

MPUA PUBLIC OUTREACH RESOURCES – June 2014

Tipsheet: SUMMER COOLING – ENERGY SAVING TIPS

- *Please carefully to determine if you would prefer to use individual sections/excerpts, or reorder for your utility's custom needs*
- *Feel free to use individual sections or points to develop your own custom media commentaries.*

ENERGY SAVING TIPS: SUMMER COOLING SEASON

Use Your Windows to Gain Cool Air and Keep Out Heat

- Close drapes, shades and blinds during the day to block the sun's heat.
- When outside air cools to comfortable temperatures at night, consider turning off your cooling system and opening windows while sleeping if it is not uncomfortably humid. When you wake in the morning, shut windows and blinds to capture the cool air.

Use Your Thermostat to Save Money

- Set your thermostat as high as comfortably possible in the summer. The smaller the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be.
- Keep your house warmer than normal when you are away, and lower the thermostat setting to the highest comfortable setting only when you are at home and need cooling. A programmable thermostat can make it easier to set your temperature.
- Avoid setting your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner. It will not cool your home any faster, and it could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.
- Avoid placing lamps or TV sets near a thermostat. The thermostat may sense heat from these appliances, which can cause an air conditioner to run longer than needed.

Use Fans and Ventilation Strategies to Cool Your Home

- If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4°F with no reduction in comfort. If you purchase a new ceiling fan, check ENERGY STAR listings for energy efficient models.
- Turn off ceiling fans when you leave the room. Remember that fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a wind chill effect.
- When you shower or take a bath, use a bathroom fan to remove heat and humidity from your home. Your laundry room might also benefit from spot ventilation. Make sure bathroom and kitchen fans are vented to the outside (not just to the attic).

Keep Your Cooling System Running Efficiently

- Make sure air conditioners are well maintained. Poorly maintained units use more energy to do less work.
- The most important maintenance to improve the efficiency of your air conditioner is to routinely replace or clean its filter. Clean or replace your air conditioning system's filter or filters every month or two during the cooling season. Clogged, dirty filters block normal airflow and reduce a system's efficiency significantly. Replacing a dirty, clogged filter with a clean one can lower your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5 to 15 percent. For central air conditioners, filters are generally located somewhere along the return duct's length. Common filter locations are in walls, ceilings, furnaces, or in the air conditioner itself. Room air

conditioners have a filter mounted in the grill that faces into the room. Some types of filters are reusable; others must be replaced. Filters may need more frequent attention if the air conditioner is in constant use, is subjected to dusty conditions, or you have fur-bearing pets in the house.

- Vacuum registers regularly to remove any dust buildup. Make sure that furniture and other objects are not blocking the airflow through your registers.

Don't Heat Your Home with Appliances and Lighting

- On hot days avoid using the oven by cooking on the stove, using a microwave or even using the grill outside.
- Install efficient lighting that runs cooler. Only about 10 to 15 percent of the electricity that incandescent lights consume results in light—the rest is turned into heat.
- Take advantage of daylight instead of artificial lighting, but avoid allowing direct sunlight to stream through windows during the day.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes. Consider air drying both dishes and clothing.
