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Published by the



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Published monthly by the Nebraska Rural Electric Association, 1244 K Street, Box 82048, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501, (402) 475-4988.

Advertising in the *Rural Electric Nebraskan* does not imply endorsement for products by the Nebraska Rural Electric Association. Correspondence should be sent to Wayne Price, Editor, *Rural Electric Nebraskan*, Box 82048, Lincoln, NE 68501.

The *Rural Electric Nebraskan* is printed by the Aradius Group, 4700 F Street, Omaha, NE 68117. Form 3579 should be sent to the Rural Electric Nebraskan, Box 82048, Lincoln, NE 68501.

Periodicals postage paid at Lincoln, Neb. POSTMASTER: send address changes to the Rural Electric Nebraskan, 1244 K Street, Box 82048, Lincoln, NE 68501.

Publication numbers are USPS 071-630 and ISSN 0193-4937.

Subscriber Services: Cost of subscription for consumers of participating member-systems is \$2.14 per year (17.8 cents per month), plus periodicals postage paid from equity accruing to the consumer. For nonmembers, a subscription is \$10 per year or \$20 for three years, plus local and state tax. Single copy, \$2.50.

Volume 73, Number 5, May 2019

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## On the cover

May is a time where we are even more mindful of safety because it is Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes.



## Let's change the conversation about going green

The nice thing about having a column in a magazine is that I get to write about issues—that's also the drawback. I read, discuss and think about many things. This month, I have been thinking a lot about the debate that has been going on throughout the nation over how America produces electricity.

I spend a lot of time on the road. In most hotels, there is a sign about how the chain is "green." Hotels encourage room occupants to skip housekeeping and reuse towels. I see variations on similar "green" initiatives in many businesses I frequent, including restaurants and grocery stores. I have no problem hanging up my towel or refusing housekeeping services for a day. It's a personal choice.

As I travel I often hear from individuals that say "I want to have more green energy" or "I want more renewable energy." I think that sentiment is commendable. Stan and I have children, grandchildren, and yes, even great-grandchildren. Like you, we want to leave the planet in good shape for their future. However, I must note; in rural America, the farm mentality has honored that sentiment for eons -- leave the land in good shape for future generations.

I have to ask myself when I see the signs about "going green" or talk to folks who want "green" or even renewable energy: what do they mean? How much do businesses do to be "green?" Do they just say it as a "feel good"? Do they walk the walk or just talk to talk?

My problem is this: what does it mean to be green, especially when it comes to electricity? What do Americans want in their electric energy in their home? Why don't we acknowledge the strides that have been made across the nation and in Nebraska over the past few years. Carbon emissions have declined in



by Kim Christiansen  
NREA General Manager

the American electric industry.

The next time you hear or say, "I want to be green," especially in your electric service, think about what that statement means. Most of the time, we can drill down "green electric" to the following: Going green means reducing the use of carbon-emitting sources, like coal. So, let's change the conversation. Let's think about moving to a future that includes non-carbon emitting sources.

There are some simple facts:

1. Carbon emissions are declining: In 2018, the U.S. reduced its coal consumption by 13.6 percent, in ONE year! Nebraska ranks 36th in carbon emissions. In 2017, the power sector's carbon dioxide emissions were below the transportation industry.

2. We value reliable, safe and affordable electricity. Nebraska has very good rates. The average American pays 12.5 cents per kWh -- Nebraskans pay 9.5 cents.

3. Overall the electric industry increased energy production from renewable resources from 417,724 thousand megawatt hours in 2000 to 712,773 thousand megawatt hours in

2018. That's a 59 percent increase in eight years.

4. The electric industry is very complex. One change or requirement can have far-reaching impact.

If we want reliable energy, if we want to be able to walk over to the switch on the wall and turn the lights on, solar and wind sources are not the solution. At least, not the whole solution. Both wind and solar are intermittent electricity sources. They produce when the sun shines, or the wind blows. For solar and wind sources to be the entire energy source, a battery back up for the system, of a size and type that are not feasible today, are required.

In the electric industry, I think "going green" needs to be a discussion of non-carbon emitting sources. We can't ignore the data that says in one year, coal consumption DECLINED by 12 percent.

To be safe and reliable, the future must include a mix of non-carbon emitting resources. This mix should include solar and wind. However, it would go further and include tried and true resources that are often excluded from "renewable" vernacular: hydropower, nuclear, and other non-carbon emitting sources.

Nuclear energy is also a clean source of power. I admit that nuclear energy, because of the source of power, is somewhat controversial. However, nuclear plants do not contribute to carbon emissions, and, their record in the U.S. has been excellent. Nuclear plants run reliably and very cheaply.

At some point in the future, America might rely on renewable resources -- but that mix is bigger than wind or solar. Focus, for now, on non-carbon emitting resources. That's the way to keep electricity safe, reliable and affordable in the near future. It's time to change the conversation.



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## A new beat for the heart of the home

It's known as the heart of the home. The contemporary kitchen is the epicenter of domestic activity, a place for cooking, eating and entertaining. Over the decades, the function of the kitchen has transitioned from a utilitarian space into a place for family and friends to gather—compare the dimly lit rooms with smoky wood stoves of pre-electricity days to the open-concept floor plans of modern homes outfitted with high-tech conveniences and oversized islands that are more frequent today.

“Today’s kitchen is an all-inclusive space, not just a place for cooking,” says Elle H-Millard, industry relations manager for the National Kitchen and Bath Association. “It has become an entertainment zone as well as a place for homework and office work.”

As a result, people are investing in their kitchens. And with good reason—a kitchen remodel offers homeowners the opportunity to customize the space to their lifestyle needs and tastes. Plus, updates to the kitchen can provide a great return on investment. According to the National Association of Realtors® (NAR), a renovated kitchen is of top priority for potential homebuyers.

Whether a few cosmetic changes are in order, or a homeowner is considering a complete kitchen overhaul, this guide offers practical steps for bringing revival to the heart of the home.

### Step #1 - Envision the Project

When considering a kitchen update, one of the first decisions a homeowner should make is whether to hire a designer. A certified designer will guide the homeowner through the entire remodel process.

“If you’re looking at a do-it-yourself (DIY) replace and refresh, a designer might not be required. But if you’re looking to move walls, plumbing, HVAC or change the footprint of the space, a designer is advisable,” H-Millard says. “Designers have knowledge about functionality and safety in the kitchen, and their expertise will prevent you from having to redo a project. A certified designer will save you money in the long run.”

If a homeowner chooses not to work with a designer, they will take on the role of the designer throughout the remodel.

In the early stages of the project, this means the homeowner should think about the functionality of the kitchen and how an upgrade or remodel will meet the needs of those living in the home. Things to consider include: Does the homeowner cook often? If so, what type of cooking do they do—quick meals utilizing the microwave or more gourmet meals that call for upgraded kitchen appliances? What about baking? Does the homeowner entertain often? How much storage space is



needed for kitchen equipment? What are the unique needs of the people who will utilize the kitchen? Are there young children for whom safety features are a priority? Are there special needs the homeowner can foresee 10 or 15 years in the future?

“A designer will help you determine your unique lifestyle needs. Surprisingly, this is often overlooked by homeowners,” H-Millard says.

She recommends doing online research to gain inspiration about what design elements the homeowner would enjoy having in the kitchen. A Pinterest board is a useful tool to organize ideas and to help a designer get to know the homeowner’s personality.

## Step #2 - Create a Budget and Timeline

Once the homeowner has decided a remodel is in order, they will determine the scope of the project. Will they undertake a complete remodel that may involve gutting the existing kitchen and starting from scratch? Or will the project focus on cosmetic updates to outdated features or minor improvements to prepare a home for sale?

Depending on a homeowner’s skillset, they may take on DIY projects like removing and reinstalling cabinets, painting, tiling, and installing new flooring. Elizabeth McKenna, director of marketing and communications for the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, says if a renovation will require a building permit, moving a wall, or adaptation to plumbing or electrical, it’s best left to professionals. In that case, McKenna recommends visiting [www.nari.org](http://www.nari.org) to find a qualified remodeler.

“It is often cheapest in the long run to hire a professional,” McKenna says. “DIY projects can go horribly wrong and cost more money as well as emotional stress and inconvenience to the homeowner.”

The project’s scope will also depend on the budget available. H-Millard says that as a general rule, a complete kitchen remodel will cost twice as much as the car in the homeowner’s driveway. A cosmetic upgrade will be less expensive.

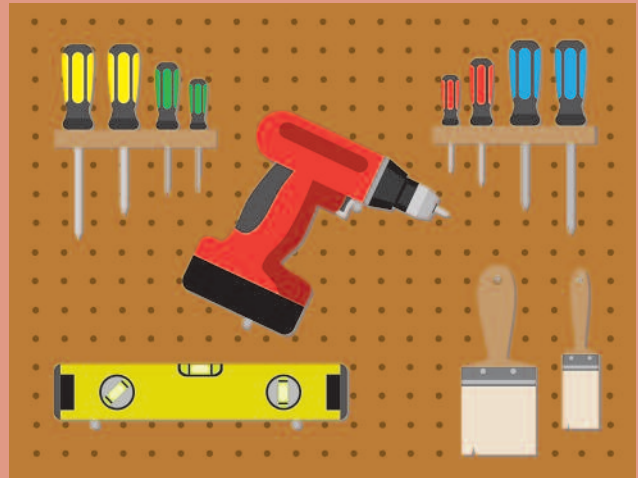
She recommends that a 20 percent contingency fund be included in the overall budget.

“I often see homeowners try to cut corners in order to focus on aesthetic elements,” she says. “Problems hidden behind walls need to be solved before covering them up.”

Once the scope of the project and budget are determined, it’s time to contract trade professionals and vendors. If a designer is used, they will coordinate this process; in a DIY project the homeowner will hire any needed tradespeople. The designer or homeowner should obtain quotes from various professionals and ensure that estimates given are thorough in order to avoid additional costs being tacked on later.

Finally, create a timeline for the remodel. If

**More on Page 8**



## To DIY or not to DIY

With the popularity of remodeling television shows and blogs, a do-it-yourself project might sound appealing. But how can a homeowner be sure that taking on a DIY kitchen remodel is a good idea? The National Association of the Remodeling Industry offers several questions to consider before starting a project.

- 1) Does the homeowner have the expertise needed for the project?
- 2) What about tools? Does the homeowner own the needed tools or will they need to be rented or purchased?
- 3) Does the homeowner have the time needed to start the project and carry it through to completion?
- 4) Will the homeowner require another person’s assistance? If so, does that person have the availability to help?
- 5) Are there any safety risks involved in this project?
- 6) Does the project require knowledge of local building codes?
- 7) Where will the materials needed for the project come from?
- 8) Is the project an attempt to save money? If so, will the homeowner’s time investment outweigh the potential cost for a professional to complete the project?



## A new beat for the heart of the home From page 7

professionals will be used, the timeline will be dependent on their availability. Even if the homeowner is planning to do most of the work, it's a good idea to have a plan for the project's completion.

In scheduling the project, the homeowner should be aware that a kitchen renovation will disrupt their routine and yield a lot of dust.

"A remodel will cause massive destruction in your home. There may be a dumpster in your driveway and boxes in your garage. This can be annoying and frustrating to the homeowner, so it's important to take this into account when planning for a project," H-Millard says.

### Step #3 - Execute the Remodel

Once contracts are in place with the needed professionals, work can begin.

If the remodel is a DIY project, the homeowner will purchase materials and begin work. If tradespeople are used during the project, the homeowner may need to be available to meet them during daytime hours.



If a designer is used, he or she will ensure materials are ordered and that work stays on schedule. The designer will also oversee the progress to make sure work is being completed as specified. At the conclusion of the remodel, the designer and/or homeowner will walk through the kitchen with the contractor one final time and note any adjustments needed.

At this point, the homeowner's vision has become a reality. There's only one thing left to do—invite friends and family over and enjoy a good meal in the heart of the home.

## Smart Appliances

by Laura Araujo

One of the newest developments in home electronics is the smart appliance, an appliance with built-in technology that enables it to connect to the internet. Imagine a refrigerator that notices when the milk is almost gone and orders more from an online grocery store. It might sound space-age, but this technology now exists.

"Smart appliances are becoming more and more prevalent and there are a number of benefits to using them," says Elizabeth McKenna, director of marketing and communications for the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

Homeowners may consider including one or more smart appliances in a kitchen remodel. But what are the pros and cons of smart appliances?

### Smart appliances offer energy savings

Smart appliances are designed with energy savings in mind. For example, a homeowner can schedule their dishwasher to run during off-peak times when the cost of electricity is less expensive. Likewise, a smart refrigerator can delay its defrost cycle until the evening hours. To preserve energy, a smart refrigerator will also allow the homeowners to look inside without opening the door. They will receive an alert on their smartphone if the refrigerator door is left open.

### Smart appliances offer convenience

Smart appliances have many conveniences. They can be controlled remotely from the homeowner's smartphone. While out running errands, the homeowner can look inside the refrigerator to see if they

need to pick up more eggs. A baker with messy hands can preheat their oven simply by speaking to it. And rather than hiring an appliance repair person come to recalibrate the oven, the manufacturer can do it remotely.

### Smart appliances offer safety

The technology in a smart appliance can monitor a person's behavior and send an alert if they deviate from their normal routine. While this may be a privacy concern, it may also enable people to maintain their independence longer.

"Would you rather have your oven keep an eye on you as you walk into your kitchen each morning—invasive as that might seem—or would you prefer to have a nurse come and check on you each day?" asks Mary Jo Peterson, president of Mary Jo Peterson Design, Inc.

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*As the solar energy market continues to grow, consumers can expect new and improved technologies. Tesla's Solar Roof, shown here, is made entirely of durable glass tiles that generate electricity through solar cells.*

## Watts new with solar panel technology

**A**lthough solar energy has been commercially available for decades, the evolution of the solar market has grown faster and more expansive than some originally anticipated. With the price of solar rapidly declining over the last several years, combined with the significant evolution of battery storage technology, new products and systems are now within the reach of more energy consumers. Let's take a look at three of the latest improvements to better understand the solar energy landscape.

### **New Solar Cell Materials**

Generally, when it comes to solar cell technology, there's usually a trade-off between the efficiency of the solar cell, or the measure of sunlight that hits the panel and actually becomes electricity, and the cell's flexibility. Perovskite solar cells are an emerging class of cells. They differ from common silicon solar cells in that they're flexible and have a higher reported efficiency. Their efficiency is reportedly at 22.7

percent with the potential for 40 percent. To better understand these numbers, typical silicon photovoltaic cells generally achieve about 20 percent efficiency, meaning 20 percent of the solar energy that passes through the cell becomes electricity.

Perovskite solar cells also have a unique flexibility that allows for the material to be painted or sprayed on surfaces. This opens up infinite opportunities for solar energy generation. Perovskite cells are currently being tested and developed by the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Lab.

### **Solar and Storage**

With increasing interest in solar energy, there is also a parallel interest in residential battery storage. Many electric utilities are seeing their consumers with residential solar panels add batteries to their systems. By pairing storage with solar, batteries can provide limited to complete back-up during a power outage, depending on the size

of the home and the device. For new solar installations, homeowners and utilities are increasingly including battery storage to maximize the potential of the solar energy system.

### **Solar Panel Technologies**

One of Tesla's more revolutionary offerings is its Solar Rooftop. Rather than installing traditional solar panels to a home's rooftop, Tesla is giving homeowners the option of turning the entire roof into a solar energy generating system through solar roof tiles.

These extraordinary glass tiles come in various shades and sizes to compliment your home's design and are reportedly three times more durable than the average rooftop shingle. Tesla backs up this guarantee with a warranty that lasts for the lifetime of your house. Because this technology is still very new, it has some maturing to do before it's as deployable as traditional rooftop solar, but the future is looking bright.



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– Janet F.

Have you ever said to yourself "I'd love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it." Well, you're not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they've gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the "pointing and clicking" and "dragging and dropping" you're lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that's designed for simplicity and ease of use. It's the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world

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## NREA welcomes Northeast Power as its newest member

The Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) has announced the addition of Northeast Power in Wayne, Neb., as its newest member.

Northeast Power serves approximately 8,500 retail electric customers in Pierce, Thurston, Wayne, Dixon and Dakota Counties in Nebraska. Northeast Power operates about 3,000 miles of electric lines and over 100 miles of high voltage transmission lines. General Manager Tracy Golden said Northeast Power looks forward to working with the Nebraska statewide organization and its members.

“There are numerous unprecedented challenges occurring

in the electric industry,” Golden said. “One of the greatest challenges is uncertainty. Rapid advances in technology, new regulatory requirements, artificial intelligence, and environmental compliance are just a few of the challenges we are facing.”

Golden stated it has never been more important to have a central location that professionals involved in electric generation, transmission, and distribution can go to and discuss issues, share ideas and develop solutions.

“We are very selective when deciding where to spend our funds and are expecting the NREA to be an asset that brings value to the

Northeast Power rate payers,” he said.

Headquartered in Lincoln, Nebraska, NREA's mission has evolved to include a broad range of activities to assist our member-systems as they face the many challenges of providing low-cost, reliable electric service to the rural regions of Nebraska. According to NREA General Manager Kim Christiansen, “We are excited to have Northeast Power join the Nebraska Rural Electric Association and become part of the rural electric family. We are stronger together and are able to provide various services to Nebraska's rural electric consumers.”

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## Pond owners should be wary of possible winterkill

Private pond owners should be wary of fish possibly succumbing to winterkill.

A prolonged winter and recent frigid weather kept ponds covered with snow and ice well into March, which created conditions for a winterkill, said Jeff Blaser, private waters specialist with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Winterkills typically occur in small, shallow ponds with abundant aquatic vegetation. Snow and ice covering a pond prevent the water from exchanging oxygen with the air. Excessive snow and thick ice allows very little sunlight penetration, so plants are not able to produce enough oxygen. If excessive snow cover persists, the plants die and subsequent decomposition, along with respiration by various aquatic organisms, can completely deplete the oxygen, resulting in a fish kill.

Blaser recommends pond owners take stock of their waters at ice-out.

“Depending on the size of the



pond, the presence of 40 or 50 dead fish would not indicate a large winterkill; however, thousands of dead fish of various species and sizes would be evidence of a major die-off event.”

Blaser suggests owners check for fish (visually and angling) following

ice-out to help determine the status of the fish populations. The findings from these actions could indicate a pond is a candidate for restocking

Pond owners can contact Blaser at 402-471-5435 for management suggestions if they had a major fish kill.





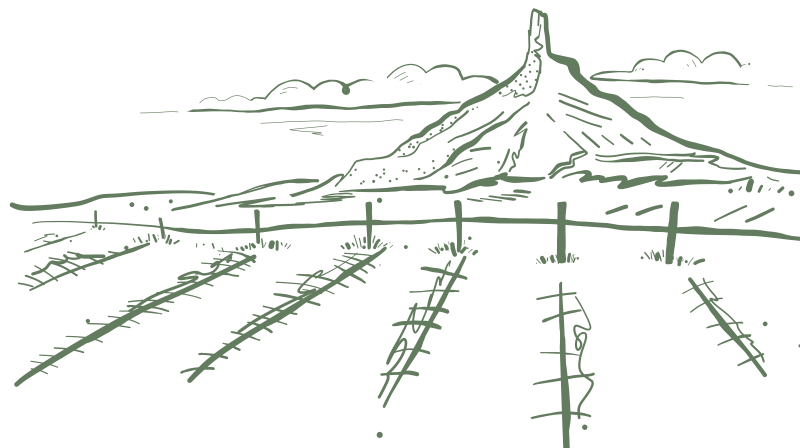
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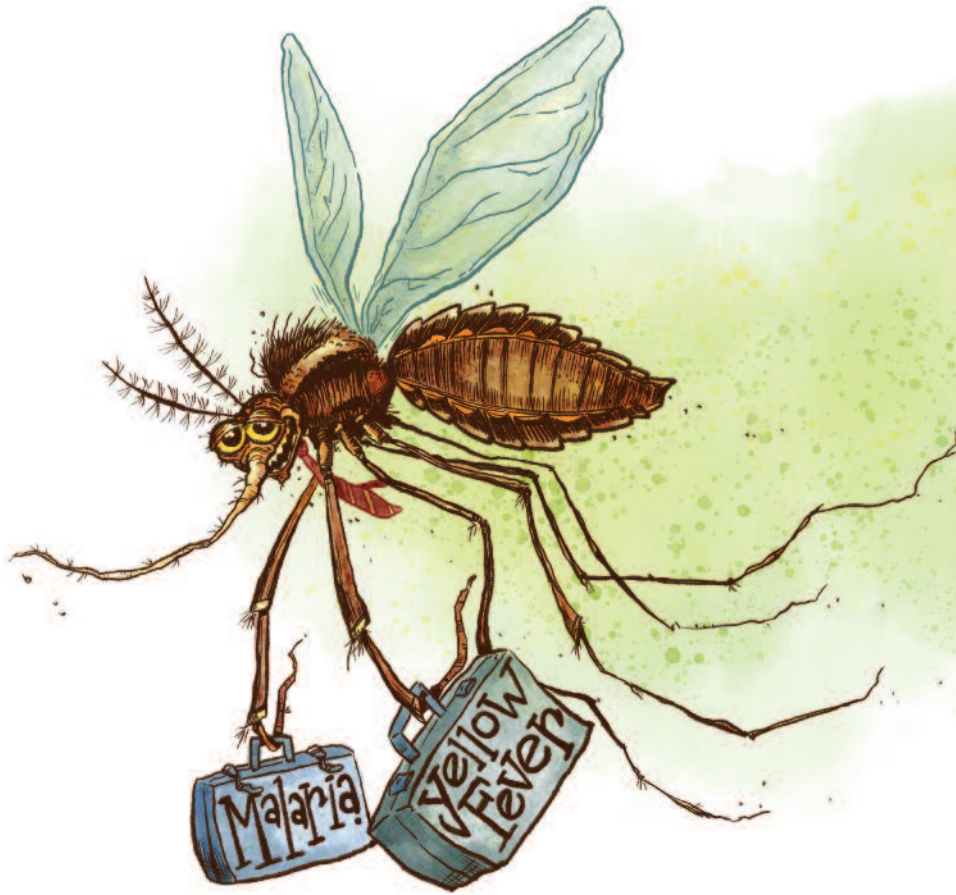


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# Mosq

by Mark Peyton

As I waited in line in the gift shop of the Hluhluwe Imfolozi Game Reserve in South Africa I noticed a couple of boxes of small, simple, bracelets. They were for sale at a fairly steep price so I took a closer look. They were part of a campaign to raise money in order to inoculate children against yellow fever and malaria. For the price of one bracelet you could get one child immunized.

Prior to going to South Africa I had myself immunized against a number of disease, none being yellow fever or malaria. We were only going to be in a malaria-danger area for a day and yellow fever is becoming so rare that even in South Africa we were advised not to get the shot. Regardless, just to be on the safe side, the Red Cross will not allow me to give blood for an entire year.

We did take precautions. We wore bracelets with a citronella-like gel that was advertised to keep the mosquitoes away as well as using insect spray with 40 percent Deet. However, as I waited in line it dawned on me. I don't have to go all the way to South Africa (17-hour plane ride from Atlanta!) to be in

danger of a mosquito-borne disease! I can get plenty sick right here in Nebraska! Right in my own backyard!

There are over 50 different species of mosquitoes here in Nebraska, including *Anopheles quadrimaculatus*, the mosquito guilty of carrying malaria. *Aedes aegypti*, the mosquito that carries yellow fever is not found in Nebraska but it has been collected in California where my wife and I were vacationing last spring. A close relative of the yellow fever mosquito is the one guilty of transmitting dengue and it has been identified from eastern Nebraska! But, malaria, yellow fever, and dengue are not what I was thinking about standing there in line

at the Game Reserve. I was thinking of the mosquito *Culex pipiens*, the northern house mosquito.

Prior to leaving for South Africa I had three or four mosquitoes that had moved into the house for the winter. They were living in my basement bathroom. Mosquitoes commonly move into houses for the winter. They find little places to hide and then are drawn to the humidity of the bathroom. These had done so.

*Almost 80 percent  
of people with West  
Nile virus don't  
know they have it.*

# quitos!

Illustration by Tyler Rinne

I was curious so I caught one and placed it in the freezer. Once it was dead I placed it under the dissection microscope and proceeded to “key” it to species. Yep, it was a northern house mosquito...the mosquito that carries West Nile Fever and dog heartworm!

West Nile was first identified in the U.S. in New York in 1999. By 2002 it was here in Nebraska and 152 people were diagnosed with it. The next year that number jumped to almost 2,000. By November of 2018 almost 4,000 people had been formally diagnosed here in Nebraska, and sadly, to date, 81 of those have died from the disease. In 2018 we had the second highest death rate since the disease first made its appearance in 2002. Eleven people died from the disease. In 2003, a total of 27 people died, however in 2003 there were eight times as many people diagnosed with the disease as in 2018, so while the number of cases was lower, the percent of those cases that were severe and deadly was much higher.

In Nebraska we like to chant “We’re Number One”, well, last year when it comes to West Nile, we were! If you take a look at a map from the Center of Disease Control on page 16, we can see the abundance of West Nile cases throughout the U.S. While the first case may have been in New York, the Great Plains seems to be where the bulk of the cases in the U.S. are found. Once again, we stand out.

Why? Why the Great Plains? I don’t know for sure, but if you look at the migratory paths of birds you see a very similar pattern. Everyone in Nebraska knows about the sandhill crane migration, one of the top ten wildlife wonders of the world, but cranes are not the only migratory birds.

Along with “those of the gray wing” are literally millions of ducks and geese crossing Nebraska on their way north or south and the number of song birds and shore birds passing through dwarf that of the ducks and geese.

What does that have to do with West Nile? Northern house mosquitoes suck the blood of both birds and humans. The birds can also get sick and some species have been hard hit by it. Over 250 species of birds have been found with the disease but the Corvidae, the family of crows, magpies and jays, seem to be the hardest hit.

I had noticed a drop in the number of blue jays at my feeder and magpies virtually disappeared from places along the Platte where they were common in 1999. But, species do adapt and birds, like people, can develop an immunity to the disease. Given the number of blue jays that were back at the feeder last winter, maybe that is what has happened...at least with blue jays.

Other common birds of our backyards that die from the disease are good old house sparrows, house finches, grackles, and some hawks, and of course, along with the birds are horses; with over 25,000 being diagnosed and more than 10,000 deaths since 1999 when there were 25 cases in New York. The first case of West Nile in horses here in Nebraska was in 2002 same year as humans.

The disease is transmitted when a mosquito bites an infected bird, or human, or horse and it sucks the blood from the animal. It then can go and lay some eggs. Once that is done, she bites another animal and lays more eggs. This goes on for a while. When a mosquito bites you it inserts its proboscis (long pointed mouth) through your skin and then it secretes a fluid that prevents the blood from clotting. The fluid is a little allergenic and so a swollen welt develops which itches. The mosquito bite. Within this fluid the mosquito squirts under our skin are the West Nile virus. It has now transmitted the disease from some other animal to you.

What I find interesting is that most people, as high as 80 percent, don’t even know they have the disease. They may get a little headache and backache, and they may think they have the flu, but nothing to raise concern.

I was one of those 80 percent in 2008. Well, I guess technically I wasn’t. I didn’t feel good and had all the symptoms. I suspected West Nile. The doctor agreed, but he didn’t test me for it at the time because as he said, “the test is expensive, and being it’s a virus, there isn’t much I can do for it anyway, so just go home, get some rest, drink plenty of liquid and if you start feeling worse, then come back.”

Well, I never had to go back and I was actually hoping that I had experienced the disease. That may sound weird,

**More on Page 16**



## Mosquitos! From page 15

but there is no vaccine for West Nile and the only way to become immune to the disease is to live through it! I had lived through it and I hoped that now, I was immune. Given my job as a biologist and as much time as I spend along the river, mosquito bites are a hazard of the job. Being immune to West Nile is a good thing!

What did bring West Nile to my attention is that for over a month last fall we were praying in Church for two young men here in town that did have severe cases of West Nile and both were hospitalized. Both are still recovering six months later, so while the vast majority of us are not affected by this virus, if you are the one-in-five that is...it can be a devastating experience.

How can you protect yourself from the disease? Unlike yellow fever and malaria there are as yet no vaccines. Human clinical trials are being completed, but as yet, your best defense against West Nile Fever is a defense against mosquitoes.

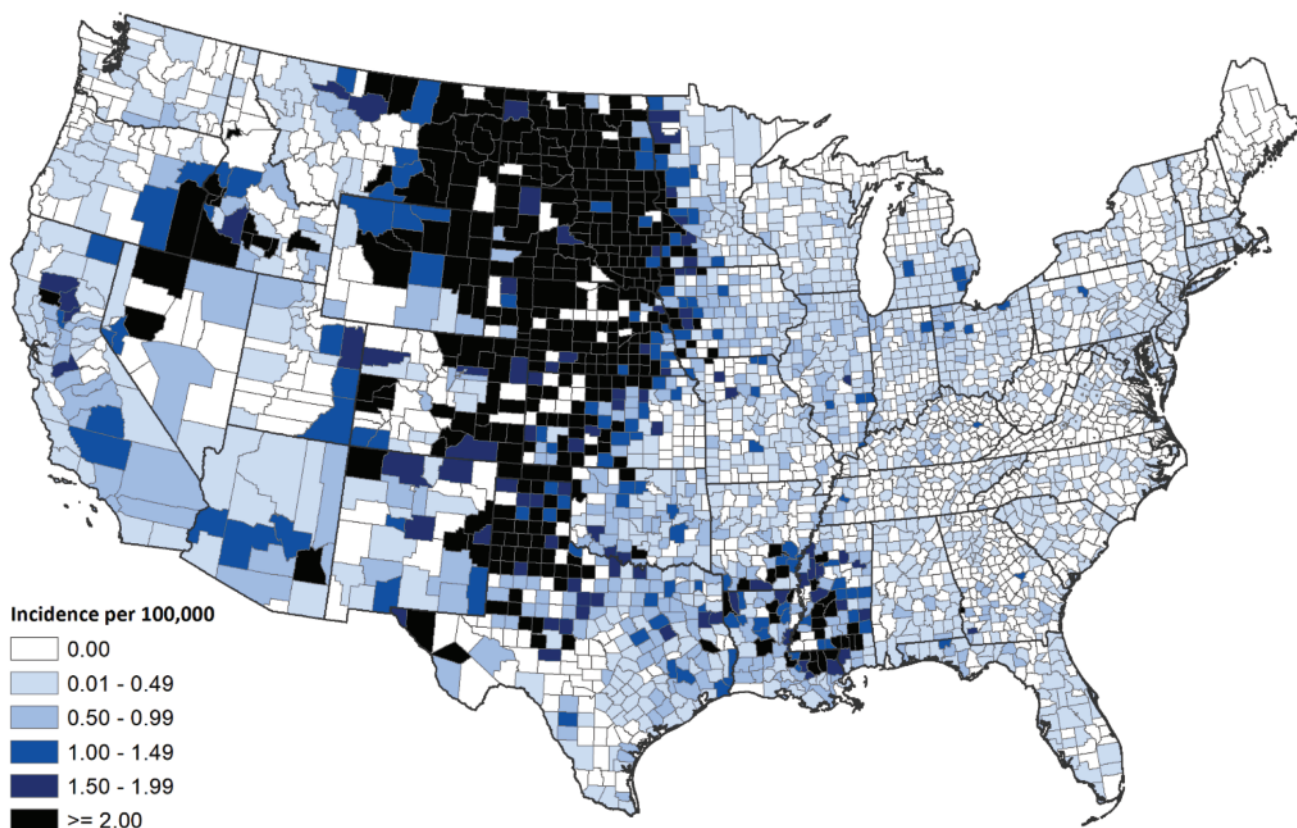
Early morning and late afternoon and evening are the times of day when most mosquitoes are out feeding and the northern house mosquito is by far more active in the

evening. Thus, first you can stay inside during that time of day during summer. However if you do that you miss all those days when you can cook on the grill, the best time of day for a round of golf, and if you are a farmer in central Nebraska, that's the time you irrigate. So, secondly, wear long sleeves and long pants. In summer? Come on let's go to number three. Mosquito spray, preferably with Deet, but the best defense is to not let the mosquitoes breed near you.

The northern house mosquito is not a strong flyer and it will stay close to its breeding pond. It breeds in any temporary pool of water laying 150 – 300 eggs at a time. The eggs hatch in a day or two and the wigglers (larva) mature in another week or so. If you make sure there are no stagnant puddles around, chances are you won't have northern house mosquitoes.

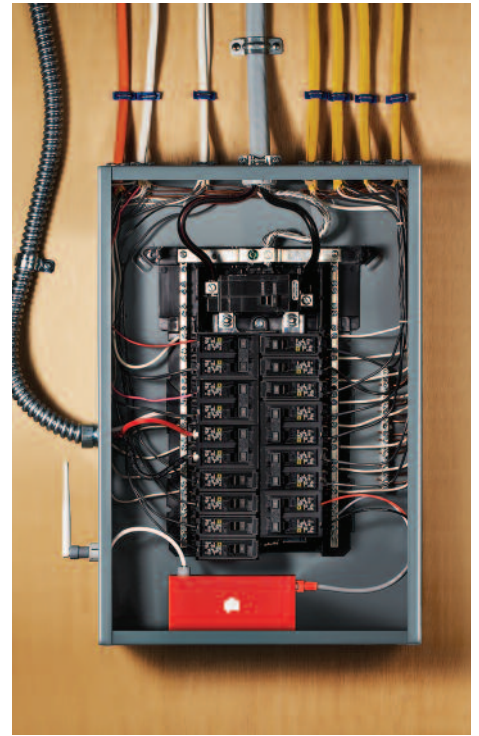
Lastly, you can hope that like me, you have already had West Nile and you are now immune to it. If you haven't, then I do hope and pray that you are one of the 80 percent who will experience only the minor symptoms of the disease. Then, once your body's immune system defeats it, you will have a standing army of antibodies to keep you from ever catching the disease again, if not the rest of your life, for a long, long time.

Mosquitoes belong to the order Diptera...the flies. So I end this with a quote from Ogden Nash: "God in His wisdom created the fly...and then forgot to tell us why!"



Source: ArboNET, Arboviral Diseases Branch, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





# Monitoring energy use at home

by Brian Sloboda

As consumers, many of us try to find ways to save energy. But determining how and where energy is being used in your home can be difficult. Luckily, a new generation of home energy monitors is available, and these monitors promise greater insight into how we use electricity.

For several years, consumers could purchase energy monitoring devices that connected to individual appliances. These devices would show how much energy that specific appliance was using. This was a time-consuming process because each appliance had to be connected individually, one by one, to the device.

New versions of energy monitoring devices follow the same concept, but instead, consumers can view energy use for the entire home. Rather than connecting individual appliances to the energy monitor, you can install a

kit into your home's breaker panel. (It's important to note you should consult with a licensed electrician before performing any work on your home's breaker panel.)

Another cool feature these new home energy monitors offer is the ability to automatically recognize appliances within the home. Consumers can log into their account, either online or via an app, to view a breakdown of each appliance. The device may prompt you to verify that the appliance found is correct, or it may prompt you to input what the appliance actually is. But over time, as the monitor is exposed to different appliances, it will become better at automatically recognizing them. Once properly configured, the monitor can provide a customized energy use report for the home.

You may be wondering if home energy monitors actually save energy. No, they do not. They simply provide information on your home's appliances and how they use energy. But you can use this information to

identify energy hogs (like that spare freezer in the garage) that might need to be replaced.

Two of the most popular home energy monitoring systems on the market today are the Sense Energy Monitor and the Neurio Home Energy Monitor. Energy monitoring systems promise different levels of reporting, and some can even interface with rooftop solar systems. It's up to the consumer to decide which energy monitoring system makes the most sense for their needs. A whole-home energy monitoring system typically costs between \$150 and \$400, plus installation.

If you're looking to optimize your energy use, home energy monitors can be helpful tools. But remember, they are not a magic bullet, and you will need to act on the information provided by the system.

*Brian Sloboda is a program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*

# Be aware of electrical hazards on the farm

**L**ong hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. If you farm, remember to take care of yourself by getting as much rest as possible and allowing yourself breaks to clear your head.

Be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm. Be cautious and think twice before acting around electricity. Safe Electricity offers farmers the following reminders:

- If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out. Once contact has been made with a live line (even when your tractor or truck makes contact), you are now a “pathway to ground” and you could get electrocuted if you step out. Instead, stay where you are and call 9-1-1 to dispatch the appropriate utility to de-energize the power.
- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger. Do not approach the scene.
- When using machinery with long



extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.

- Don't forget, non-metallic materials (such as tree limbs, ropes and hay) can conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust/dirt accumulation.
- Visually inspect overhead lines,

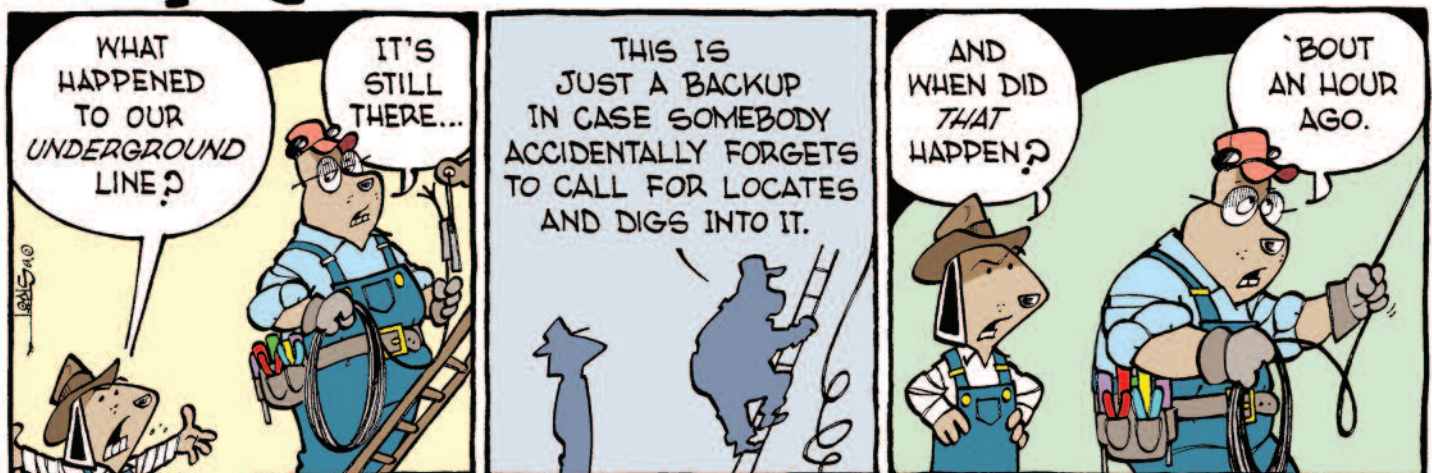
which may not meet height codes due to age or pole damage. If a wire is hanging low or is on the ground, consider it energized and stay at least 50 feet away; call 9-1-1 to have the operator dispatch the utility.

- Every day, map out where equipment will be moved to ensure it will clear power lines.
- When working in the vicinity of power lines, always use a spotter who has a broad vantage point.
- Train anyone working with or for you (including seasonal employees) to be aware of power line locations and teach them proper clearance distance. Also design and implement a safety training program that includes a review of electrical hazards and how to safely deal with power lines.

• According to American Family Insurance, “know your PTO.” To stay safe when working with a power take off (PTO), always disengage the PTO, turn off the engine and remove keys before getting off the tractor. Also, never step across a rotating power shaft.

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

## Murphy





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— J. Fitzgerald, VA



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allows you to pause the chair in an infinite number of positions, including the lay flat position and the zero gravity position where your body experiences a minimum of internal and external stresses. You’ll love the other benefits, too: It helps with correct spinal alignment, promotes back pressure relief, and encourages better posture to prevent back and muscle pain.

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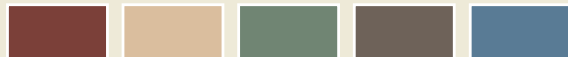
### Long Lasting DuraLux Leather

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# Ken Johnson receives NRECA honor



*Ken Johnson, center, was presented with the President's Award by NRECA CEO Jim Matheson, left, and NRECA Board President Phil Carson.*

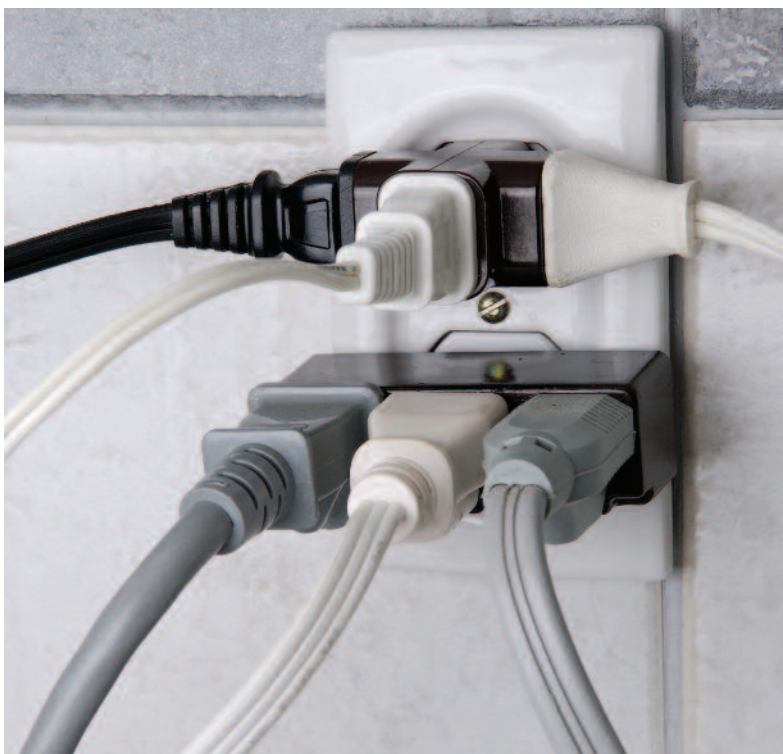
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association honored Ken Johnson, former CEO and general manager of Co-Mo Electric Cooperative in Tipton, Missouri, with the President's Award at the annual meeting in Orlando, Florida in March.

Johnson was honored for his role in creating Co-Mo Connect, which makes broadband service available in rural central Missouri.

"Ken is a standard-bearer and a wealth of knowledge for electric cooperatives that are working to bridge the digital divide," Carson said.

He is currently the Senior Vice President of Broadband Programs at the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) in Herndon, Virginia.

Johnson was general manager for Twin Valleys Public Power District in Cambridge, Nebraska after beginning his career with Nebraska Public Power District.



**Overloaded electrical circuits are a major cause of residential fires. Lower your risk of electrical fires by not overloading your home's electrical system.**

**Safety starts with you.**  
**MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH**



# Leading Acid Reflux Pill Becomes an Anti-Aging Phenomenon

*Clinical studies show breakthrough acid reflux treatment also helps maintain vital health and helps protect users from the serious conditions that accompany aging such as fatigue and poor cardiovascular health*



by David Waxman  
Seattle Washington:

A clinical study on a leading acid reflux pill shows that its key ingredient relieves digestive symptoms while suppressing the inflammation that contributes to premature aging in men and women.

And, if consumer sales are any indication of a product's effectiveness, this 'acid reflux pill turned anti-aging phenomenon' is nothing short of a miracle.

Sold under the brand name AloeCure, it was already backed by clinical data documenting its ability to provide all day and night relief from heartburn, acid reflux, constipation, irritable bowel, gas, bloating, and more.

But soon doctors started reporting some incredible results...

"With AloeCure, my patients started reporting less joint pain, more energy, better sleep, stronger immune systems... even less stress and better skin, hair, and nails" explains Dr. Liza Leal; a leading integrative health specialist and company spokesperson.

AloeCure contains an active ingredient that helps improve digestion by acting as a natural acid-buffer that improves the pH balance of your stomach.

Scientists now believe that this acid imbalance is what contributes to painful inflammation throughout the rest of the body.

The daily allowance of AloeCure has shown to calm this inflammation which is why AloeCure is so effective.

Relieving other stressful symptoms related to GI health like pain, bloating, fatigue, cramping, constipation, diarrhea, heartburn, and nausea.

Now, backed with new clinical studies, AloeCure is being recommended by doctors everywhere to help improve digestion, calm painful inflammation, soothe joint pain, and even reduce the appearance of wrinkles – helping patients to look and feel decades younger.

## FIX YOUR GUT & FIGHT INFLAMMATION

Since hitting the market, sales for AloeCure have taken off and there are some very good reasons why.

To start, the clinical studies have been impressive. Participants taking the active ingredient in AloeCure saw a stunning 100% improvement in digestive symptoms, which includes fast and lasting relief from reflux.

Users also experienced higher energy levels and endurance, relief from chronic discomfort and better sleep. Some even reported healthier looking skin, hair, and nails.

A healthy gut is the key to a reducing swell-

ing and inflammation that can wreak havoc on the human body. Doctors say this is why AloeCure works on so many aspects of your health.

AloeCure's active ingredient is made from the healing compound found in Aloe vera. It is both safe and healthy. There are also no known side effects.

Scientists believe that it helps improve digestive and immune health by acting as a natural acid-buffer that improves the pH balance of your stomach.

Research has shown that this acid imbalance contributes to painful inflammation throughout your entire body and is why AloeCure seems to be so effective.

## EXCITING RESULTS FROM PATIENTS

To date over 5 million bottles of AloeCure have been sold, and the community seeking non-pharma therapy for their GI health continues to grow.

According to Dr. Leal, her patients are absolutely thrilled with their results and are often shocked by how fast it works.

"For the first time in years, they are free from concerns about their digestion and almost every other aspect of their health," says Dr. Leal, "and I recommend it to everyone who wants to improve GI health without resorting to drugs, surgery, or OTC medications."

"I was always in 'indigestion hell.' Doctors put me on all sorts of antacid remedies. Nothing worked. Dr. Leal recommended I try AloeCure. And something remarkable happened... Not only were all the issues I had with my stomach gone - completely gone - but I felt less joint pain and I was able to actually sleep through the night."

With so much positive feedback, it's easy to see why the community of believers is growing and sales for the new pill are soaring.

## THE SCIENCE BEHIND ALOECURE

AloeCure is a pill that's taken just once daily. The pill is small. Easy to swallow. There are no harmful side effects and it does not require a prescription.

The active ingredient is a rare Aloe Vera component known as acemannan.

Made from 100% organic Aloe Vera, AloeCure uses a proprietary process that results in the highest quality, most bio-available levels of acemannan known to exist.

According to Dr. Leal and several of her colleagues, improving the pH balance of your stomach and restoring gut health is the key to revitalizing your entire body.

When your digestive system isn't healthy, it causes unwanted stress on your immune system,

which results in inflammation in the rest of the body.

The recommended daily allowance of acemannan in AloeCure has been proven to support digestive health, and calm painful inflammation without side effects or drugs.

This would explain why so many users are experiencing impressive results so quickly.

## REVITALIZE YOUR ENTIRE BODY

With daily use, AloeCure helps users look and feel decades younger and defend against some of the painful inflammation that accompanies aging and can make life hard.

By buffering stomach acid and restoring gut health, AloeCure calms painful inflammation and will help improve digestion... soothe aching joints... reduce the appearance of wrinkles and help restore hair and nails ... manage cholesterol and oxidative stress... and improve sleep and brain function... without side effects or expense.

Readers can now reclaim their energy, vitality, and youth regardless of age or current level of health.

## One AloeCure Capsule Daily

- Helps End Digestion Nightmares
- Helps Calm Painful Inflammation
- Soothes Stiff & Aching Joints
- Reduces appearance of Wrinkles & Increases Elasticity
- Manages Cholesterol & Oxidative Stress
- Supports Healthy Immune System
- Improves Sleep & Brain Function

## HOW TO GET ALOECURE

Due to the enormous interest consumers have shown in AloeCure, the company has decided to extend their nationwide savings event for a little while longer. Here's how it works...

Call the AloeCure number and speak to a live person in the US. Callers will be greeted by a knowledgeable and friendly person approved to offer up to 3 FREE bottles of AloeCure with your order. AloeCure's Toll-Free number is 1-800-808-9640. Only a limited discounted supply of AloeCure is currently available.

Consumers who miss out on the current product inventory will have to wait until more becomes available and that could take weeks. They will also not be guaranteed any additional savings. The company advises not to wait. Call 1-800-808-9640 today.

THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE, OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE. ALL DOCTORS MENTIONED ARE REMUNERATED FOR THEIR SERVICES. ALL CLINICAL STUDIES ON ALOECURE'S ACTIVE INGREDIENT WERE INDEPENDENTLY CONDUCTED AND WERE NOT SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN GLOBAL HEALTH GROUP.

# Gov. Ricketts declares April 8 as Lineworker Appreciation Day



*Linemen from around the state took part in a ceremony at the State Capitol on April 8, 2019 where Governor Pete Ricketts signed a proclamation declaring Lineworker Appreciation Day.*

Nebraska's electric lineworkers are committed to the communities they serve. They are on the job through severe weather; they work in challenging, often dangerous, conditions; and they serve on the front lines of our nation's energy needs. To honor their commitment, on April 8th, we celebrated those who dedicate their lives to keeping our lights on. We are proud to recognize the services they perform 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S., linemen often work in challenging conditions near high-voltage power lines to restore electricity after major storms. They serve on the frontlines of our nation's energy needs to ensure we receive the safe, reliable electricity we depend on.

Linemen from around the state met with state senators and were recognized on the floor of the Legislature. Governor Pete Ricketts signed a proclamation declaring April 8 as Lineworker Appreciation Day.

The ceremony took place in the Governor's Hearing Room at the Nebraska State Capitol in Lincoln. Lineworkers and representatives from the following utilities were present:

- Butler Public Power District
- Cornhusker Public Power District
- Elkhorn Rural Public Power



*Left: Keith Staab, Cornhusker PPD Lead Line Technician, delivers remarks at the ceremony with Governor Ricketts.*

*Above: State Senator Myron Dorn speaks with linemen at a breakfast.*

- District
- Howard Greeley Rural Public Power District
- Norris Public Power District
- Northwest Rural Public Power

- District
- Nebraska Public Power District
- Polk County Rural Public Power District
- Southwest Public Power District





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## Keep your home cool for less money

by Pat Keegan

**Q** : We moved into our home last spring. It's pretty new and seems well-insulated in winter. But it was hot last summer, so we had to run the A/C a lot, and the electric bills were a killer. Do you have any tips on how we can cool our home this summer—without going broke?

**A** : We've discussed some of the easiest ways to make your home more efficient, like reducing solar gains, insulating and ventilating the attic, and sealing air leaks. You may need to focus on inefficiencies in your home's cooling system. But before we address that, let's look at some other potential problems:

- Do you have freezer or second refrigerator in the garage? This can be a major energy hog, especially if it's old and you live in a warmer climate.
- Do you have a well? Your pump may be draining your energy use as you rely on it more during the summer. Start by looking for leaks in the system, and if necessary, reduce

irrigation.

- How about a swimming pool? It may be time to overhaul or replace the pool pump. If the pump is in good shape, try putting it on a timer.

If you have central air conditioning (A/C) or a heat pump, make sure your filter has been changed or recently cleaned. The next step is to call an HVAC contractor for a tune-up and a complete assessment of the system. A tune-up can improve the efficiency and extend the life of the unit. The tune-up includes cleaning the condenser coil, a check of the refrigerant levels and a good look at the pump and electrical contacts. Talk to the contractor about the efficiency of the A/C unit. If it's old, it may be cost-effective to replace it, even if it's still functional.

Ductwork is equally important as the A/C unit, so make sure the contractor you choose is capable and willing to provide an expert assessment. A real pro will know how

to measure the air flow at each supply and return register. If you're not getting cool air to the rooms that need it, the contractor may be able to make modifications to the ductwork.

Leaky ductwork could be your problem. If the ducts are in unconditioned areas like a crawl space or attic, it's especially important to make sure they're sealed and insulated. It will also help to seal ducts that are in conditioned spaces.

Some HVAC contractors can do a duct-blast test to measure duct leakage. Discuss whether you should ever close any supply registers. Most experts recommend that supply registers are always open.

If you cool your home with window A/C units, there are a few things you can do to maximize your cooling while keeping costs as low as possible.

- Use window A/C units in rooms that can be closed off with a door, to make the cooling as effective as possible.
- Make sure you have the right sized unit for the size of the room. A unit that's too big will cool the room before the humidity has been lowered, which will make it feel less cool, while a unit that's too small will have to work harder, causing a shorter life span—and it may not do the job.
- Use an electric fan or ceiling fan to help distribute the cold air throughout the area you are cooling.
- Turn off the A/C unit when no one is in the room.
- If your window A/C unit isn't cooling properly, it may need to be replaced. Look for an EnergyStar-certified unit to make the most of your cooling dollars.

Of course, the simplest way to save money on your A/C is to not use it. As much as possible, keep your activities limited to rooms that are easily cooled. Try to spend more time cooking and eating outside. If you have a basement, think about setting up a second bedroom down there where it's cooler. Think of it as your new summer hideaway!



*Mastic can be used to seal small gaps and leaks in your ductwork. Photograph provided by Weatherization Assistance Program*



# Good News for Americans, Bad News for Pain Drugs



Millions are expected to benefit from a new technology that could relieve years of severe joint discomfort; reprograms the body to block slow burning inflammation instead of creating it

By Casey Law, Health News Correspondent

**NATION-** Several of the major drug companies behind popular pain relievers may take a financial hit as manufacturing of a new pill is now complete.

Using a new technology, the pill could be safer and more effective than many store bought brands.

The pill, *VeraFlex*, was developed in May of this year by a private company in Seattle.

Functioning primarily as an immune modulator, the pill targets the body's immune system which can decrease pain in the body.

## The Science Behind Relief

Research shows that the joint stiffness, soreness and discomfort associated with arthritis is caused by inflammation which attacks healthy cartilage and protective tissue.

And according to leading medical scientists, this inflammation is caused by two inflammatory enzymes released by the body's immune system.

Remarkably, the active ingredients in *VeraFlex* help to block the production of both these enzymes, resulting in a dramatic decreasing in swelling, inflammation, and discomfort.

Right now, the leading over-the-counter pills are only able to block one of these enzymes!

It's why so many sufferers fail to ever find relief.

## Years of Discomfort Relieved in 5 Days

"*VeraFlex* users can generally expect more flexibility in three days...their joint pain alleviated in five days...and in just seven days, a tremendous improvement in overall joint function that may help them move like they did years prior" explains Dr. Liza Leal, developer and spokesperson for *VeraFlex*.

"It's an incredibly powerful little pill. And with the addition of a patented absorption enhancer, it packs an even greater punch. That's why I'm so excited to be the first to share these results. It's giving sufferers their life back."

## A Safer, More Effective Avenue to Amazing Relief

Its widely accepted through the medical community that inflammatory enzymes are the primary cause of pain and suffering in millions of Americans. It's why most prescriptions and even nonprescription pills are designed to block them.

However, what most people don't know is that even the most advanced ones can't block both!

And yet, that's exactly what *VeraFlex* is designed to do and why it works so well.

"Top pharma companies have struggled to create a drug that blocks COX and LOX; the medical names for the two inflammatory enzymes in the body. Consider the top seller Celebrex, it only blocks one variation of the COX enzyme" explains Leal.

"And that's because they have focused on using chemicals instead of natural substances like *VeraFlex*."

"Every *VeraFlex* capsule contains an ultra-high dose of a patented plant extract which has been clinically shown to block both enzymes, bringing relief to every joint that hurts!

"The kind of relief most people have never experienced. I often say two enzymes, twice the relief. People think I'm kidding until they try it."

## Piling on the Clinical Research

Remarkably, the key ingredient in *VeraFlex* is protected by 8 patents that spread from the US into Canada. And as would one guess, it's backed by an enormous amount of research, including two patient clinical trials.

In the first, 60 participants with rheumatoid arthritis and/or osteoarthritis were randomly placed into four groups.

Two groups were given the patented ingredient in *VeraFlex*, one was given the drug Celecoxib, and the last group a placebo. The results were monitored at 30, 60, and 90 days.

The data collected by researchers was stunning.

The groups taking the *VeraFlex* ingredient saw staggering improvements in arthritis symptoms such as flexibility, discomfort and function.

And even more astonishing they experienced a dramatic reduction in pain by the 30-day mark that was even better than Celecoxib, a powerful drug!

A second study was conducted to ensure the data was accurate and again the results participants experienced taking the *VeraFlex* compound blew away researchers.

This time it beat out the drug Naproxen. Shockingly, both men and women experienced a reduction in joint stiffness two days faster than when using Naproxen.

"I have to admit I was surprised when I read the initial findings" explains Leal. "But when you look at the science it just makes sense. It's

going to change everything."

## Faster Delivery, Maximum Absorption

*VeraFlex* is mainly comprised of two patented ingredients: Univestin, a powerful immune modulator which blocks the enzymes which cause your joints to hurt and BiAloe, an absorption enhancer (accelerator) that ensures maximum potency.

Research shows that severe joint discomfort arises when the immune system goes haywire and releases COX and LOX into your blood stream, two enzymes that causes tremendous swelling and inflammation around cartilage and protective tissue.

Over time, this inflammation overwhelms the joint and it begins to deteriorate resulting in a daily battle with chronic pain.

Unfortunately, modern day pain pills are only able block only one of these enzymes, resulting in marginal relief and continued suffering.

The Univestin in *VeraFlex* is one of the only known substances which has been proven successful in blocking both enzymes, resulting in phenomenal relief from the worst kinds of discomfort.

The addition of BiAloe, a unique aloe vera extra, maximizes the delivery of the plant based Univestin extract to every joint in the body because it is proven to improve nutrient absorption for maximum results.

Aloe Vera also is proven to support the body's immune system which manages inflammation, further supporting relief.

## How to Claim a Free 3-Month Supply Of VeraFlex

Due to the enormous interest consumers have shown in *VeraFlex*, the company has decided to extend their nationwide savings event for a little while longer. Here's how it works...

Call the *VeraFlex* number and speak to a live person in the US. Callers will be greeted by a knowledgeable and friendly person approved to offer up to 3 FREE bottles of *VeraFlex* with your order. *VeraFlex*'s Toll-Free number is 1-800-235-7807. Only a limited discounted supply of *VeraFlex* is currently available.

Consumers who miss out on the current product inventory will have to wait until more becomes available and that could take weeks. They will also not be guaranteed any additional savings. The company advises not to wait. Call 1-800-235-7807 today.

# SAFETY FIRST, SAFETY ALWAYS

MAY IS ELECTRICAL  
SAFETY MONTH



**P**ublic power districts and electric cooperatives' top priority is always to provide safe, reliable, affordable energy to their consumers. Your well-being and that of the larger communities we serve are of paramount concern.

May not only means spring storms and potentially severe weather, it also heralds the beginning of the celebration season for many high school students, especially seniors. Proms, graduation parties and other social gatherings are often associated with this time of year.

While we naturally focus on the sunny aspects this season brings, we also sometimes hear about preventable tragedies involving young people and car accidents. This brings me to the topic at hand: safety.

Does your teen or loved one know what to do in the event of a collision

with a utility pole resulting in a downed power line? Do your loved ones know what to do if they come upon an accident with a downed power line? This month, we'd like to share a few safety tips that we hope you never have to use. But if you do, they could save their life.

### **Life-saving tips**

If a car collides with a utility pole, the vehicle may be charged with electricity. Anyone exiting the car could come in contact with thousands of volts of electricity from the downed line. In essence, when you step out of the car, you become part of the electricity's path to the ground and could be electrocuted. It's critical to stay in the vehicle and tell others to do the same until emergency crews have told you it's safe to exit the car. If the vehicle is on fire or you must exit for other

safety reasons, jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothing touch the vehicle and ground at the same time. Land with your feet together and shuffle away (in small steps with your feet still together) to avoid electric shock. Keep moving away until you are at least 40 feet from the vehicle.

If you come upon a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines, keep your distance. A downed power line can energize the ground up to 35 feet away. While your natural instinct may be to rush to the car to help, instead pause. Do not approach the car or scene of the accident. Tell others to stay away. While you may be concerned about injuries to those involved, the best action you can take is to alert emergency officials, who will in turn coordinate with the power provider. For the same reasons described



above, never drive over a downed power line or through water that is touching a downed power line.

If you have a downed power line on your property as a result of a falling tree, storm or other circumstance, do not go near the power line. Assume that the downed line is energized and dangerous. Never try to move the power line even if you think it's not energized or if you are using a non-conductive material. We recognize that you may

be anxious to clear your property of tree limbs or other debris near the downed line, but please wait until after an electric utility crew or emergency officials have confirmed that it is safe to do so.

### May is Electrical Safety Month

May is a time where we are even more mindful of safety because it is Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in

the U.S. are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable.

- Always read and understand the operator's manual before using an appliance or tool.

- Make sure recognized safety laboratories, like UL, ETL, or CSA have certified the electrical appliance, tools, and cords you plan on using.

- Never use a product with a damaged electrical cord.

- Never use extension cords on a permanent basis.

- Only use extension cords properly rated for the devices you plan to plug into it.

- For the safety of children in your home, install tamper-resistant outlets or protective coverings.

- If your outlets are warm to the touch, immediately shut them off at the circuit breaker, and contact a qualified electrician to make repairs.

- Install ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCIs) in areas that may be wet or damp. GFCIs help protect against electrical shock. Use the test and reset button monthly to ensure they are working properly.

- Never use power tools outdoors if it is raining or the ground is wet.

- If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker, or has given you an electrical shock, immediately unplug it and have it repaired or replaced.

We know first-hand how dangerous electricity is because Nebraska's public power districts and electric cooperatives work with it all day, every day. To us, safety is more than a catch phrase. We view it as our duty and responsibility to keep utility employees safe and to help keep our communities safe.

Contact your local public power district or electric co-op for additional electrical safety tips or if you would like to request a safety demonstration at your school or community event. It is no accident that safety is our top priority.

**WHAT TO DO:  
IF YOUR CAR  
CRASHES INTO  
A UTILITY POLE**

**Accidents happen.** Would you know what to do if your car crashed into an electric utility pole? Knowing what to do could be the difference between life and death.

**Always consider power lines and other electrical equipment to be live and dangerous!**

**IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE IS NO FIRE:**

Your safest option is to stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. The vehicle acts as a path for the electrical current to travel to reach the ground. You are safe inside the vehicle, but if you get out, you could be electrocuted.

Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.

40 ft.

**IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE IS A FIRE:**

Only attempt to leave your vehicle if it is on fire.

**To exit safely:**

- Jump out of the vehicle, making sure NO part of your body or clothing touches the ground and vehicle at the same time.
- Land with both feet together and in small, shuffling steps, move at least 40 ft. away from the vehicle.
- The ground could be energized. Shuffling away with both feet together decreases the risk of electrical shock.

Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.

## Refreshing, dairy-infused dishes for warm days

**K**eep your kitchen cool and comfortable with grilled meals that banish the heat to the outdoors. Crisp, fresh greens and a perfect blend of spices and savory ingredients make each of these refreshing dishes perfect solutions for toasty days.

Featuring ingredients across the food groups, these dairy-fueled recipes from Milk Means More are ideal for well-rounded meals filled with nutritious flavor. Zesty mustard, spicy Sriracha and rich buttermilk lend a marinated flavor upgrade to traditional grilled chicken, while homemade pesto, fresh corn and ham create a perfect harmony for a cheesy grilled pizza.

Find more refreshing meal solutions at [milkmeansmore.org](http://milkmeansmore.org).



### Grilled Pizza with Arugula Pesto, Corn and Ham

#### Arugula Pesto:

- 2 cups fresh arugula, tightly packed
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- pinch red pepper flakes, (optional)
- 1/3 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste

#### Grilled Pizza:

- 2 tablespoons flour, divided
- 1 pound pizza crust dough (at room temperature if using refrigerated dough)
- vegetable oil, for grill
- 1/2 cup Arugula Pesto
- 1/2 cup part-skim ricotta cheese

- 1/2 cup diced deli ham
- 1/2-3/4 cup fresh corn kernels (about 1 cob)
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Heat grill to medium heat (350-400 F).

To make Arugula Pesto: In food processor, combine arugula, garlic, lemon juice, red pepper flakes and Parmesan. Pulse until combined then, with food processor on, drizzle in olive oil until pesto forms, scraping down sides as needed. Taste and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

To make Grilled Pizza: Flour pizza dough lightly and stretch or roll to about 1/2-inch thickness (14-16-inch diameter).

Sprinkle remaining flour on large

rimless baking sheet, pizza peel or pizza stone. Transfer dough to baking surface.

Clean grill grate and grease with oil-soaked paper towel and tongs. Slide dough off baking surface onto grill. Cover and cook until dough is bubbling on top and golden brown on bottom, 2-3 minutes.

Carefully flip dough over using peel or tongs. Remove crust from grill to add toppings. Spread Arugula Pesto over dough. Top with ricotta, ham, corn kernels, onion and Parmesan. Return pizza to grill, cover and cook until toppings are heated through and bottom of crust is crispy, 5-7 minutes.

Remove from grill, slice and serve.





### Grilled Buttermilk Chicken

- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon mustard powder
- 1 tablespoon Sriracha
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 4 chicken drumsticks, bone in, skin on
- 4 chicken thighs, bone in, skin on
- vegetable oil, for grill
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges (optional)

In medium bowl, whisk buttermilk, mustard powder, Sriracha, garlic and paprika.

Place chicken in large zip-top bag; pour buttermilk mixture over chicken. Seal bag and refrigerate 2 hours or overnight.

Heat outdoor grill for direct grilling over medium heat. Remove chicken from marinade, shaking off excess; discard marinade. Lightly oil grill grates. Transfer chicken to grill and cook, turning occasionally, 16-18 minutes, or until internal temperature reaches 165 F.

Transfer chicken to serving platter. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with lemon wedges, if desired.

### Slow Cooker Garlic Herb Mushrooms

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 24 oz. cremini mushrooms   | Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste |
| 4 cloves garlic, minced    | 1/4 cup half & half                                 |
| 1/2 teaspoon dried basil   | 2 tablespoons unsalted butter                       |
| 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano | 2 tablespoons fresh parsley leaves                  |
| 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme   |   |
| 2 bay leaves               |   |
| 1 cup vegetable broth      |   |

Place mushrooms, garlic, basil, oregano, thyme and bay leaves into a 3 quart slow cooker. Stir in vegetable broth; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Cover and cook on low heat for 3 – 4 hours or high heat for 1 – 2 hours or until browned and tender. Stir in half & half and butter during the last 15 – 20 minutes of cooking time. Serve immediately, garnish with parsley, if desired.

**Margaret Walker, Sidney, Nebraska**

### Pineapple & Rhubarb Pie

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 2 large eggs                 | 1 1/2 cups diced fresh pineapple            |
| 1 cup sugar                  | 2 1/2 cups rhubarb cut into 1/2 inch slices |
| 2 tablespoons flour          | Pastry for 9" pie, plus lattice topping     |
| 1/8 teaspoon salt            |   |
| 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind |   |
| 1 tablespoon lemon juice     |   |

Beat eggs, sugar, flour, salt, lemon rind and juice together well. Add pineapple and rhubarb. Pour into prepared pastry shell and cover with lattice topping. Bake in preheated 425 degree oven for 15 minutes and reduce heat to 325 and bake 20 minutes longer. I have also put the filling a 9" X 9" baking dish with our favorite crisp topping and bake as you would for any fruit crisp. Either way it's good!

**Jo Munderloh, Pender, Nebraska**

### Carol's Crockpot Lasagna

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Meat mixture:</b>              | <b>Cheese Mixture:</b>                      |
| 1/2 medium onion chopped          | 1 small container ricotta cheese            |
| 2 lbs. hamburger                  | 1 regular container cottage cheese, drained |
| 1 teaspoon oregano                | 4 cups mozzarella                           |
| 1 teaspoon minced garlic          | 1/2 cup shredded parmesan                   |
| 1 tablespoon sugar                | 2 eggs                                      |
| 1 large can Hunts Spaghetti sauce |   |
| 1 large can tomato paste          | <b>Noodles:</b>                             |
| 1 cup water                       | 10-12 no boil lasagna noodles               |

Sauté onions, brown hamburger and then add garlic, oregano and sugar. Add spaghetti sauce, tomato paste and water. Stir. Set aside. Mix all ingredients of the cheese mixture. Spray large crock pot with cooking spray, then pour about 1/4 cup of hamburger/tomato sauce mixture in the bottom, next put layer of uncooked lasagna noodles on bottom, you will have to break to fit. Then 1/3 of the meat mixture, then 1/3 of cheese mixture and repeat process two more times, be sure to end with cheese mixture. Put on lid and cook on low for 5 hours. Remove lid and shut off cooker, wait 5 minutes before serving. This serves 12-14 people.

**Carol McGregor, Hartington, Nebraska**

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