

Beat the summer heat and save energy with tips from PPL Electric Utilities

Stay comfortable this summer without losing your cool over higher electricity use by using some simple low-cost or no-cost measures to save energy.

PPL Electric Utilities customers can track their own energy usage by setting up an online account profile by visiting www.pplelectric.com and clicking on “myPPL.”

The company also provides tips, tools and financial incentives for its customers to take action to save energy, save money and still keep cool in the summertime. PPL E-power rebates are available for things like new central and room air conditioners and easy-to-install programmable thermostats at www.pplelectric.com/e-power. □

“Summer heat brings some of the highest demands for electricity of the year. Knowing some simple energy-saving tips can save you money and make keeping cool a no-sweat effort,” said Thomas C. Stathos, manager of Customer Programs and Services for PPL Electric Utilities.

Star power. Look for ENERGY STAR models when shopping for a new central air-conditioning system or room air conditioner. They are the most energy-efficient on the market, and operating savings over the life of the appliance will offset any higher upfront cost. For central air conditioners, look for a seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) of 14.5 or higher and make sure your central air conditioning system is the right size for your home. For room air-conditioners, look for a SEER of at least 10.8.

Made in the shade. Draw the blinds, close the curtains and plant shade trees to block the summer sun and heat. You can save on your cooling costs for every degree you raise your thermostat setting. Only use the indoor lights and lamps that are necessary as well.

It’s a breeze. For those without air conditioning, ceiling, window and portable fans are the least expensive ways to stay comfortable. Try opening doors and windows on opposite sides of your home when it’s breezy, but not humid, to create cross ventilation. The breeze can keep you just as comfortable at temperatures 4 to 6 degrees warmer. If you have air conditioning, using fans at the same time is even more efficient and allows you to raise your thermostat setting a few degrees. That can save as much as 10 percent on your cooling costs.

Smart appliance use. Limit use of the kitchen stove, dishwasher and clothes dryer during warmer days. These appliances generate heat and humidity inside the home. Use the microwave or cook outside on hot days to eliminate the additional indoor heat.

All in good time. On warmer days, turning your thermostat lower than usual won’t cool your warm home any faster. Cooling will happen at the same rate, no matter what the setting. A lower setting will just make your unit run longer. On days with temperatures above 90 degrees, you actually should raise the thermostat setting to 76-78 degrees. The difference between the outdoor heat and indoors will still be comfortable and you’ll save on cooling costs.

Location, location, location. Be careful what you place near your central air-conditioning thermostat. Lamps, televisions and anything that creates heat near the thermostat can cause it to read a higher temperature than the true room temperature.

Seal the deal. Make sure any gaps along the sides of your room air conditioners are sealed with foam insulation. Your air conditioner has to work harder if cool air is leaving your house.

Fridge visits. Try to reduce the number of times you or members of your household open the refrigerator door.

During the summer, with children off from school, that can be a challenge. Opening the door often can waste energy and cost extra money. And keep in mind a full refrigerator requires less energy to keep cool than one that's more empty.

For more energy-saving tips, visit PPL Electric Utilities at www.pplelectric.com/e-power or the Alliance to Save Energy at www.ase.org.

PPL Electric Utilities, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL), provides electric delivery service to 1.4 million customers in 29 counties of eastern and central Pennsylvania and has consistently ranked among the best companies for customer service in the United States. More information is available at www.pplelectric.com.

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