

RURAL ELECTRIC

# NEBRASKAN

April 2017



# Drug Companies Fear Release of the New AloeCure



**Big Pharma stands to lose billions as doctors' recommend drug-free "health cocktail" that adjusts and corrects your body's health conditions.**

by David Waxman  
Seattle Washington:

Drug company execs are nervous. That's because the greatest health advance in decades has hit the streets. And analysts expect it to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.

So what's all the fuss about? It's about a new ingredient that's changing the lives of people who use it. Some call it "the greatest discovery since penicillin"!

The name of the product is the AloeCure. It's not a drug. It's something completely different. And the product is available to anyone who wants it, at a reasonable price. But demands may force future prices to rise.

## TOP DOC WARNS: DIGESTION DRUGS CAN CRIPPLE YOU!

Company spokesperson, Dr. Liza Leal; a leading integrative health specialist recommends AloeCure before she decides to prescribe any digestion drug. Especially after the FDA's stern warning about long-term use of drugs classified as proton pump inhibitors like **Prilosec**®, **Nexium**®, and **Prevacid**®. In a nutshell, the FDA statement warned people should avoid taking these digestion drugs for longer than three 14-day treatment periods because there is an increased risk of bone fractures. Many people take them daily and for decades.

Dr. Leal should know. Many patients come to her with bone and joint complaints and she does everything she can to help them. One way for digestion sufferers to help avoid possible risk of tragic joint and bone problems caused by overuse of digestion drugs is to take the AloeCure.

**Analysts expect the AloeCure to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.**

The secret to AloeCure's "health adjusting" formula is scientifically tested **Acemannan**, a polysaccharide extracted from Aloe Vera. But not the same aloe vera that mom used to apply to your cuts, scrapes and burns. This is a perfect strain of aloe that is organically grown under very strict conditions. AloeCure is so powerful it begins to benefit your health the instant you take it. It soothes intestinal discomfort and you can avoid the possibility of bone and health damage caused by overuse of digestion drugs. We all know how well aloe works externally on cuts, scrapes and burns. But did you know **Acemannan** has many of other health benefits?...

## HELPS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM TO CALM INFLAMMATION

According to a leading aloe research, when correctly processed for digesting, the Aloe plant has a powerful component for regulating your immune system called **Acemannan**. So whether it's damage that is physical, bacterial, chemical or autoimmune; the natural plant helps the body stay healthy.

## RAPID ACID AND HEARTBURN NEUTRALIZER

Aloe has proved to have an astonishing effect on users who suffer with digestion problems like bouts of acid reflux, heartburn, cramping, gas and constipation because it acts as a natural acid buffer and soothes the digestive system. But new studies prove it does a whole lot more.

## SIDE-STEP HEART CONCERNS

So you've been taking proton pump inhibitors (PPI's) for years and you feel just fine. In June of 2015 a major study shows that chronic PPI use increases the risk of heart attack in general population.

## UNLEASH YOUR MEMORY

Studies show that your brain needs the healthy bacteria from your gut in order function at its best. Both low and high dosages of digestion drugs are proven to destroy that healthy bacteria and get in the way of brain function. So you're left with a sluggish, slow-to-react brain without a lot of room to store information. The **acemannan** used in AloeCure actually makes your gut healthier, so healthy bacteria flows freely to your brain so you think better, faster and with a larger capacity for memory.

**Doctors call it "The greatest health discovery in decades!"**

## SLEEP LIKE A BABY

A night without sleep really damages your body. And continued lost sleep can lead to all sorts of health problems. But what you may not realize is the reason why you're not sleeping. Some call it "Ghost Reflux". A low-intensity form of acid reflux discomfort that quietly keeps you awake in the background. AloeCure helps digestion so you may find yourself sleeping through the night.

## CELEBRITY HAIR, SKIN & NAILS

Certain antacids may greatly reduce your

body's ability to break down and absorb calcium. Aloe delivers calcium as it aids in balancing your stomach acidity. The result? Thicker, healthier looking hair...more youthful looking skin... And nails so strong they may never break again.

## SAVE YOUR KIDNEY

National and local news outlets are reporting Kidney Failure linked to PPI's. Your Kidney extracts waste from blood, balance body fluids, form urine, and aid in other important functions of the body. Without it your body would be overrun by deadly toxins. Aloe helps your kidney function properly. Studies suggest, if you started taking aloe today; you'd see a big difference in the way you feel.

## GUARANTEED RESULTS OR DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK

Due to the incredible results people are reporting, AloeCure is being sold with an equally incredible guarantee.

"We can only offer this incredible guarantee because we are 100% certain this product will work for those who use it," Says Dr. Leal.

Here's how it works: Take the pill exactly as directed. You must see and feel remarkable improvements in your digestive health, your mental health, in your physical appearance, the amount inflammation you have throughout your body - even in your ability to fall asleep at night!

Otherwise, simply return the empty bottles with a short note about how you took the pills and followed the simple instructions and the company will send you...Double your money back!

## HOW TO GET ALOECURE

This is the official nationwide release of the new AloeCure pill in the United States. And so, the company is offering our readers up to 3 FREE bottles with their order.

This special give-away is available for readers of this publication only. All you have to do is call TOLL-FREE 1-800-328-8919 and provide the operator with the Free Bottle Approval Code: JC025. The company will do the rest.

**Important:** Due to AloeCure's recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.

RURAL ELECTRIC  
**NEBRASKAN**

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Jason Vaisvilas, Lead Lineman at KBR Rural Public Power District's Valentine outpost, helps a camper learn how to climb a pole. See the related story on Page 12. Photograph by Wayne Price



by Wayne Price

## Nebraska celebrates National Lineman Appreciation Day

**F**rom restoring power after a storm to building new lines to serve customers, Nebraska's electric linemen are the face of public power in Nebraska. They play a vital role in serving customers around-the-clock with reliable and affordable electricity.

They don't always get the recognition they deserve. Please take a moment on April 10 and join me in expressing your appreciation for their professional contributions in all kinds of weather conditions, day and night. Use #ThankALineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.

You probably don't even notice these well-trained and highly skilled employees working hard to keep the electricity flowing in the areas they serve. It's not until a storm strikes and the power goes out that most of

us think about these guys.

When the power goes out, for whatever reason, Nebraska's electric linemen are the first to jump into action. Crews from neighboring systems will join in the effort to help restore power as quickly as possible.

Linemen must perform their duties safely and efficiently while wearing special gear to protect themselves. This gear often makes their tasks more difficult.

America's public power districts and electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

On April 10, 2017, the Nebraska Rural Electric Association and its 34 member-systems will honor the hard working men and women who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

A photograph of two linemen in safety gear working on a wooden utility pole. They are in white bucket lifts, and the background is a clear blue sky. The image is part of a larger graphic with text overlays.

**THANK YOU  
FOR POWERING  
OUR LIVES.**

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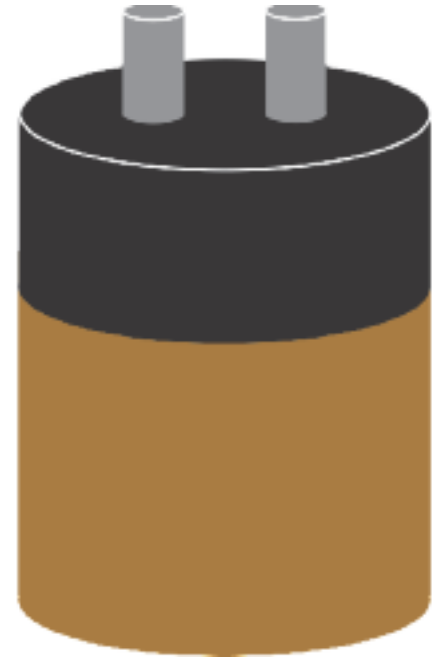
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by Paul Wesslund

# Batteries vs. energy storage



*The difference could define the utility industry.*

Consumers expect more from their electricity these days, which means public power districts and electric cooperatives are facing new challenges to meet new expectations.

Among those expectations are smoother, faster recoveries after storm outages and better access to renewable energy choices.

One possible solution to these new expectations is a new generation of large batteries that could capture energy when it's plentiful, and release that energy when demand is higher. Batteries are a hot topic for meeting those new demands, and some experts predict that utility-scale use of batteries could grow by eight times in the next four years.

## **Energy storage alternatives to batteries**

But some experts say even that's thinking small. What batteries promise utilities is the ability to store energy. But a traditional battery that produces direct-current electricity from a mix of chemicals inside a case is just one way to store energy. Changing the term "battery"

to "energy storage" opens up a whole new world of improving your electric service.

"For many of the things a battery can do, there are other technologies that can accomplish the same thing," says Andrew Cotter, a program manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Business and Technology Strategies group. "That's encompassed by this larger idea of energy storage."

Batteries are booming because everybody wants them; for smart phones, laptop computers and electric cars. The forces of competition and supply and demand are producing research and mass-production techniques that are making batteries better and cheaper.

Even the military is adding to the push for better batteries, says Cotter.

"The military is increasingly interested in batteries, specifically to support their bases and to make sure they're increasing their resiliency for their different critical assets," says Cotter.

State governments are adding requirements for utilities aimed at

improving storm recovery and encouraging renewable energy. More than a dozen states have taken action to promote energy storage.

And that distinction between "energy storage" and "batteries" could be the difference between solving a problem the expensive way, or the efficient way.

For example, one way to store energy without a battery is already in place—pumped storage.

Tom Lovas, a technical liaison and consultant with NRECA, says, "We have 22 gigawatts of energy storage already, in the form of pumped storage." That 22 gigawatts is enough to power about 15 million homes.

But what is pumped storage? It's a technology that allows a power plant to pump water up a hill when not many people are using electricity, like in the middle of the night. Then, during times of peak use, like when everyone is using hot water in the morning, the water is released downhill through a turbine that generates electricity for the busier times of day.

Forty-two pumped storage plants

**More on Page 8**

## Quick Guide to Energy Storage

Electric co-ops are committed to implementing innovative energy solutions for consumers. Energy storage is one emerging technology that could reshape how we use electricity. Below is a quick guide to storing energy.



### Utility Battery Storage

Large batteries are one way to store energy for later use. As utilities work to improve electricity's usefulness, other forms of energy storage could be more cost-effective. Those include "pumped storage" and "community storage."

### Pumped Storage

There are 42 pumped storage plants in the U.S. that pump water up a hill when less people are using electricity, for example, during the night. Then, during peak energy use, the water runs downhill to spin a turbine that produces electricity.



### Community Storage

A relatively new form of energy storage involves coordinating the heat energy stored in residential water heaters while they are not being used, to offset other electricity use. Currently about 24 electric co-ops use some form of community storage, and that number is growing.

### Renewable Energy

A major challenge with renewable energy is that it is often generated not when it is needed, but only when the sun shines or the wind blows. Storing that energy for use at night or in calm weather could improve the use of renewable energy.



### Storm Recovery

As utilities improve responses to storm-related power outages, they are focusing on quick restoration to essential services. Large batteries could immediately power pharmacies, gas stations and other urgent priorities.

Source: NRECA

## Batteries vs. storage From page 6

are already operating around the U.S. A Department of Energy study issued last year said that today's pumped storage capacity could be increased to as much as 36 gigawatts.

### Your water heater could be a battery

Keith Dennis describes another "cost-effective" storage innovation in which you or your rural electric utility may be involved. It's called "community storage" and it harnesses the energy that's already stored and available throughout communities, like in your home's water heater in the form of hot

water. "A water heater is a thermal battery," says Dennis, NRECA senior principal for end-use solutions and standards. "It's a very basic form of thermal storage."

Dennis says a couple dozen electric utilities around the country are already supporting community storage programs that coordinate consumer-members' water heaters into a large battery. That stored energy could potentially be used during peak demand times, possibly avoiding the expense of building an additional power plant.

And Dennis expects to see more community storage programs. A water heater program could even include the energy stored in electric car batteries when they're not in use.

Dennis predicts, "Thermal storage could be much, much cheaper and

more cost-effective than traditional batteries."

Batteries. Thermal storage. Pumped storage. Community storage. NRECA's Andrew Cotter says all of those options mean that utilities are learning to meet the new electricity demands not by focusing on a single technology like batteries, but by responding to each separate energy question with the most appropriate form of energy storage.

"It's important to not get hung up on specific battery or energy storage technologies," he says. "If it's backup power you need for energy on a remote part of the utility system, water heaters won't produce electrons, so maybe you do need to explore batteries. But if what you want is to reduce peak electricity uses, water heaters could be a much cheaper alternative than batteries."

## If it looks like a duck ...

*It might be a chart about the new ways we use energy.*

**E**vidence of big changes in how we're using electricity these days has shown up in California, and it looks like a duck.

In the last couple of years, electric utility specialists have started talking about "the duck curve," which illustrates the effect renewable energy is having on consumers and electric utilities.

The duck curve starts with a simple graph of electricity during a typical day—the graph shows a single line with three parts:

1. The line slopes down starting at midnight as people go to sleep and use less electricity;
2. It starts sloping up as people wake and start their day;
3. It starts sloping back down about 8 p.m. as people start turning off lights and appliances for the night.

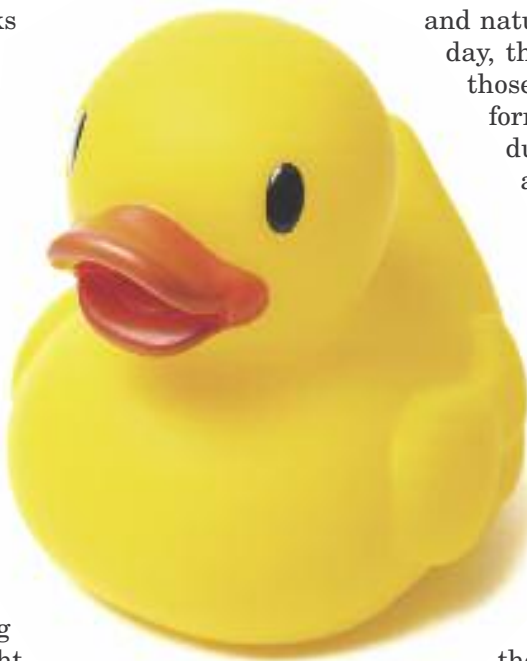
But now, there is so much use of renewable energy that a second line has been added. Solar energy tends to be generated in the middle of the day. That

means the utility needs to generate less electricity from more traditional sources like coal, nuclear and natural gas. So in the middle of the day, the line showing electricity from those traditional sources dips down, forming the belly of the profile of a duck, with tail feathers at the back and a duckbill in the front.

Changes to how and when we use energy mean electric utilities are adjusting how they produce and deliver electricity.

"There's a shifting of the demand curve of power that's happening across the U.S.," says Andrew Cotter, a program manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Business and Technology Strategies group. "Places with the most solar energy are feeling it the most, but this is a universal

change that's happening everywhere." *Image provided by iStock.com/ajt*





## Plan ahead to dig safely

**D**amaging underground utilities can be costly, dangerous, and disruptive. Before picking up your shovel for your next digging project, plan ahead to be safe or you just might dig up trouble or even tragedy.

Call 811 a few business days before your planned digging date. Once you have reported where you plan to dig and what type of work you will complete, the area will be surveyed and marked for public utilities within two to three days. This service is free of charge.

Once all marks have been made to indicate the location of underground utilities in the area, respect the boundaries, and dig carefully. Keep at least 24 inches away from the utility line markings. It can be helpful to excavate by hand when more control is needed to maintain this safe distance.

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# The well-connected lineworker

## *And the cool technologies they use in the field*

When public power districts and electric cooperatives were formed in the 1930s, their technology was primitive by any standard. Digging holes for the utility poles by hand, walking them up into those holes, using ladders to reach equipment needing service. And if you had to get in touch with the line crew, face-to-face communication was the only option.

Today, the lineworker rivals any other worker when it comes to having the necessary tech to get the job done safely, quickly and more accurately. Let's take a look at a few of the devices behind this evolution, starting with the tablet.

Many public power districts and electric co-ops are sending their crews into the field with ruggedized tablets. Depending on the utility, the content varies. A common use is to load work orders detailing the day's projects. This can include construction drawings for how the job is to be built, the bill of materials so they know what to pull from inventory before hitting the road and system maps so they know exactly where to go. Gone are the reams of paper and cumbersome map books of the past.

Not quite as new, but equally important, are GPS units. This functionality might be built into the lineworker's tablet, a ruggedized smart phone or a handheld unit. As more PPDs and co-ops map their systems using GPS coordinates, the GPS capability gets the crews where they need to be in a more efficient manner. Some GPS units are designed specifically for heavy trucks, and plot routes that avoid bridges with weight limits or roads with height restrictions.

One of my personal favorites in terms of lineworker tech is the forward-looking infrared camera, also known as FLIR. You may be



*Many lineworkers use tablets to perform their duties.*

familiar with this technology from the many ghost hunter programs currently on television. With a FLIR camera, crews can rapidly scan power lines, transformers and other equipment when searching for hot spots. A piece of distribution equipment about to fail will often get hot. While not visible to the naked eye, it shows up clear as day on a FLIR display. Scanning the system with a FLIR camera is a fast and accurate means of spotting a problem before it becomes an outage.

And today, many lineworkers have eyes in the sky in the form of drones. Public power districts and electric cooperatives cover territory that is often difficult to access when they need to survey the system for necessary repairs or to locate a new power line route. Instead of tackling the job on foot or in quads, the utility crews might be able to send in a drone. Flying above the area gives a great view of the situation and allows the crew to make an assessment of what to do next without having to be there in person.

This is especially useful after a major storm when roads can still be blocked.

Public power utilities are laser focused on providing the best reliability possible at the lowest possible price. A major aspect of reliability is getting the lights back on as soon as possible after an outage. Key in this is the outage management system, or OMS. This system builds on geo-tagged system maps (each pole has its GPS location mapped), sophisticated engineering models of the distribution system, and for maximum accuracy, an advanced metering system. When an outage occurs, the system uses models and databases to determine the exact location of the fault and the extent of the outage. Crews can then be sent to the right spot to correct the problem. Part of this restoration effort might be a vehicle tracking system that tells operations staff the exact location of each line truck. The crews closest to the outage are sent to restore power—and essential information can be accessed on the tablets, depending upon the situation.

Sometimes, all the technology in the world is not enough and a good old-fashioned visual inspection is required. During daylight hours, it can be pretty easy to see the cause of a problem. But at night, lineworkers need a reliable source of light. Today, that comes from LED flashlights and truck mounted lights. If you have not invested in a handheld LED flashlight, you owe it to yourself to get one. These powerhouses are a fraction of the size of regular flashlights, and they make your incandescent model look like a candle by comparison. In the hands of a lineman, they provide an amazing view of the lines during the darkest of nights.

Technology is permeating every aspect of rural electric utility operations, allowing your electric utility to constantly improve your service. And the well-connected lineworker is at the forefront of that technical evolution.

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without an expensive shaft-way. Its small "footprint" and self-contained lift mechanism adds convenience and value to your home and quality to your life. It's called the Easy Climber® Elevator. Call us now and we can tell you just how simple it is to own.

For many people, particularly seniors, climbing stairs can be a struggle and a health threat. Some have installed motorized stair lifts, but they block access to the stairs and

are hardly an enhancement to your home's décor. By contrast, the Easy Climber® Elevator can be installed almost anywhere in your home. That way you can move easily and safely from floor to floor without struggling or worse yet... falling.

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# NREA

## YOUTH ENERGY LEADERSHIP CAMP

.....

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All Expenses Paid



**E**ach year member-systems of the Nebraska Rural Electric Association accept applications from high school students to attend the NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp at the State 4-H Camp in the Halsey National Forest. The 2017 Youth Energy Camp will be held July 10 - 14.

The popular week-long camp is set up to give young people a better understanding of public power, electricity, power generation and the rural electric program. Our goal is to offer a program that challenges participants educationally, recreationally and socially.

The NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp is established as an operating power district and provides a “hands-on” approach to member-owned businesses. The students will join other high school students from

Nebraska and Wyoming, along with adult counselors and junior counselors. The adult counselors are employees of rural electric systems who donate their time and talents to the camp. The junior counselors are selected by their peers to return to next year’s camp.

On the first day of camp, a board of directors is elected to oversee the operation of the newly formed electric power district. The board then chooses a general manager to oversee the committee activities and act as a liaison between the counselors and campers.

Every participant has a role in the workings of the camp. Students can participate in the Ambassador competition or actively seek a position on the Board of Directors. Each student must also volunteer to serve on at least one of the committees

responsible for various aspects of the camp activities. There is even a talent show where the campers can show off their various talents.

A highlight of the camp involves a tour of the Kingsley Hydro Station at Lake McConaughy and Gerald Gentleman Station, a coal-fired power plant at Sutherland, Neb.

High school students who attend the energy camp may compete for a chance to participate in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. with expenses paid by the Nebraska Rural Electric Association. Three students are chosen as part of the Ambassador competition held during camp.

The competition involves submitting an application at camp, presenting a self-introduction speech and delivering a five-minute speech on



an assigned topic. Each camper votes for three candidates following the speech with the top male, top female and person with the next highest vote total becoming next year's ambassadors. The top six finalists are invited to return to next year's Youth Energy Leadership Camp as junior counselors.

Recreational activities include basketball, volleyball and canoeing.

Camp expenses and transportation are provided by each sponsoring rural electric system. High school freshmen, sophomores and juniors whose families are customers of NREA member-systems may apply.

For more information about attending Youth Energy Leadership Camp, send the form below to your rural electric provider.

### 2017 Youth Energy Leadership Camp RSVP Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parents \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring rural electric system :

\_\_\_\_\_



## All aboard the electric bus

**E**lectric vehicles are revving up! With over half a million electric cars on the road, several companies are turning their attention to a new market niche, electric buses. Several companies, including Proterra, GreenPower Bus, eBus and Lion Bus are actively selling and manufacturing electric buses while others such as Tesla have announced plans to break into this market.

Buses may seem like an odd choice for innovation, but they make ideal candidates for electrification. First, buses have predictable, set routes. This means it's easy to plan around their battery range limitations. Buses also have long idle periods, typically at night, that are perfect for re-charging. Next, even though electric vehicles are more expensive to buy than comparable fossil-fuel counterparts, they are less expensive to operate because kWhs are almost always cheaper than gallons of fuel on a levelized basis. Buses are frequently in use, allowing them to leverage their cheaper fuel source. Buses are also

able to take advantage of regenerative braking, an electric vehicle feature that converts kinetic energy (usually lost while braking) back into useable energy. Lastly, buses provide enough size for a truly immense battery pack. Proterra's Catalyst E2 bus debuted last year and can carry a 660 kWh battery the size of a twin mattress, giving it a range of 350 miles. For comparison, the latest Tesla model S only gets 315 miles per charge of its 100 kWh battery pack.

On the consumer side, there are two primary benefits, health and noise. Electric buses run much cleaner than their diesel counterparts, though your mileage will vary depending on how your region generates electricity. Massachusetts estimates that switching from diesel to electric power will reduce vehicle CO2 emissions by more than 70 percent. Even if emissions aren't completely erased, it does change where they are produced. Bus passengers, nearby pedestrians and motorists will have cleaner air as they travel. This is an especially important benefit for children riding

electric school buses. The other positive of electric buses is that they'll run quietly, contributing less noise pollution to the streets they travel.

However, electric buses still have a challenging road in front of them. They currently cost about two to three times as much as a similarly sized diesel bus. The Proterra Catalyst E2 bus unsubsidized retails for \$799,000, while the electric school buses from Lion Bus cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000 (customized depending on their intended route and use).

So when will you be riding to work or school in an elegant, whisper quiet, electric bus? Well, several cities including Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Miami have already launched pilot-programs, and Proterra is planning to triple their production in 2017 from 30 buses to 90. While that might not sound like much, battery costs are falling rapidly, which will make electric buses a viable transit choice for more cities, towns and school districts. The downside, of course, is now you'll have no excuse not to talk to your seatmate.

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# Keep kids safe as they head outdoors to play

When temperatures begin to rise, outdoor areas begin to fill with both children and adults enjoying the weather. It's easy for the electrical equipment that we see every day to fade into the background, but it's important to always take safety precautions around it. Take time to explain to your kids how to be safe around electricity before they head outdoors.

Safe Electricity provides the following tips to share with kids when having a conversation about how to stay safe around outdoor electrical equipment.

- Always stress the importance of safety around electrical substations. Never enter an electrical substation for any reason. Even if a pet has entered inside or a ball goes over the fence, do not go in. Call the electrical utility for help. Substations should only be entered by professionals.

- Kites should only be flown during good weather conditions and in large, open areas like a park or a field. Always look up and check for the location of overhead power lines and other electrical equipment, so that



you can be sure to fly kites far away from them. A kite string can conduct electricity from an overhead line directly to the person on the ground.

- Before climbing a tree, check that the tree and its branches are not located near any overhead power lines. Climbing a tree in contact with a power line can energize the tree with electricity and lead to electric shock or death.

- Never throw objects at power lines.

- If you ever see downed electrical wires, stay far away. Call 911 to have the utility notified. Downed lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be carrying electricity and be dangerous.

- Do not play with, tamper with, or

open outdoor electrical boxes. They contain electrical equipment for underground service to homes and businesses.

- Check the forecast before going outside. Do not plan outdoor activities if a thunderstorm is expected because there is no safe place from lightning when you are outside. It is important to follow the advice of the National Weather Service, "When thunder roars, go indoors."

There are also steps parents and caregivers can take to help ensure safe outdoor play.

- Make sure all outdoor outlets are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to help prevent electric shock.

- Keep all long handled tools out of reach of children so they will not be tempted to reach for or accidentally hit an overhead power line.

- Pay attention to trees and power lines. Do not plant trees near them, and if there is a tree that has grown into a power line, make sure to call a professional to trim the tree.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Murphy





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— Janet F.

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## Choosing the right air conditioner

by Pat Keegan

**Q** : I have a central air conditioner in my home that is at least 15 years old – it is not very efficient, but still works. Should I look into replacing it now, or wait until it fails?

**A** : Replacing an inefficient air conditioner (AC) with a more efficient model could significantly reduce your electric bill. A new AC unit is 20 to 40 percent more efficient than one from the 1990s – and Energy Star-certified systems are even more efficient. Replacing an aging system now, before summer starts, could help you avoid delays or price premiums.

How much money you save by replacing your current AC unit depends on how often your AC runs and your electric rate. If you are in a hot climate and you keep your home's temperature in the low 70s, your cost of cooling will be substantial and so will the potential savings from replacing your old air conditioner with an efficient new one.

The best way to determine possible savings is to have an in-home assessment conducted by a qualified heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) professional or a certified energy auditor. Public power districts and electric co-ops are often interested in reducing peak summer loads and sometimes offer information, rebates or a list of qualified professionals. It's a plus if the contractor has North American Technician Excellence (NATE) certification. Contractors should be knowledgeable about energy efficient systems and have good references.

Your contractor needs to size the

system to your home. A unit that is too small will not cool your home to the levels you want. If it is too large, it may not dehumidify your home



*An HVAC contractor or energy auditor can test ductwork and make sure it is properly sealed, which can reduce energy costs and improve comfort. Photograph by United Cooperative Service*

sufficiently, and it will cycle on and off more frequently, which can increase wear and tear on the system and shorten its life significantly.

In order to size the system, the contractor will need to look at the efficiency of the home by checking insulation levels. If you add insulation where it's most needed, you may be able to install a smaller AC unit, and you should enjoy greater comfort and lower cooling costs. The HVAC contractor you hire should also assess your ductwork, which is often poorly designed, leaky or inadequately insulated.

As you talk to your contractor, it's

good to know there are several air conditioning options suited to different situations. It may or may not be practical to change to a different type of system.

- Central air conditioning is generally one of two types: either split or packaged. A split system, which has the cold coils inside the home and an outside unit exhausting heat, is the most common. Packaged systems, which are sometimes installed because of space constraints, combine these functions into one box located outside the home.

- A heat pump can provide cooling and heating in homes with or without ducts. If you are currently using propane or natural gas as your fuel source, this may be a good option.

- A ductless mini-split heat pump can be an efficient way to cool up to four zones inside the home. If your existing ductwork is in bad shape or poorly designed, this could be a good solution.

- Window units are much less efficient than other options, but they can still be effective for cooling a single room. It's worth paying a little more for a new Energy Star-compliant unit, rather than the dusty \$80 unit from the yard sale or auction that wheezes its way through the summer.

- Evaporative (or "swamp") coolers are an alternative in very dry climates. While they use a quarter the energy and are less expensive to install than central air conditioning, they also require more frequent maintenance.

Replacing an aging air conditioner is a great way to improve comfort, cut energy costs and reduce peak energy demand. Your rural electric utility may be able to help, and you can learn a lot from the information resources available on our website and on the Energy Star and energy.gov websites.



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# Apps and starters perfect for game day

**R**ules may vary from one event to the next, but whether your favorite team kicks it, runs it or dunks it, sports fans and food always provide a winning combo.

A lineup filled with starters is just the ticket for a game day watch party or tailgate. Offering a series of finger foods and lighter fare lets your fellow fans grab a quick bite before the game or during a commercial break and continue snacking through the game.

Make no mistake, serving up a lighter menu doesn't mean you need to skimp on quality – just the opposite, in fact. Make every bite count by using exceptional ingredients and introducing unexpected flavors such as the distinctive taste of Jarlsberg Brand Cheese, which has a rich, 60-year Norwegian heritage. Best known as a classic wedge, this mild, mellow and nutty cheese can also be served sliced, shredded and cubed.

Quesadillas are always a hit, and this version combines the best of goeey, melted cheese with bacon and a deliciously tangy salsa for a lively burst of fresh flavor. Then keep the mouthwatering cheese and bacon combos coming with a whole new take on grilled kebabs.

Find more ideas to liven up your game day menu at [jarlsberg.com](http://jarlsberg.com).



## Cheese and Bacon Kebabs

- 18 slices bacon
- 2 1/2 cups Jarlsberg cheese, cubed
- 18 pearl onions
- 12 long skewers
- 1 1/3 tablespoons capers
- 2 2/3 tablespoons olives
- 1/4 cup cucumber
- 3 1/3 ounces olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice and grated zest
- salt
- pepper

**Relish:**  
1/4 cup roasted bell peppers

Cut bacon slices in half and wrap around cheese cubes. Place cheese cubes and pearl onions on each skewer, alternating ingredients. Roast in pan or on grill 2-3 minutes on each side.

To make relish, chop peppers, capers, olives and cucumber, and mix with olive oil, lemon juice and zest. Season with salt and pepper.

**Wanted: Main Dish recipes**

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We will pay \$25 to any reader who submits a recipe selected for publication in the magazine. Be sure to include a mailing address for payment purposes and a phone number in case we need to contact you. Recipes will not be returned and not all recipes will be used.

**Mail:** Nebraska Rural Electric Association, *Rural Electric Nebraskan* Recipes, P.O. Box 82048, Lincoln, NE 68501.

**E-mail:** Tina Schweitzer at [tschweitzer@nrea.org](mailto:tschweitzer@nrea.org).



### Bacon & Cheese Quesadillas

- 4 slices thick slab bacon
- 1 small chili pepper
- 4 medium tomatoes
- 1 small shallot
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon coriander or cumin salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1 small lime (juice and zest)
- 6 slices Jarlsberg Original or Hickory Smoked cheese
- 2 large tortillas

Fry bacon, drain and chop.

To make salsa, remove seeds from chili pepper and finely dice. Chop tomatoes then dice shallot and garlic clove. Combine pepper, tomatoes, shallot and garlic with lime juice, coriander, salt and pepper, to taste.

Divide cheese slices and bacon on one half of each tortilla, top with 1/4 cup salsa and fold tortilla over, pressing down to close. In medium-hot, lightly oiled pan, toast tortillas about 1 minute on each side.

Cut each tortilla in half and serve with remaining salsa on the side, or combine salsa with black beans and fresh chopped cilantro to make a side salad.

### Pea Salad

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1/2 cup sour cream             | 1 package (10 oz.) frozen peas, thawed |
| 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar | 1/4 cup thickly sliced green onions    |
| 4 teaspoons milk               | 6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled    |
| 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar          |  |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt              |  |
| 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder     |  |

In small bowl, mix sour cream, vinegar, milk, sugar, salt, garlic powder; chill. Combine remaining ingredients in a large bowl; add chilled dressing and toss lightly. Yields 6 servings.

**Mershon Franssen, Amelia, Nebraska**

### Creamy Corn Soup

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 3 potatoes, diced and boiled                      | 1/2 of 12 oz. can evaporated milk |
| 1 onion, diced and browned in bacon grease        | 1/2 cup milk                      |
| 6 slices bacon, crumbled into small pieces        | 1 stalk celery, chopped           |
| 1 can (14 1/2 oz.) chicken broth or make your own | 2 tablespoons cornstarch          |
| 1 can whole corn                                  | Dash of salt                      |
| 1 can creamed corn                                | 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning    |
|   | Pepper to taste                   |

Fry bacon, then brown onion and celery in bacon grease. Mix 2 tablespoons of cornstarch with a little water, to make a roux, cooking until almost boiling. Then add all other ingredients, except corn and bacon, cook thoroughly. Finally add corn and bacon. Simmer for 5 or so minutes, then serve.

**Arlene Miller, St. Paul, Nebraska**

### Moist Angel Food Cake

- 1 cup cake flour
- 1 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 1/2 cup egg whites (12 egg whites)
- 1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup or small box Jello
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar

Measure and sift together flour and powdered sugar. Sift granulated sugar and Jello together. Beat egg whites till peaks can be formed. Add cream of tartar, salt and vanilla. Fold in granulated sugar and Jello mixture, then flour and powdered sugar mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 – 50 minutes in angel food cake pan. Use different flavors of Jello for the holiday: Easter – lemon, watermelon or grape, July 4th – berry blue or cherry, Halloween – orange or peach, Christmas – lime or strawberry, etc.

**Wilma Schock, Norfolk, Nebraska**

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