

# Currents

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## KEEP COSTS DOWN AS TEMPERATURES RISE!

With the weather warming up, it's important to keep your home cool and energy efficient. There are simple and cost effective ways to keep costs down and your home comfortable at the same time.

- Set your thermostat to cool at 76 degrees or higher when it's warm. If you have a programmable thermostat, consider adjusting it according to your schedule. When no one is home throughout the day, raise the thermostat a few degrees to save energy and money on your bill.
- If you're in the market for a portable or window air conditioner, buy an Energy Star® model. It will use at least 10 percent less energy than regular models.
- Close drapes on the sunny side of the house. Awnings and exterior shades are also a good idea on south and west facing windows.
- Plant leafy deciduous trees like oaks and maples on the south and west sides of the house. The shade they provide can cut cooling costs dramatically. But be sure not to plant them under power lines, and don't forget to call 811 two business days before you dig.
- For a quicker solution add a lattice screen with a vine plant on it. Make sure the screen is far enough from the house wall to keep the plants off the building.
- Use fans as an inexpensive alternative to air conditioning.
- To promote natural cross ventilation, open windows high on one side of the house, and low on the other side in the early morning or evening. Close them in the morning before it warms up. But remember safety is the top priority, so block access to open windows if there's a chance someone might fall through that opening. Screens are not strong enough to prevent a fall or unwanted entry.
- Keep lights off when possible.

## LIGHT LINES

### Energy Counselors Can Help

For more tips on reducing wasted energy when it's warm outside, our Energy Counselors can help. Summer is a perfect time to work on weatherizing your house for winter or upgrading inefficient systems in your home.

Before you get started, call 360-992-3355 Monday through Friday during business hours and one of our trained energy counselors will give you an objective opinion about which energy-saving measures can, and those that probably won't, save you money.



### CONTACT US

PHONE .....360-992-3000

QUICK PAY .....360-992-3400

REPORT POWER OUTAGES

.....360-992-8000

EMAIL ... mailbox@clarkpud.com

WEBSITE... clarkpublicutilities.com



## Give your energy bill a vacation



If your summer plans include an extended vacation, make sure your home isn't wasting energy while you're away. Here are some tips to reduce your home's energy use if you're planning on being away for three days or more.

**COOLING:** Turn off – or at least set to a warmer temperature – central air conditioners and heat pumps. If there will be pets staying at home with someone checking in periodically, be sure to consider their safety and make sure the house stays at a comfortable temperature.

**WATER HEATING:** Turn off electric water heaters at the breaker box and set natural gas or propane water heaters to the “pilot” or “vacation” setting. Then leave yourself a reminder to turn the water heater back on so you'll have hot water when you need it!

**ELECTRONICS:** Even while not in use, electronics still use small amounts of electricity when plugged in. Before you take off, unplug electronics such as TVs, DVD players, computers, cable boxes, chargers and printers.

**LIGHTING:** Set a couple lights on timers. This is good for home security and if you use LED bulbs it will add less than a penny to your energy bill for every 10 hours each light is on.

## What's new in Heat Pump Water Heaters?



The next time you are in the market for a water heater, consider purchasing a Heat Pump Water Heater (HPWH) instead. While they do cost more than a traditional water heater, HPWH's are more energy efficient, keeping monthly costs down.

HPWH's work like a refrigerator, but in reverse: While a refrigerator pushes heat from inside the unit out to the surrounding air, a HPWH uses fans and an evaporator to pull warmth from the surrounding air, then transfers it to water in the storage tank.

HPWH's are 30 percent more efficient than a regular water heater so they cost less to run. Clark Public Utilities offers a rebate up to \$300 for qualified units.

If you are interested in purchasing a HPWH for your home, speak to one of our energy counselors at 360-992-3355 or use the interactive HPWH selector tool on our website.

## Free water at the fair



Join in the fun this summer and come see us at the Clark County Fair, held August 3 through 12. We will be serving up free ice water at our booth in the exhibition hall. If you need a quick cool down, or would like information about your local utility programs and services, stop by, have a sip and say hello!