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 www.coastepa.com

**Where our members
 have the power**

CEO's message

More cold weather means more high bills

If most of you are like me, you think it is high time for spring to bring warmer temperatures and sunshine.



Robert Occhi

weather.

After such a cold January, I had hoped February would give us a little relief from the cold, but temperatures remained at or below freezing for a prolonged period of time, making heaters work overtime. When heaters work hard, bills will be higher. There is not much we can do about the weather, but there are some steps you can take to control your energy use that may

help keep your bill in check.

I invite you all to visit www.coastepa.com. Our Web site is such a great resource to our members. The following are just some of the things you can do on our site:

- Learn about Time of Use (TOU) rates. This rate is an alternative to our traditional rate and allows members to save if they use energy in off-peak times. You will probably have to make a few lifestyle changes but those changes could help you save a bundle. Some of our members are already sending in great reports about how much they have saved by changing not how much energy they used but when they used that energy. Look for upcoming

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stories detailing how they were able to save with TOU rates. TOU rates are a pretty revolutionary option in our

Coast Electric's employee spotlight

We want you to get to know Coast Electric's employees. The men and women we feature each month are your neighbors, your friends and the people behind our promise to bring you the most reliable, affordable electric service possible. These employees take pride in serving you, our members, and we honor them for the job they do.



Donovan Bell

This month, our spotlight is on Maintenance Technician Donovan Bell. Donovan has served Coast Electric and its members for eight years. As a maintenance technician, Donovan is part of the crew that ensures Coast Electric's buildings and grounds are cared for. Donovan's job helps guarantee things at Coast Electric's facilities are running smoothly and that day-to-day operations can be carried out seamlessly. With his friendly demeanor and dedication to excellent service, Donovan is a great co-worker and an asset to the company.

state, and I believe many of our members could greatly benefit from making the switch.

- View our new Touchstone Energy "Together We Save" materials that provide simple solutions to managing energy use and costs. Nothing suggested will cost you lots of money, and you won't need a professional to make any of the recommended changes to your home. You may just need a tube of caulk and a greater awareness of how your behaviors can affect costs.
- Check out our interactive calculators. See how bumping your heat setting

from 70 to 68 degrees or sealing a leaky window can help you save.

- Get your kids interested in energy

efficiency with Kids Korner. Saving can be easier if the whole family is in on the act.

- Download one of our energy efficiency guides or publications. There are several available.
- Learn how you can get one of our energy efficiency experts to visit your home and conduct a free energy audit and make savings suggestions specific to your house.
- Learn about our Comfort Advantage program to build your home to our efficiency standards.
- Find phone numbers of local agencies that can assist you in paying your bill.

None of us want high bills and the financial burden they cause, but if we work to manage or change our patterns of use, we all have the potential to save.

Q & A with your Coast Electric energy efficiency expert

Q: What appliances other than heating and cooling systems can reduce my annual electric use?

A: Water heaters. Heating water accounts for approximately 15 percent of a home's energy use. High efficiency water heaters use 10 to 50 percent less energy than standard models, saving homeowners money on their utility bills. Actual energy savings from high efficiency water heaters depend on family size, heater location, and the size and placement of water pipes.

Understanding high efficiency water heater technologies

- **Storage (Tank) Water Heaters.** Water is kept hot and ready for use at all times in insulated storage tanks with capacities ranging from 20 to 80 gallons. One drawback of these units is the energy used to keep the water hot at all times, otherwise known as "standby losses."
- **Heat Pump Water Heaters.** Heat pumps transfer energy from the surrounding air to water in a storage tank. These water heaters are much more efficient than electric resistance

water heaters and most effective in warm climates with long cooling seasons.

- **Solar Water Heating.** While the initial purchase price of solar water heaters is high compared to standard models, they can be cost effective. That is because the sun's energy is harnessed to reduce operating costs up to 90 percent. Solar water heating systems require a conventional water heater as a backup water heating source to ensure hot water is available when solar energy is not.

And...

Even if you aren't going to buy a new water heater, you can save a lot of energy and money with your existing system by following a few simple suggestions.

- **Conserve Water.** Your biggest opportunity for savings is to use less hot water. In addition to saving energy (and money), cutting down on hot water use helps conserve dwindling water supplies, which in some parts of the country is a critical problem. A family of four each showering five minutes a day can use about 700 gallons per week—a three-year drinking water supply for one person! Water-conserving showerheads and faucet aerators can cut hot water use in

half. That family of four can save 14,000 gallons of water a year and the energy required to heat it.

- **Insulate Your Existing Water Heater.** Installing an insulating jacket is one of the most effective do-it-yourself energy-saving projects, especially if your water heater is in an unheated space. The insulating jacket will reduce standby heat loss—heat lost through the walls of the tank—by 25–40 percent, saving 4–9 percent on your water heating bills. Water heater insulation jackets are widely available in most hardware stores. Always follow directions carefully when installing an insulation jacket.

- **Insulate Hot Water Pipes.** Insulating your hot water pipes will reduce losses as the hot water is flowing to your faucet and, more importantly, it will reduce standby losses when the tap is turned off and then back on within an hour or so. A great deal of energy and water is wasted waiting for the hot water to reach the tap. Even when pipes are insulated, the water in the pipes will eventually cool, but it stays warmer much longer than it would if the pipes weren't insulated.
- **Lower the Water Heater Temperature.** Keep your water heater thermostat set at the lowest temperature



This month's question is answered by our Senior Residential Energy Representative for Pearl River County, Scott White.

that provides you with sufficient hot water. For most households, 120°F water is fine (about midway between the "low" and "medium" setting). Each 10°F reduction in water temperature will generally save 3–5 percent on your water heating costs. When you are going away on vacation, you can turn the thermostat down to the lowest possible setting, or turn the water heater off altogether for additional savings.

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Visit <http://www.coastepa.com/coopconnections.aspx> and see just how much you can save!

Tip of the Month

A significant amount of the average home energy bill pays for heating water. Take five-minute showers instead of baths and make sure your water heater is set no higher than 120° F.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



DON'T FORGET

Daylight saving time begins March 14

Set your clocks ahead one hour, as we spring forward!