



an Enfinity Energy partner



Connections

Strengthening our Community...

one customer at a time!

March 2010

**Austin
Utilities
Office
will be closed
Friday,
April 2nd
in observance
of
Good Friday**

**See you at the
Austin Home &
Vacation Show**

Make plans to stop by Austin Utilities booth at the Annual Austin Home & Vacation Show on March 19th, 20th, & 21st at the Riverside Arena.

Come see what's new for 2010!

Bring your Home Energy Report and receive a **Free LED night light** (Available while supplies last).

Ways to save energy and your money

Turn down your thermostat to 68 degrees. For every degree you lower your heat in the 60-degree to 70-degree range, you'll save an average of 3 percent on heating costs. Wear warm clothing like a sweater and set your thermostat to 68 degrees or lower during the day and evening, health permitting.

Replace or clean furnace filters once a month. Dirty filters restrict airflow and increase energy use. Keeping your furnace clean, lubricated and properly adjusted will reduce energy use, saving up to 5 percent of heating costs.

Reduce hot water temperature. Set your water heater to the "normal" setting or 120°, unless the owner's manual for your dishwasher requires a higher setting. Savings are 7-11 percent of water heating costs.

Use cold water when washing clothes. About 16 percent of an average home energy bill goes just for heating water. Most detergents clean well in cooler temperatures. Keep clothes dryer free of lint and inspect dryer vent to be sure it is free of obstructions.

Let the sun in. Open drapes and shades on the sunny side of your house to help warm the home during the day. Close drapes and shades at night to cut heat loss.

Remove window air conditioning units for the winter. If you have a window air conditioning unit, remove it for the winter months to prevent heat from escaping through and around the unit. If it cannot be moved, buy a cover to prevent drafts.

Close your flue. Always make sure the fireplace damper seals tightly and remains closed

except when a fire is burning or smoldering in the fireplace. Also shut fire place doors if installed.

Use your ceiling fan. Ceiling fans help keep you comfortable not only in the summer but in the winter as well. Reversing the direction of the blades pushes warm air down into the room. Warm air collects near the ceiling. So, during the winter, turn the fan to "reverse" to circulate the warm air without blowing air down and cooling you in the process. A ceiling fan, running in reverse, gently mixes the air, and helps move the warm air down where you are. During the summer, on the other hand, turn it to "forward" to create a wind-chill effect as the air moves against your skin and cools you. When purchasing new ceiling fans, consider an Energy Star model for optimum fan and motor efficiency.

Put your computer to sleep. Activate "sleep" features on computers and office equipment that power down when the equipment is not in use for a while. Turn off equipment during longer periods of non-use to cut energy costs and improve longevity.

Don't waste hot water. Adjust load size on washer to fit actual load. Set small loads to low water level to save water and energy.

Flip the switch. Turn off all appliances and equipment when not in use: lights, TVs, VCRs or DVDs, computers, other electronics.

Keep vent space clean & clear. Make sure heating registers, vents and cold air returns are not blocked by draperies, furniture or rugs. These should also be cleaned regularly with a vacuum or a broom.

CONSERVE & SAVE

Austin Utilities will be hosting Conserve & Save at Home workshops in Austin and Owatonna. The workshop will teach participants common sense ways to decrease energy use and save money on their utility bills. Workshop participants will be able to sign up for the Conserve & Save House Call, a comprehensive energy audit program; a \$300 value that participants will receive for a co-pay of only \$25, normally \$50. The Conserve & Save House Call will include a blower door test and installation of low-cost materials. Participants will also receive information on innovative financing, rebates, incentives, and stimulus funding.

Attend one of the FREE Workshops*

Wednesday, April 21st, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Owatonna Senior High School
OR
Monday, April 26th, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
JC Hormel Nature Center

**Childcare provided at both workshops*

Reserve your spot today!
Call Dave Thompson, Austin Utilities, 437-0822 or
email DaveT@austinutilities.com



Call Gopher State One Call
two working
days before you dig to identify
underground utilities
in your area.

Anyone digging in Minnesota must call before digging.
This is a FREE service

It's Safe — It's Smart — It's the LAW
Minnesota Toll Free Number
1-800-252-1166

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 at our website www.austinutilities.com for further assistance.

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