

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Valley News

November | December 2008

Volume 65 | Issue 6



What's under your tree?

Appliance
safety tips
Pages 4-5

www.valleyrec.com

Looking back while moving forward

FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS, electric power has illuminated American homes, energized our economy and improved our standard of living. Yet, at the turn of the 20th century, it was a luxury available only to the urban wealthy. Those living in rural areas were left in the dark because private power companies decided it was unprofitable to serve them. This created a vast cultural divide between the "haves" and the "have nots."

That unfair system changed in 1935 after the creation of the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and Congress's subsequent passage of the Rural Electrification Act. Through the REA, consumers and the federal government partnered to form local cooperatives, bringing safe, reliable and affordable electric service to every corner of our great nation. President Franklin Roosevelt, who signed the act into law, said, "Electricity is no longer a luxury; it is a definite necessity."

This year, Valley Rural Electric Cooperative celebrates 70 years of service to the rural citizens of central Pennsylvania. As we look back over the decades of progress that came as a direct result of the REA, we can't help but share a great sense of accomplishment and pride as well as a deep appreciation for the folks who helped make it all possible.

Now, as we look forward to the next seven decades, we realize we are, in a sense, back at the beginning. We face the same challenges that we did when REA was first launched -- making electricity available while keeping it safe, reliable and affordable for the rural communities we serve.

Escalating fuel and power production costs coupled with rising construction material costs are forcing up the price of electricity nationwide. Over the past year, consumers in some areas of the country have seen rates jump 60 percent or more. And these increases are only the first in a series confronting our industry. Inflation; international competition for raw materials; impending federal climate change goals -- these all add to the bottom line of electric bills.

As a consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, we must find ways to minimize the impact of this "perfect storm." We



Wayne F. Miller
President & Chief Executive Officer

have to become increasingly efficient on both sides of the meter. We must also maintain adequate generation capacity to meet your demand. And we must encourage the federal government to dedicate additional resources toward the research and development of technologies that will help us generate, transmit and distribute power in the most economical and environmentally responsible way possible.

As we did 70 years ago, we must live up to our responsibility to fight for the rights of all electric consumers. If government won't work with us in meeting our pressing energy challenges, then we are prepared to stand alone in defense of affordable electricity for everyone -- not just the "haves."

Electricity is still a "definite necessity." And we at Valley REC will continue to make the case that America remains strong only when all segments of society have access to affordable power. We will refuse to step back into darkness.

Cooperatively yours,

Wayne F. Miller

Wayne F. Miller
President & CEO

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Choosing the right portable electric heater

HIGHER OIL PRICES have many of us looking for ways to lower our heating costs. One option is to use portable electric resistance (space) heaters. These units can be an economical choice if they are used to heat one room or supplement inadequate heating. They can also boost the temperature of rooms used by individuals who are sensitive to cold without overheating the entire home and driving costs through the roof.

With the wide variety of models on the market -- and the wide variety of prices that go with them -- it's not a bad idea to get a clear understanding of how they work.

Electric resistance heaters are often grouped into three categories: high-temperature radiant, natural convection and fan-forced.

It's important to note that all electric resistance heaters use the same process to change electricity into heat. And they all have the same efficiency -- 100 percent. The amount of heat produced is determined solely by the amount of electricity being drawn. In other words, two heaters with a rating of 1,500 watts on the serial plates will deliver the same amount of heat, regardless of their shape or size. The only difference is in how the heat is transferred from the heat source to the person or space being warmed.

SPACE HEATER TYPES

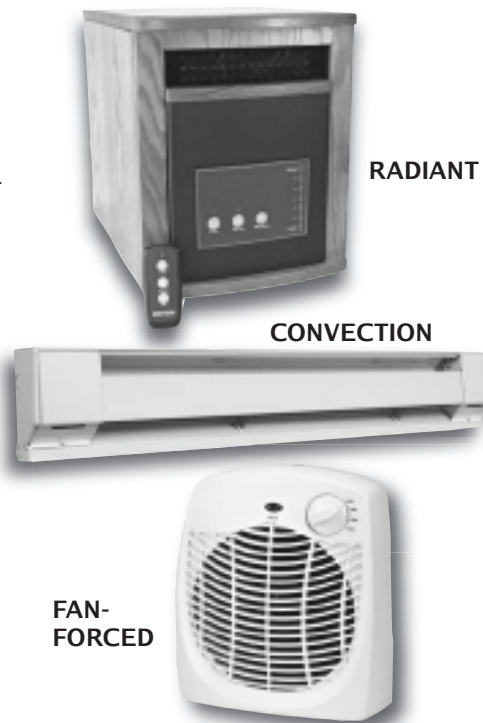
High-temperature radiant space heaters are characterized by visible heating elements -- typically quartz infrared tubes with shiny reflectors behind them.

Pros

- ▶ Deliver immediate heat in close proximity
- ▶ Offer better "coverage" to more of your body, whereas a smaller box heater may only warm your ankles
- ▶ Instead of heating the air, they "beam" warmth directly to objects in their paths

Cons

- ▶ Won't keep you warm unless you are standing in the airflow path
- ▶ Some wall-mounted heaters of this type are not as portable



Natural convection heaters are typically characterized by a long, slender baseboard design.

Pros

- ▶ Warm to the touch, but not hot enough to burn you (or children); may be located closer to furniture without the fire hazard
- ▶ Create a cycle of air flow to transfer warmth from the heater to the air
- ▶ Relatively quiet

Cons

- ▶ Take up more floor space than other units
- ▶ Do not provide instant heat

Fan-forced heaters use a fan to push air over the heating coils and into a room.

Pros

- ▶ Often more compact than other designs -- an advantage if the heaters will be moved frequently
- ▶ Deliver a constant flow of hot air
- ▶ Offer a short "recovery time" to add heat back to a room

Cons

- ▶ These "mini-furnaces" can only warm a smaller area
- ▶ The fans make the units a little noisier than others

OPERATING COSTS

One 1,500-watt space heater -- of any shape or size -- running for 24 hours a day at a cost of 9 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) would add an additional \$96.12 to your monthly electric bill. To do the math, follow these steps.

Step 1: Identify the wattage

This information is typically found on the serial plate of an appliance. Some electric requirements are listed in volts and amperes (amps). If this is the case, multiply the volts times the amps to get the wattage.

Step 2: Figure the estimated kWh

Wattage x Estimated hours of use =
_____ Watt hours.

Divide the result by 1,000 to get kWh.

Step 3: Figure the cost

Now multiply the kWh by \$.089 (8.9 cents) to figure the approximate operating cost for the specified amount of time.

LOOKING FOR HIGHER EFFICIENCY?

While electric resistance heat is 100 percent efficient, which means you get one unit of heat for one unit of electricity, air-source heat pumps are considered around 200-250 percent efficient -- you get up to 2.5 units of heat for one unit of electricity. Air-source heat pumps operate for less than half the cost of electric resistance heat.

Geothermal, or ground source, heat pumps can be up to 400 percent efficient -- a quarter of the operating cost of electric resistance heat.

For more information on home heating, visit www.valleyrec.com and follow the Home Energy Suite link to the Calculators and Library tabs. Or call the co-op at 814/643-2650 or toll-free 800/432-0680.

SAFETY CHECK

Before purchasing a space heater:

Make sure the unit has an automatic shut-off feature that cuts power if the unit tips over.

Avoid using extension cords with heaters.

Follow manufacturers' instructions on how much distance should be allowed between the heaters and other objects.

Small appliance safety

Gadgets make great gifts, but it's easy to forget they can pose hazards

BY SUSAN R. PENNING

Director of Member Services

SMALL APPLIANCES are often at the top of our holiday wish lists.

Although they make many of our daily chores easier, these useful helpers can also be safety hazards if they aren't cared for and handled properly.

Some things to keep in mind when operating them:

Always check appliance cords before using. If they are broken, frayed,

tied in knots, melted or damaged, the cords need replaced or repaired.

Appliances and water don't mix! Don't plug in appliances with wet hands.

Always insert and remove plugs by holding the plug itself; never pull on the cord.

Be sure that your fingers never come into contact with the metal prongs of a plug.

Never use appliances that over-

heat, send off sparks or have an unusual odor while in use.

Never attempt to dislodge items stuck in small appliances. This can cause electrocution.

Don't allow children to operate appliances unsupervised.

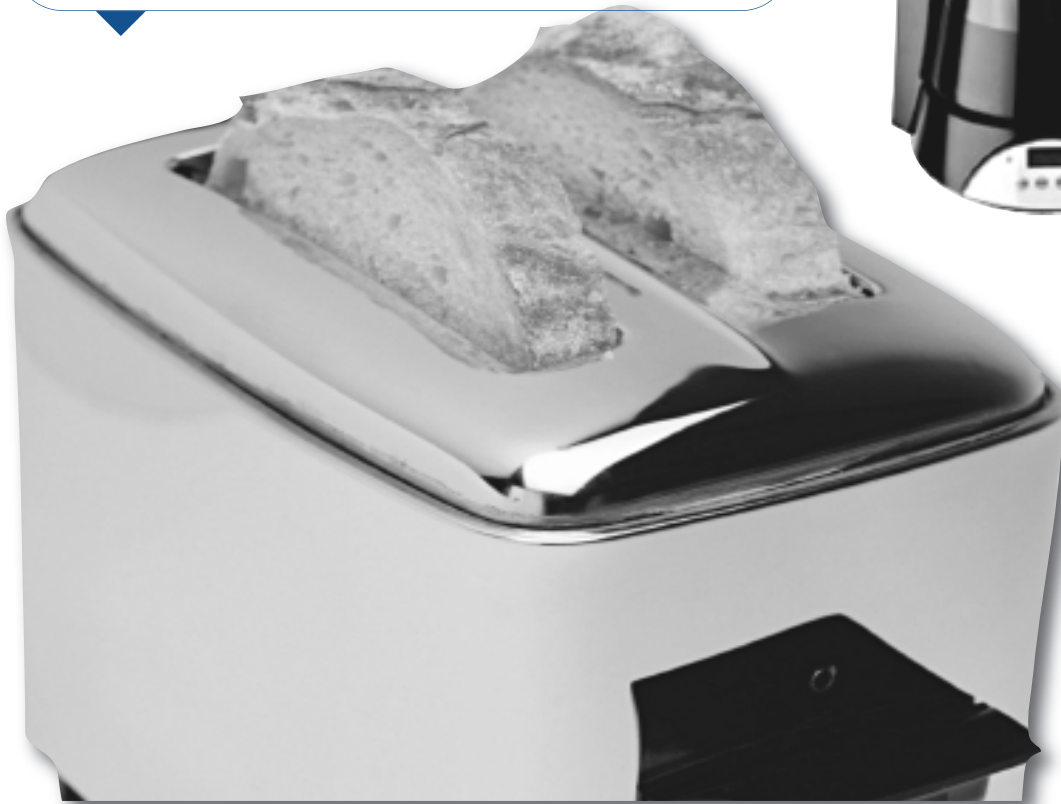
Unplug appliances when not in use.

When buying small appliances, look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) seal. It means an independent laboratory has tested product samples for public safety and found that they meet applicable requirements.

Toaster/toaster oven

Safety issue: Fires can start in toaster ovens and these appliances also pose the risk of shock.

Best practices: Keep the door of a toaster oven closed if a fire ignites. Unplug the appliance if you can safely reach the cord. Keep the crumb traps clean (unplug the unit before cleaning.) Except for the food you want toasted, never stick anything in a traditional toaster. As a rule of thumb, keep the appliance unplugged when not in use.



Coffee maker

Safety issue: Automatic coffee makers can cause fires and burns.

Best practices: Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully to prevent hot surfaces. Turn off the coffee maker when not in use. And place coffee makers away from the back of countertops, out-



Hair dryer

Safety issue: Wrapping the cord tightly around the dryer can kink the wires, eventually causing the plastic coating to crack and the wires to become exposed.

Best practices: Gather the cord loosely or purchase a dryer with a retractable cord. Also remember to periodically clean the lint filter according to instructions. Make sure your bathroom outlet has a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) installed to protect against electrocution.



Microwave oven

Safety issue: Microwaves can leak and cause health issues.

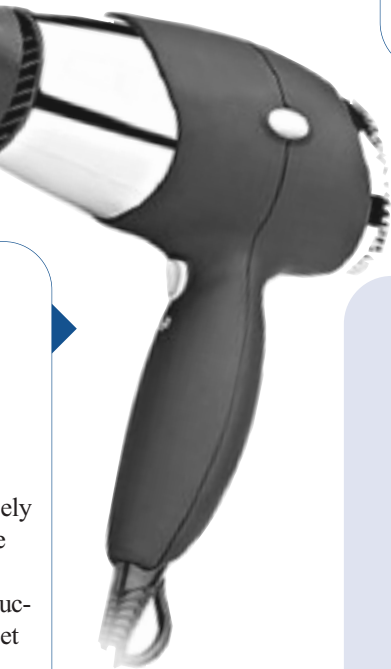
Best practices: Use the oven only if the door seals when it is closed. If the microwave has damage to the hinges, latch or seal, replace it or have it inspected. Also be sure to use only microwave-safe containers in the unit.

...c-drip coffee makers can
 ...manufacturers' instructions
 ...coffee from overflowing.
 ...er and remove the pot when
 ...ffee makers toward the
 ...of the reach of children.

Iron

Safety issue: Clothing irons get hot enough to injure people and ignite combustible items.

Best practices: Never leave a hot iron unattended. Make sure the iron remains a safe distance away from items you're not pressing, such as bedding and drapes. Invest in an iron with an automatic shut-off feature, which turns the unit off if it hasn't been moved for a pre-set amount of time.



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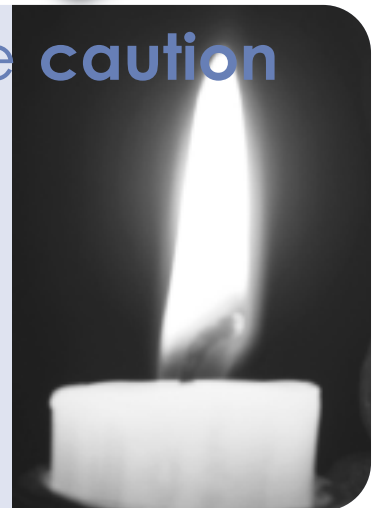
'Tis the season for candle caution

Candles can add romantic lighting and a special touch during the holidays. But they also have the potential to turn your joyful season into a nightmare.

The top five days for home candle fires are Halloween, Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

The following safety tips can help prevent candle-related fires:

- ▶ Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- ▶ Keep candles at least one foot from flammable items.
- ▶ Use sturdy candleholders.
- ▶ Avoid using candles in bedrooms.
- ▶ Don't splatter wax when extinguishing the flame.



THE
**Trading
Post**

Classified Advertising



Co-op members may submit ads by phone at 800/432-0680; by fax at 814/643-1678; via e-mail at valleynewsads@valleyrec.com; or by mail at Valley REC, PO Box 477, Huntingdon, PA 16652-0477. There is no charge for this service. If consumers wish to continue running particular ads, they are required to resubmit the information on a bimonthly basis. The deadline for submission is the 25th day of the month prior to the issue months. Submissions are viewable on the co-op's website at www.valleyrec.com. Items published are printed at the request of our members. The co-op does not endorse, recommend or assume any responsibility for the products or services advertised.

Real Estate

Fulton Co., 2 miles south of Waterfall, 66 acres, partially wooded, good hunting, beautiful view, clean & green. 814/685-3495 or 717/987-4327.

Huntingdon Co. near Raystown Lake, Amish-built (2006) cabin on 4.2 wooded acres, knotty pine throughout, 1-1/2 bath, 2 BR, great room, kitchen, well w/ water purification system, covered front & back porches, garage. Minutes from boat launch, \$220,000. Owner building larger cabin (same builder) nearby as permanent home. 407/484-1184.

Office/retail rental, 10773 Wm. Penn Hwy., Huntingdon (Rt. 22 Ardenheim Fronting Hwy). 400 sq. ft. of office space w/ restroom, \$275 per month plus electric, 814/643-3775 or 599-4284.

Juniata Co. 55'x400' double-story chicken house. Includes a double-story feeding building & equipment on 12 acres of ground, will finance, \$325,000. 717/734-3275 or 994-5683.

Wanted

Used bunk beds w/ mattresses, good cond., reasonable price. 814/448-2080.

Leaf raking & gutter cleaning. 814/259-3634.

Autos/Trucks

1998 Ford Contour, auto. trans., 85,000 miles, \$1,500. 814/447-3630.

1950 single-axle Chevy dump truck, \$1,000. Good for restoration projects. 814/447-3630.

1994 Ford Taurus, runs great, \$1,500. 814/381-4367.

16" alloy wheel w/ M & S, tire size P205/15 R16, 75% tread from 2001 Ford Focus, \$60; 2 like-new winter tires, 205/60 R16, \$60. Call Mike at 814/658-3151.

2001 full-sized Chevy truck, \$6,500 OBO. 814/542-2749.

Truck tonneau cover for 8' bed, 1999-2007 GM. 717/250-8095.

1989 Dodge Dakota truck, runs good, \$900. 814/658-3442 after 4 p.m.

Service

Christmas is only 2 months away! Allow me to help you w/ your gift shopping & receive a 10% discount off your first order, as well as a free gift w/ any order of \$50 or more, Tanya's Avon. 814/330-8877.

Buck Hollow Taxidermy, Orbisonia - Full-time licensed taxidermist Michael Bish. 814/447-3744 or visit www.buckhollowtaxidermy.com

Dennis A. Heeter Heating & Air Conditioning, Heeter's Oil & Heeter's Stove Shop. Let us give you a free quote on a new heating system. We offer very competitive rates on installations of furnaces, boilers, heat pumps & many other alternative heat sources. Call us today at 814/669-9332 or visit our show room on Rt. 305, Alexandria.

Tom's Tree Service - 7 days a week, no job too big or small. Tree trimming & removal, stump grinding, bucket truck & chipper, storm damage clean-up, brush mowing, land clearing. Free est., fully insured. 814/627-0550 or 448-3052. Backed by the Better Business Bureau.

MTG Excavating - Specializing in mini-excavating, skid loader services, dump truck hauling, snow plowing, foundations, driveways, footers, French drains, all types of water issues. Call for your free est. 814/599-5505. Ask for Matt.

ES Ministries Thrift Shop is located in the Mooresville United Methodist Church, 5468 Charter Oak Road, Mooresville. Open Thursday & Friday 9 a.m.-6 p.m. & Saturday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Selling clothing, household goods & toys.

Vintage Art Glass - A magical storefront complete w/ indoor pond. Shop for all your gift needs. Spe-

cializing in custom stained glass (any size) & builder of unique ponds & water features. Corner of 5th & Washington St., Huntingdon. 814/643-0636.

Recreational

1989 Larson boat, 3.0 Mer engine. Call 814/542-2749 for details.

Lg. Park model RV, lots of extras, Snyder's Run Campground. 717/250-8095.

Snowmobiles - 1979 Arctic Cat w/ cover, 1980 Arctic Cat w/ cover, trailer for hauling both, \$2,000. 814/359-2191.

Clymer Evinrude/Johnson outboard shop manual, 48-235 hp, 1973-1990 models. Super Bait tank for sale, 20-gallon. 814/658-2235.

2006 Roketa 125cc go cart, good cond., \$500. 814/658-3442 after 4 p.m.

Vacation Rentals

Blue Knob Resort chalet - Ski, golf, hike, access park. For rent by ski season (Dec.-March), month or week. Call 814/643-4011 or 599-1605.

Livestock/Pets

Miniature horse stallion, AMHA/AMHR-registered, Subino Overo, should throw lots of color, champion blood lines, LTD Magic Man, Rowdy, Golden Melody Boy & Moore, has a 9-gene ration pedigree, will be 2 in the spring & ready for your mares, \$1,000 OBO. 814/643-2806.

Tools/Equipment

JD 885 rigid no-till/ridge-till row-crop cultivator. New Idea mounted corn picker. 814/684-3057.

1960 Massey Ferguson backhoe, pd. \$5,000, \$2,500 in repairs, asking \$6,500 OBO. 717/899-7691.

Thor 7" electric sander/polisher, \$15. 814/667-3519.

Craftsman 10" table saw w/ attached stand, \$40. 814/667-3125.

Kubota grass & leaf bagger, fits BX series tractors, runs off PTO, exc. cond., asking \$1,400. 814/695-8184.

Miscellaneous

Williamson oil furnace, 4 yrs. old, like new cond., 84-87,000 Btu. 814/695-5502.

Collection of bells, IGA ceramic house, material, religious cassette tapes, Huntingdon High School year-books 1938-41, embroidery hoops (all sizes), plastic canvas kits & patterns, 3-tier hanging basket, quilting frame, grapevine & straw wreaths, craft books. 814/658-3081.

Creative gift baskets for every occasion. Shop online & ship nationwide anytime! Visit our website at www.giftbasketsonthegobytdpearce.com or call 814/259-3175 or 717/404-0880.

Excellent quality horse hay (mixed grass), first & second cutting, 4x4 round bales & small square bales stored inside, by the ton or by the bale. Call 814/224-5499 after 3:30 p.m. or on weekends.

12-15 pairs of men's flannel pajamas, new \$18-24, now \$5 a pair. 2 plaid flannel shirts, 1 blue, 1 brown, size lg. (16-16-1/2). 6-8 men's large dress shirts (16-16-1/2), \$5 each. Call 814/447-5450.

Hand-woven rag rugs for sale. Free canning jars & buttons. Call Norma Huntsman at 814/658-3111.

Singer sewing machine, good cond., \$50. 814/447-3735.

Like new small wood stove, iron w/ glass front, asking \$250. 814/447-3630.

1920 antique Hoosier cabinet, natural wood, \$700. 814/643-1874.

Good used Home Interiors products. 814/259-3634.

Classified Ads

4-drawer dresser, dark walnut stain, good cond.; poplar gun cabinet, cherry stained, wildlife back, 2 drawers, 3 side shelves, holds 9 guns, size is 49" long by 14-1/2" wide by 72" high, exc. cond. 717/485-3281.

Coal furnace, like new, thermostat-controlled, 9759 Holly Ln., Donation area. New motorcycle jacket, \$100, only worn once. 814/667-2467.

50-lb. Matthews Conquest 2 bow, 28-1/2 pull, \$200. 814/695-8184.

2 very old brass & porcelain table lamps. 5'x7' air mattress, 8" thick. 814/658-2235.

Smoker/cooker for meat processing, propane-fired. 814/832-3187.

New St. Croix stove, burns pellets or corn, asking \$2,000. 814/251-3033.

Lg. collection of old sheet music for piano & guitar. 814/643-4011 or 599-1605.

1,000 board ft. kiln-dried white pine, \$1,250. Other woods also avail. 814/447-3630 or email galleriesofwood@innernet.net

Fire King coal furnace, auto., thermostat-controlled, like new cond., \$1,500. 814/667-2467.

Rectangular patio dining set, glass-top table & 4 chairs w/ cushions, light blue aluminum, \$25. 3 solid cherry, natural finished end/night tables, exc. cond., \$40 each or all for \$100. (6) 120/240-volt electric baseboard heaters: (1) 4', \$25; (1) 8', \$35; (4) 10', \$45; or all 6 for \$210. 2 cherry-finished ladderback/wicker seat chairs, \$20 each or \$35 for both, exc. cond. Kenmore sewing machine in walnut cabinet, exc. cond., \$50. 814/667-3519.

Kodiak wood/coal fireplace insert, \$300. 814/658-3442 after 4 p.m.

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1993 20' Wells Cargo concession trailer, comes w/ commercial refrigerator, chest freezer, deep fryer, grill, lots of storage space. For more details, call 814/448-9098.

Bundy flute, gently used & completely reconditioned. Includes case & stand, \$175. 814/937-5171.

Tonneau truck bed cover, complete w/ mounting clamps, from 2004 Chevy Silverado short bed, good cond., used 1 year, \$100. Call Bill at 814/658-3988.

Save 50% on your heating bills w/ an EdenPure heater, avail. at Weaver the Florist, 5th & Washington St., Huntingdon. 814/643-0530 or 800/491-2994. Good prices, guaranteed service.

3' base cabinet, light oak finish, good cond., 2 drawers, 2 doors, \$40 OBO. 814/542-4965 evenings & weekends.

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