotten so popular that manufacturers now offer a wide range of choices.

Options run from pull-start gasoline models costing a few hundred dollars to permanent outdoor installations for several thousand dollars. That variety makes it easier to get exactly what you want, but harder to choose.

A good first step is to think about what you want a home generator to do. Do you just want to keep your phone charged? Do you want to make sure food doesn't spoil in your refrigerator? Do you want to make sure you have heat and air conditioning through an extended outage? Answering those questions will require you to know the wattage of the appliances you want to run so you know the capacity of the generator you need.

You might also ask if you really need a generator. The average U.S. home is without power about seven hours a year. Is that enough to justify the expense and attention?

Another part of your planning should be contacting your electric co-op to get their expert advice on the best and safest fit for your home.



Here's what to know about the four basic choices in home generators:



Most portable generators are powerful enough to run a refrigerator or a window air conditioner. Special attention to safety is required, and they should never be used indoors, not even in a garage.

Portable generators are small enough that you might even take them on camping trips. The costs for these can vary — from more than \$2,000 to as low as \$400. Most should be able to run a refrigerator or a window air conditioner. Special attention to safety is required. They should never be used indoors, not even in a garage. The carbon monoxide they produce can be deadly in minutes. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that 85 people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators. Portable generators should be operated more than 20 feet from the house and be connected only with outdoor extension cords matched to the wattage being used. Look for models with a carbon monoxide detector and automatic shutoff.

Appliances should be plugged in to the generator — the generator should never be plugged into an outlet or your home's electrical system.

You should also spend the money to have an electrician install a transfer switch. That acts as a mini-circuit breaker to protect your appliances and can be an easier way to connect the house to the generator.

Inverter generators are higher-tech versions of standard portable generators. The power they produce changes to match what the appliances are using, so although they are a little more expensive, they use fuel more efficiently and make less noise. The same safety guidelines apply to both inverter and standard portable generators.



Most standby generators are permanently mounted outside the home, then connected to the home's electrical system. Standby generators run on propane or natural gas, and they must be installed by a professional electrician.

Standby generators can cost \$7,000, plus installation, but they have the benefit of turning on automatically during a power outage and running your whole house. They're typically a permanently-mounted outdoor unit that's connected to your home electrical system and runs on propane or natural gas. It must be installed by a professional electrician.

Power stations, also known as batteries, charge themselves up while the power is on. They're not as powerful as some of the other options, and can be more expensive, but they're quiet, easy to operate, and some are designed to look good hanging on the wall. They can cost between \$400 and \$6,000. One common use of power stations is to pair them with rooftop solar panels so that electricity from the sun can be available even at night.

With the increased intensity of storms and our reliance on electronic devices, power outages can be a bigger concern these days. Technology now gives you many choices for how to react, whether you want to make sure you're never without power, or you're willing to just light a candle and wait for the lights to come back on.

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Seal in savings with EFFICIENT EXTERIOR DOORS



I like the style of my front door, but it is drafty. Can you recommend ways to fix the drafts and make it more energy efficient?

by **Miranda Boutelle**

Efficient exterior doors seal tightly and don't allow air to pass through. Limiting airflow from exterior doors can result in lower heating and cooling costs. Throughout the years, the construction of exterior doors has improved to increase their efficiency. If your door is older, it likely is not insulated.

There are two strategies to address an inefficient front door: Purchase a new one or work with what you have.

If you want to replace your front door for aesthetic purposes, make it more functional or improve its efficiency, consider upgrading to an ENERGY STAR®-certified model. The ENERGY STAR® certification ensures the door you buy meets efficiency criteria for your local area. It also means the National Fenestration Rating Council independently tested and verified the door.

Certification requires any windows in the door to be double or triple pane to reduce heat flow, which results in a more efficient home. While windows in doors offer aesthetics, more glass means less efficiency. ENERGY STAR® offers different criteria based on the amount of glass the door has. That means that the bigger the windows in a door, the lower the efficiency. The most efficient doors have no glass or windows in them.

U-factor is the primary rating for efficiency on doors and windows. U-factor is the inverse of R-value, which is the rating used for insulation. Unlike R-value where higher is better, the lower the U-factor, the more energy efficient the door. Check the U-factor on ENERGY STAR® doors at your local hardware store or online to help choose the most efficient door in your preferred style.

ENERGY STAR®-certified doors are made of the most efficient materials, such as fiberglass, wood cladding, and steel with polyurethane foam core. They are built to fit snugly into their frames, reducing drafts and airflow.

When it comes to doors, you don't have to sacrifice style for efficiency. There are many styles available to match the architecture, whether your home is historic or modern.

When completely replacing a door and the frame, you can use expanding foam or caulk to fill the space between the door jamb and structural framing. ENERGY STAR® doors have specific installation instructions to ensure the desired efficiency.

If a new door isn't in your budget, there are less expensive options to reduce air leakage and improve your home's efficiency.

All of that coming and going throughout the years can wear out weatherstripping. If you can see daylight around the edges of the door or underneath it, it's time to stop those air leaks.



The front door of your home has a lot of meaning. It sets the stage for the home and is the first impression for your guests. Beyond curb appeal, the front door is a good place to look for energy savings.

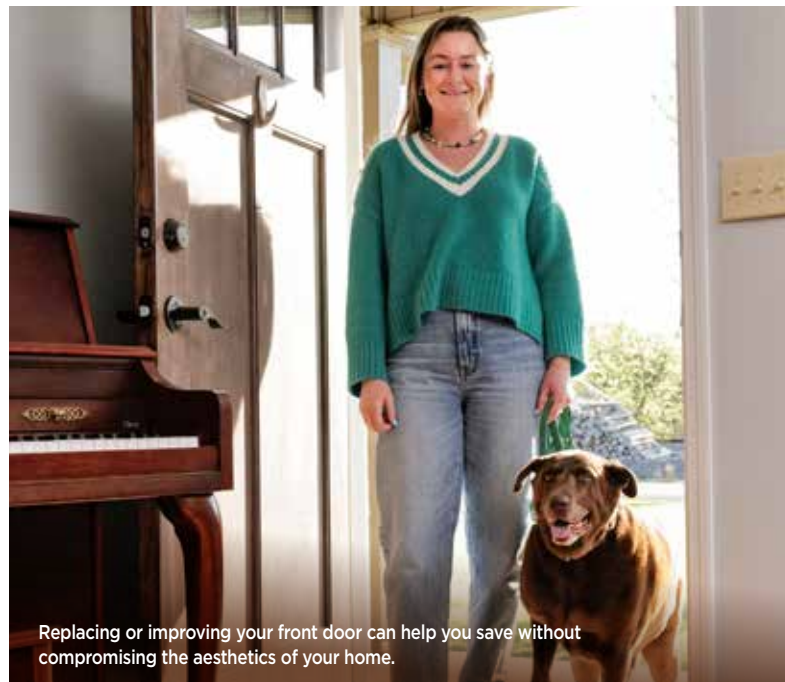
Weatherstripping around the door jamb can be adjusted to make a snug seal or replaced if it's too far gone. Apply one continuous strip along each side, and make sure it meets tightly at the corners.

There are many different types of weatherstripping products on the market, so shop around for what's right for you. Don't forget the door sweep at the bottom of the door.

Adding a storm door can also help and is less expensive than replacing the entire door. Most storm doors have options for using a screen or glass. Swapping the screen for the glass insert can help save energy in both the winter and in the summer if you use air conditioning. Consider a storm door that's easy to switch between glass and screen so you can maximize the benefits.

Open the door to energy savings by improving the efficiency of your exterior doors — without compromising the aesthetics of your home.

Miranda Boutelle is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company.



Replacing or improving your front door can help you save without compromising the aesthetics of your home.