

Horizon Utilities reminds customers to be conscious of electricity use during heat wave

Simple tips to help your pocketbook and the environment

(HAMILTON/ST. CATHARINES, ON) July 21, 2011 – Air conditioners will be humming today as local temperatures are predicted to reach record-breaking highs. As the use of air conditioning increases, so does the demand on the province's electricity grid. Horizon Utilities encourages its customers to take action to manage their electricity use during the current heat wave.

Summer tips to conserve energy and manage electricity costs

- **Be mindful of when you use electricity:** Take advantage of [Time-of-Use rates](#) by shifting non-essential electricity consumption (dishwasher, laundry, etc.) to off-peak hours. (During the summer, Time-of-Use rates are off-peak from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. on weekdays and at all times during the weekend and on statutory holidays).
- **Fans:** Use ceiling and/or stationary fans, which cost only a few pennies an hour to operate, to supplement or replace your air conditioner. Set ceiling fans to direct air flow down during the summer. The furnace fan in circulate mode can balance temperature throughout the home.
- **Furnace Filters:** Air filters need to be checked once a month. Dirty air filters restrict air flow and increase energy consumption. Filters must be cleaned or replaced as necessary.
- **Maintain the Ducts and Vents:** Make sure furniture does not obstruct air conditioning vents. Close off unused rooms and close vents in those rooms. You may want to have a specialist check for holes or leaks in the ducts. Duct tape can offer a temporary repair, but you will want to have any holes or leaks properly fixed.
- **Programmable Thermostats:** Use a programmable thermostat to raise the temperature in your home when you leave for the day and lower it before you return. Sign up for *peaksaver*® and receive a FREE programmable thermostat. Register online at www.horizonutilities.com.
- **Thermostat Settings:** Typical thermostat setting in summer is 26° C (78 °F). Setting your thermostat lower does not cool your home any faster and wastes energy.
- **Blinds and Curtains:** Close blinds and curtains to block out the sun's heat.
- **Laundry:** Hang clothes outside to dry.
- **Cooking:** Use a microwave or barbecue outside instead of using an oven.
- **Phantom Power:** All electrical loads contribute to heat in the home including lighting on during the day. Save energy and reduce heat gain by turning off all non-essential electrical devices when not in use (TV, computer, etc.).
- **Check for Household Leaks:** Make sure air isn't escaping through unnecessary openings such as fireplace dampers, doors and windows. Take a good look at the seals around doors and windows to see if weather stripping or caulk needs to be applied.

More energy conservation tips are available at www.horizonutilities.com.

About Horizon Utilities Corporation

Horizon Utilities is one of the largest municipally owned electricity distribution companies in Ontario, providing electricity and related utility services to 237,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. Horizon Utilities' employees are committed to delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, providing unparalleled customer value, and helping to create a culture of energy conservation in Ontario.

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