Lowering electricity costs using AC load controls

According to Minnesota Public Radio, this summer was the fourth hottest summer on record. Hot summer temperatures greatly affect electricity costs. Sixty-five percent of the cost of electricity is based on the cost of purchasing power. One cost variable is when our system peaks. That “peak” sets a portion of purchased power costs for the year. Lowering the peak helps lower rates and utility bills for all customers.

To help control system peaks, we install AC load control devices outside on your central air unit. The device helps reduce demand for electricity during peak times by only cycling the compressor on your AC off for a portion of each hour. It is also known as peak shaving, which is a practice that saves customers energy and money.

From June 1 to September 30, Austin Utilities initiated 16 load control events – which was 13% of the total days during that timeframe. The average amount of time when load control was initiated was three hours and 43 minutes. Load control, the Energy Hero Program, and generation powered by a few local businesses - all contribute to reducing our peak. If you feel your central air unit isn’t keeping up like it should, we have Conserve and Save™ rebates for new equipment and A/C Clean and Tune Rebates.

Thank you, Energy Heroes!

As we experienced above average temperatures, this summer, these businesses participated in our Energy Hero Campaign. The program is an opportunity for local businesses to lower their electric usage during peak demands. AU thanks these customers for participating in the program for 2023.

Tom Baudler retires from AU Board of Commissioners

Tom Baudler, long standing AU Commissioner, retired from the Board on November 21, 2023. Tom started as a Commissioner with Austin Utilities on October 12, 1999. He replaced his father, Richard C. Baudler, who himself was a long-term commissioner and served from 1959 to 1999. This will be the first time in 64 years that a member of the Baudler family will not represent our customers as a commissioner.

During his career, Tom has seen many changes in metering technology, customer service enhancements and most notably, the building of our central facility in 2016.

“Tom will be missed on the board. He was on the board when I arrived and has been a strong advocate for the customer from the beginning of his long board tenure. I appreciate Tom’s careful balance on board governance and allowing management to run the company. I wish Tom well in his future endeavors.” – Mark Nibaur, General Manager
**Pete joined AU in the summer of 2018 as the Warehouse Materials Coordinator. He had worked as a prototype machinist and purchasing agent for a local machine shop before taking the position. Pete is involved in purchasing and organizing the large supply of parts and equipment AU crews need to maintain and repair Austin’s utility infrastructure. Being able to interact with employees in all the different departments is something he really enjoys.**

Austin Utilities Employees handed out candy to over 250 trick or treaters and collected food donations for the Salvation Army during their Trick or Treat Food Drive on Halloween.

Pete has been married to his wife, Char, for 23 years. They have two daughters, Paige is 21 and Cara is 18. The Klingfus family still resides on the family farm where Pete was born and raised. He enjoys motorsports, snowmobiles, motorcycles, and repairing almost anything. Spending time with his family camping, boating and cruising the Caribbean Ocean also makes his list of hobbies. Pete says despite not being able to swim, his plans for the future involve winning the lottery and sailing the seven seas.

**Round Up a Little, Help Out a Lot!**

Purchase LED Holiday Lighting and get rebates up to $12 per string

Recycle your old lighting at AU - bins in lobby

**What's the Cost of Lighting Up the Holidays?**

**Outdoor Inflatables**

Becoming more popular every year, they run about 200 watts for 24-hours a day during the month of December costing you just under $19.00 (each!)

**Indoor Pre-lit Trees**

A 7.5 foot tall tree with 650 incandescent mini-bulbs uses about 300 watts. On an average of 12-hours a day during the month of December it will end up costing you just under $14.00

**Outdoor String Lights**

On average, a modest display of 10 strands of incandescent bulbs would use about 151 kWh and cost $19.31 for the full season. (Using LED lights will reduce that to 18 kWh of energy costing $2.27!)

**97 Pounds of Food Collected During Trick or Treat Food Drive**

Austin Utilities Employees handed out candy to over 250 trick or treaters and collected food donations for the Salvation Army during their Trick or Treat Food Drive on Halloween.

AU’s Meter Buddy & a Trick or Treater

Taylor Arndt, Meter Buddy & Jay Kohnke

Melissa Swenson & Lori Espe of the Salvation Army
Pete Klingfus
Materials Coordinator

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Round Up a Little, Help Out a Lot!
Give a gift all year long by setting up a HeatShare automatic monthly round-up. Your donation stays right here in our community to help neighbors in need. HeatShare is a voluntary program administered by the Salvation Army. It helps those in need survive our long winters by providing funds for heating bills and heating-related repairs. Don’t want to round-up, but still want to contribute? Visit our lobby or call us at 507-433-8886 and make a one-time donation.

Give the Gift that Never Gets Returned
Gifting a utility payment is a great way to support a friend or family member who may be struggling right now.

Your donation stays right here in our community to help neighbors in need. HeatShare is a voluntary program administered by the Salvation Army. It helps those in need survive our long winters by providing funds for heating bills and heating-related repairs.

Don’t want to round-up, but still want to contribute? Visit our lobby or call us at 507-433-8886 and make a one-time donation.

Employee Spotlight
INWITTS

4. When excavating near buried gas piping, the piping should be located in advance, and the excavation done by hand.
5. Austin Utilities and 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. You can also find information at www.austinutilities.com.