




an enfinity energy partner 

Connections

Strengthening our Community...

one customer at a time!

July 2010

Now You Can
Pay Your Bill

at

Walmart 
Save money. Live better.

Pay your utility bill at the local Walmart with an additional fee as low as \$0.88. Just take a copy of your bill to any Walmart MoneyCenter or Customer Service Desk. You can use your Walmart MoneyCard, PIN-based debit card, or cash.

*Other locations
to Pay*

**Austin Utilities
Office Drop Boxes**

*Payments made
by 5:00 p.m. on the
due date at the office
drop boxes do not
incur a late fee.*

Off Site Drop Boxes

**Jim's SuperValu
Hy-Vee
Main Street**

Smart energy saving practices

Well-maintained cooling systems will run more efficiently, use less energy, and lower energy bills, so clean or replace AC filters monthly or as needed. Also, keep both outdoor and indoor air conditioner coils clean. Dirt build-up on the indoor coil is the single most common cause of poor operating efficiency.

Reduce the cooling load by effectively shading east and west windows. When possible, delay heat-producing activities such as dish washing until the evening. Close curtains during the day, and install awnings on south-facing windows. Plant shade trees or vines.

During the cooling season, keep your house closed tight in the daytime to keep unwanted heat and humidity out. If practical, ventilate at night either naturally or with fans.

Avoid running a dehumidifier at the same time as the AC. The dehumidifier will increase the cooling load and force the air conditioner to work harder.

Turn off your computer and monitor when you are done using them; activate the "sleep" feature so the machine powers down when on but not in use for a while. When you leave a room, turn off the lights and all other energy-using equipment.

Shift energy-intensive tasks such as laundry and dish washing to off-peak energy demand hours to increase electricity reliability during heat waves; do full loads when you run washers, dryers, and dishwashers.

Switch to cold water washing of laundry in top-loading, energy-inefficient washing machines to save energy and up to \$63 a year—detergents formulated for cold water get clothes just as clean; clean the lint filter in your dryer after every load.

Keep lamps or TVs away from the air conditioner thermostat. The heat they generate will cause your air conditioner to run longer, running up bills unnecessarily.

Refrain from using nonessential appliances. Unplug or use only when necessary an extra refrigerator in your garage. A refrigerator in an uncooled space such as a garage uses more energy on hot summer days than it does during the winter.

Replace your four most used 100-watt incandescent bulbs with four comparable 23-watt compact fluorescent bulbs. ENERGY STAR® - labeled compact fluorescents work well almost anywhere incandescent bulbs are in use, and can save you a significant amount of money over their lifetime.

Energy efficient ideas

Get the most energy-efficient air conditioner you can afford. Look for a SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating) 14 or higher on central systems and the Energy Star label on room units. Savings will show up on your next electric bill.

Check and clean filters. Cleaning and replacing air conditioning filters monthly allows the system to run more efficiently.

Save up to 10 percent a year with a programmable thermostat that automatically adjusts the temperature by 10 to 15 percent for the hours that the house is unoccupied.

Ceiling and other fans provide additional cooling and better circulation so you can raise the thermostat and cut down on air conditioning costs. Energy Star-certified ceiling fans do even better, moving air up to 20 percent more efficiently than conventional models, and those that include energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are up to 50 percent more efficient than those with incandescent lighting. The CFLs last six to 10 times longer than traditional lighting and generate 70 percent less heat.

Make sure ceiling fans are blowing down. Most fans have a switch to change the fan direction. Make sure ceiling fans are blowing downward (in a counter-clockwise direction) to send air past your body.

Sufficient insulation can increase your comfort and reduce your cooling costs up to 30 percent. Start with the attic – which can reach temperatures of 115 degrees – followed by exterior and basement walls, floors, and crawl spaces. Insulate and seal attic air ducts, too.

Plug energy leaks by caulking and weather stripping all seams, cracks and

openings to the outside. You can save 10 percent or more on energy bills by reducing air leaks.

High-performance Energy Star windows can reduce average cooling costs. With efficient windows, homeowners can invest in smaller, less expensive cooling systems while maintaining indoor comfort.

Run appliances with large energy use late in the evening. Use the dishwasher and clothes washer late in the evening. When used during the day, these appliances produce additional heat, causing your air conditioner to work harder.

Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs, which use one-fourth the energy and last up to seven times longer. Replace halogen lamp fixtures with compact fluorescent lamp that use 60-80 percent less energy, produce more light, and stay cooler.

For outdoor lighting, consider combining energy-efficient light bulbs with motion sensors to provide security while reducing energy use. Indoors, use dimmers, timers, or occupancy/motion detectors or timers

Cut utility bills by up to 30 percent with air conditioners, major appliances, lighting, and electronics that have the Energy Star label – the government's symbol for energy efficiency.

Raise your thermostat to 78°. This is the number one way to conserve energy. When you are away from home for more than eight hours, raise the thermostat setting and you can expect to see a 1% savings for each degree of setback. This will reduce the amount of energy used to cool your home while you're away. You can learn more about your thermostat online by visiting the U.S. Department of Energy website.

In April, Austin Utilities asked the community to join in the effort to *Switch & Save with CFLs* by signing pledge cards. We are very pleased to announce that 505 customers made the pledge! We also had customers bring in CFL bulbs to be recycled. The next time you purchase a CFL, remember to take advantage of our CFL rebate and recycle programs. You can find information on all Austin Utilities rebate programs on our website at www.austinutilities.com

RE•fest

A Celebration of Green
Living & Clean Energy

SAVE THE DATE

September 18th

**Riverland
Community
College
Austin, Minnesota**

Austin Utilities
400 4th St NE
Austin, MN 55912
507-433-8886
507-433-5045 (fax)
talk2au@austinutilities.com

Website:
www.austinutilities.com
Newsletter staff:
Roxann Gilbertson

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