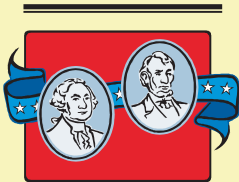




February
2012

Mark your calendars to attend the Austin Home & Vacation Show March 23rd – 25th Packer Arena.

Watch for more information on Austin Utilities booth in the March newsletter.



Austin Utilities Office will be closed Monday, Feb. 20th in observance of President's Day

Connections

Strengthening our Community...

one customer at a time!

Rebate of the month

Because we all benefit when we conserve and save

January — Electronic Hearth

Buying a new fireplace or fireplace insert this year, consider purchasing one with an electronic ignition hearth. They are easy to use, they provide a cleaner more natural look, and there's no continuous flame that can cost as much as \$100 per year. Also, Austin Utilities Gas Customers can take advantage of our \$75 Electronic ignition hearth rebate. (Must be on-demand /and/ sealed combustion or direct vent units to qualify.) Visit austinutilities.com for more information.

February—Water Heaters

Don't wait for your water heater to go out before buying a new one. Plan for a water heater replacement by knowing the size you need and where to buy one in advance. This will save you time and money and before you purchase a new water heater, make sure it qualifies for a rebate!

Austin Utilities Gas customers qualify for Conserve & Save rebates when purchasing and installing gas water heaters that meet minimum efficiency requirements. For example: a gas water heater with an energy factor of .62 qualified for a \$50 rebate. Visit austinutilities.com to learn more about both tank and tankless water heater rebates.

Attention: Business Customers

Since January 2010, Austin Utilities has paid business customers rebates totaling almost \$600,000 for investing in energy efficient equipment. The result is an annual electric savings of 5,252 Megawatt hours (MWh) and natural gas savings of 458 Mcf. This provided the same environmental benefit as planting 3,235 acres of trees.

Was your organization one of the fortunate recipients?

Helping our customers become more efficient is a win-win situation. Reducing your business' energy consumption lowers your energy bill, which delays the need for new generating resources, keeping future

electric rates low, and making our community a little greener by reducing generation emissions.

We want to do a better job at making sure your business receives information on energy saving opportunities from Austin Utilities in a timely manner by sending you occasional informational emails. Register your business information and the person you want evaluating your company's energy use and strategies for managing energy consumption on our website located at: <http://www.austinutilities.com/pages/business.asp>.

Don't miss out on another opportunity to save your business energy and money. **Fill out the on-line survey today!**

Tips to stay warm during the winter months

Take Advantage of Heat from the Sun

Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

Cover Drafty Windows

Use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the cold winter months. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.

Adjust the Temperature

When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. While you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10°-15° for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature.

Find and Seal Leaks

Seal the air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes (plumbing penetrations), gaps around chimneys and recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Add caulk or weather-stripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.

Maintain Your Heating Systems

Find out what maintenance is required to keep your heating system operating efficiently. Schedule service

for your heating system. Replace the furnace filter once a month or as needed.

Reduce Heat Loss from the Fireplace

Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is going. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney. When you use the fireplace, reduce heat loss by opening dampers in the bottom of the firebox (if provided) or open the nearest window slightly approximately 1 inch and close doors leading into the room. Lower the thermostat setting to between 50°- 55°F.

If you never use your fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue.

If you do use the fireplace, install tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room.

Check the seal on the fireplace flue damper and make it as snug as possible. Add caulking around the fireplace hearth.

Purchase grates made of C-shaped metal tubes to draw cool room air into the fireplace and circulate warm air back into the room.

Lower Your Water Heating Costs

Water heating can account for 14%-25% of the energy consumed in your home.

Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120° F). You'll not only save energy, you'll avoid scalding your hands.

In compliance with the Code of Federal regulation #49, Part 192.16, Austin Utilities must notify each customer who owns buried natural gas piping after the meter.

1. Austin Utilities does not maintain the customer's buried piping.

2. If the customer's buried piping is not maintained, it may be subject to the potential hazards of corrosion and leakage.

3. Buried gas piping should be:

(a) periodically inspected for leaks.

(b) periodically inspected for corrosion if the piping is metallic.

(c) repaired if any unsafe condition is discovered.

4. When excavating near buried gas piping, the piping should be located in advance, and the excavation done by hand.

5. Austin Utilities, plumbing and heating contractors, can assist in locating, inspecting, and repairing the customer's buried piping. Customers with buried natural gas piping should feel free to contact Austin Utilities at 433-8886 or visit our website at: www.austinutilities.com

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