

Hot tips for a cool summer

The calendar says it's not summer for another month, yet, with the warm weather on this past three-day weekend, people are starting to think about backyard cookouts, camping, and other ways to enjoy leisure time. But, because summer always places the greatest demand on our electric system, it's also a good time to begin thinking about ways to reduce our energy use.

Prudent consumers have always looked for new and better ideas to save energy. Today, there are more compelling reasons than ever to use energy wisely and conserve it where possible.

First, we all want our dollars to go farther while the economy is struggling. Being energy efficient can lower bills. Second, and especially important for the environment, is the role that conservation can play in fighting global warming. Nothing is cleaner than the power plant that doesn't need to run because energy is being saved through reduced demand.

Conserving energy is the first and easiest step toward a cleaner future, and there are many actions all of us can take to ease the strain on our pocketbooks and the environment.

With the hot weather nearly here, now is the time to take advantage of practical energy-saving steps. Here are a few suggestions:

- Use ceiling fans and set them to rotate in a counter-clockwise motion. They make people feel about four degrees cooler than the actual temperature.

- Install a programmable thermostat and set it to 78 degrees or higher if you use ceiling fans. You can save 3-to-5% on your air conditioning cost for each degree you raise the thermostat.

- Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and use 75% less electricity.

Incandescent bulbs lose 90% of their energy as heat. Keep in mind that CFLs are especially handy in hard-to-reach fixtures and won't need to be replaced for about five years.

- Do laundry in the evening when demand for electricity is lower, and wash full loads in cold water. Use the dishwasher at night as well and turn it off before the dry cycle or use the air dry feature if your machine has one.

- Turn off power

sources. Electronic devices draw power when they are in standby mode or turned off but still plugged in. Plug them into power strips and turn off the power switch when the items are not in use.

Being energy smart leaves more money for summer fun and helps our planet as well.

For more tips to save energy and money, check www.pseg.com/customer/home/save.

What's your view? Please let us know at Opinion@PSEG.com.



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