

# CURRENTS

## JNEC's August 2025 Newsletter



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### School Bus Safety Tips

School buses are among the safest vehicles on the road — but the greatest risk comes when children are getting on or off the bus. Whether you're a driver, parent or student, knowing these safety tips will help keep everyone safe.

#### For drivers:

- **Slow down:** Reduce speed in school zones and near bus stops.
- **Keep your distance:** Stay back at least 10 feet from a school bus — this is the most dangerous area for children.
- **Know the signals:**
  - Yellow flashing lights: bus is preparing to stop — slow down.
  - Red flashing lights + stop arm: bus is loading/unloading — stop and wait until the bus moves again.
  - Never pass a stopped bus on an undivided road — it's illegal in most states.
- **Stay alert:** Watch for kids who may unexpectedly enter the road, especially near bus stops.
- **Respect the zone:** When flashers are blinking in a school zone, stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and take extra care to look for children near playgrounds, parks and residential areas.

#### For parents:

Teach your child to arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes early, and how to play it **SAFE**:

- **Stay** at least ten feet — five giant steps — from the curb.
- **Always** wait for the bus to stop and the driver to signal before boarding.
- **Face** forward and buckle up if seat belts are available.
- **Exit** carefully, look both ways and cross in front of the bus — never behind. Make eye contact with the driver before crossing.

As students head back to school, remember: a moment of caution can prevent a lifetime of regret.



EVERY CHILD  
HAS A  
CHANCE—  
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### Three Smart Home Technologies to Help You Save Energy

Smart technologies make our homes more comfortable, convenient and energy efficient. By connecting your home Wi-Fi network, smart devices automate everyday tasks like lighting, heating, cooling and home security—they can even communicate with other smart devices in the home.

While not all smart home products are specifically designed with energy savings in mind, there are several smart technologies that can help you lower home energy use. Here are the top three smart home devices to help you save.

#### Smart Thermostats

Smart or not, your thermostat is the most effective tool for controlling energy use, as heating and cooling typically account for the largest portion of energy bills. Smart thermostats allow you to adjust the indoor temperature through an app, giving you full control from anywhere on the go. Many smart thermostats include learning capabilities and will adjust the thermostat based on previous behavior and patterns.

According to the Department of Energy, smart thermostats can reduce heating and cooling bills by more than 8% annually, and with models as low as \$65, they typically pay for themselves in one year.

#### Smart Lighting

Smart LED bulbs use less electricity than traditional bulbs and can be scheduled or turned off (or on) remotely through a smart phone app. Smart bulbs are available in a range of shapes, brightness levels, colors and more, so shop for the products that work best for your home lighting needs.

Many smart bulbs include motion sensors that turn on or off based on room activity, further optimizing home energy use. If you're new to smart lighting, try a home starter kit. Prices for kits range from \$70 to \$300+ depending on how many bulbs you need.

#### Smart Plugs

Smart plugs are inexpensive gadgets that can help you save energy. Many electronic devices consume power even when they are turned off (known as "phantom load"), which can take a toll on your energy bills. Smart plugs are simply plugged into an electrical outlet and connected to your Wi-Fi network. When set up, the smart plug can cut power (or return power) to non-smart devices, like coffee makers, phone chargers and other items that draw phantom load.

Many smart plugs can be paired with popular smart hubs, like Alexa or Google Nest, or controlled through the plug's associated app. Smart plugs are simple to use and a set of four can be purchased for as little as \$25.

If you're looking for new ways to save energy, try these budget-friendly, convenient smart home technologies.

# Hurricane Preparedness

*Hurricane Season is June 1- Nov. 30.*

## Preparedness Checklist:

- ✓ **Make an Evacuation Plan.** Find activated evacuation routes here: [DriveTexas.org](https://www.drivetexas.org) or by dialing (800) 452-9292. Call **2-1-1** to find out if you live in an evacuation zone.
- ✓ **Sign-Up for Emergency Alerts.** Make sure your device is enabled to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs).
- ✓ **Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit.** Learn how to build an emergency kit here: <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>
- ✓ **Review Your Home Insurance Policy.**
- ✓ **Register with State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR):** <https://stear.tdem.texas.gov/> or by dialing **2-1-1** if you live in evacuation zone and:
  - have a disability or medical needs and do not have a car or other vehicle to use in an evacuation.
  - have a disability or medical needs and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation. **\*\*STEAR Registry information collected is confidential\*\***

### Hurricane Preparedness Online Resources:

Texas Division of Emergency Management Website: [www.tdem.texas.gov](https://www.tdem.texas.gov)  
Texas Department of State Health Services: [www.texasready.gov](https://www.texasready.gov)  
American Red Cross: [www.redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org)  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security: [www.ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)  
Office of the Texas Governor Greg Abbott: [www.gov.texas.gov](https://www.gov.texas.gov)



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Replace your cooling system's filter regularly to maintain strong airflow and boost energy efficiency. A clean filter means your system doesn't have to work as hard, saving energy and lowering your utility bills. Factors like allergies and pets in the home can impact how often filters should be replaced. Check the filter every month and replace it as needed. Changing filters regularly also reduces wear and tear on your cooling system, helping extend the life of the unit.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



# Preparación para Huracanes

*La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de Junio al 30 de Noviembre.*

## Lista de verificación de preparación:

- ✓ **Haga un Plan de Evacuación.** Encuentre rutas de evacuación activadas aquí: [DriveTexas.org](https://www.drivetexas.org) o marcando (800) 452-9292. Llame **2-1-1** para averiguar si usted vive en una zona de evacuación.
- ✓ **Regístrese para recibir alertas de emergencia.** Asegúrese de que su dispositivo esté habilitado para recibir Alertas de Emergencia Inalámbricas (AEI).
- ✓ **Prepare un estuche de Suministros de Emergencia.** Aprenda cómo construir un estuche de emergencia aquí: <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>
- ✓ **Revise su póliza de seguro de hogar.**
- ✓ **Regístrese en el Registro de Asistencia de Emergencia del Estado de Texas (RAEET):** <https://stear.tdem.texas.gov/> o marcando el **2-1-1** si vive en una zona de evacuación y:
  - tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene un automóvil u otro vehículo para usar en una evacuación
  - tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene amigos o familiares para ayudar en una evacuación. **\*\* La información recolectada del Registro RAEET es confidencial \*\***

### Recursos en línea para la preparación en caso de huracanes:

Sitio web de la División de Administración de Emergencias de Texas: [www.tdem.texas.gov](https://www.tdem.texas.gov)  
Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado: [www.texasready.gov](https://www.texasready.gov)  
Cruz Roja Americana: [www.redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org)  
Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos: [www.ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)  
Oficina del Gobernador de Texas Greg Abbott: [www.gov.texas.gov](https://www.gov.texas.gov)

