

Smart, simple energy-saving tips to beat the heat

Easy actions you can take to save electricity during the heat wave

Portland, Ore. – As summer temperatures heat up again, the Bonneville Power Administration is sharing simple tips that can help consumers stay cool and save energy.

“There are a lot of easy things folks can do to stay cool and not get hit with a big electric bill,” said Richard Génécé, vice president of [Energy Efficiency](#) for BPA.

Since 1980, BPA and Northwest publicly owned electric utilities have helped homeowners, businesses, industrial facilities, farmers and irrigators collectively save about 1,500 average megawatts of electricity or about \$955 million on their electric bills.

These 10 tried-and-true tips can help you trim your energy use this summer.

1. **Circulate.** If you don't have air conditioning, use portable or ceiling fans to move air throughout your home. Even a mild breeze can make you feel 3 to 4 degrees cooler.
2. **Ventilate.** In the morning or evening, open a window high on the cool side of your house and another one low on the opposite side to promote natural cross-ventilation.
3. **Set and save.** If you have A/C, set your thermostat to 78 degrees or higher. For every degree above 75, you can save about 5 percent on your bill. And a programmable thermostat helps you avoid unnecessary cooling costs while you're away.
4. **Clean.** A new or clean air filter can reduce your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5 to 15 percent and help it operate more safely and efficiently.
5. **Clear.** Make sure your air vents aren't blocked by furniture or other items.
6. **Block the sun.** Use shades, curtains and window coverings to create an extra layer of insulation. According to the Department of Energy, medium-colored draperies can reduce heat gain by 33 percent and reflective blinds can reduce it by about 45 percent.
7. **Power down.** Turn off heat-generating devices, such as TVs, computers, stereos and lamps when you're not using them. And only wash full loads of dishes and clothes.
8. **Fire it up.** Avoid using your oven on hot days. Grill outside, cook on the stovetop or use your microwave oven instead. (Always check for local fire restrictions.)
9. **Swap your bulbs.** Changing your bulbs can reduce lighting-related heat. A standard 100-watt light bulb produces 10 percent light and 90 percent heat, but new compact fluorescents or LEDs are much cooler and cheaper to operate.
10. **Look for Energy Star®.** If you're purchasing an air conditioner, fan or appliance, choose an [Energy Star®](#)-certified model that uses less energy and is cheaper to use.

Here are a few more tips from BPA's utility customers throughout the region.

[The City of Ashland, Ore.](#), encourages night flushing. By opening windows and other vents at night, you can flush out the mass of warm air that builds up during the day. The Eugene Water & Electric Board (Ore.) shares [cooling tips](#) with its customers and reminds those keeping their windows open at night to take precautions to ensure security.

If you have a central system, [Clark Public Utilities](#), an electric and water utility that serves the Vancouver area, recommends running the fan to circulate air, especially in the early morning and evening when the outside air is cooler.

Flathead Electric in northwest Montana reminds ceiling fan owners to adjust the rotation so it's blowing downward (as opposed to upward when you want circulate heat in colder months). You can also check out Flathead's [26 Great Energy Habits to Adopt](#).

Have you looked in your attic lately? That's one of the questions [Franklin PUD](#) asks its Pasco-area customers in Washington. Without adequate ventilation, attic temperatures can exceed 140 degrees. And if you can see the wood rafters, you probably don't have enough insulation.

[Consumers Power Inc.](#), an Oregon electric cooperative serving Benton, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion and Polk counties, encourages its members to call them first for energy-saving advice.

"Sometimes little things like sealing up cracks and leaky doors and windows can make a huge difference. Other times we point our members to a ductless heat pump, which can keep them cool in summer and warm in winter," said Thomas Elzinga, energy services manager at Consumers Power.

[Central Electric Co-op](#), which serves seven counties in central and eastern Oregon, suggests planting trees on the south- and west-facing sides of your house to diffuse the hot sun before it hits your home. One of Salem Electric's [energy-saving ideas](#) is to plant trees or shrubs around your air conditioner since a shaded unit uses less electricity.

Washington's Benton PUD encourages its Kennewick-area customers to help one another. Through its [Helping Hands program](#), customers can donate to their low-income neighbors faced with high bills this summer.

The Department of Energy also offers [energy-saving tips](#) and an [infographic](#) that covers everything you need to know about home cooling.

To learn more about energy-saving upgrades, improvements and incentives, contact your local electric utility.

About BPA

The Bonneville Power Administration, headquartered in Portland, Ore., is a nonprofit federal power marketer that sells wholesale electricity from 31 federal dams and one nuclear plant to 142 Northwest electric utilities serving millions of consumers and businesses in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana and parts of California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming. BPA delivers power via more than 15,000 circuit miles of lines and 259 substations to 490 transmission customers. In all, BPA markets about a third of the electricity consumed in the Northwest and operates three-quarters of the region's high-voltage transmission grid. BPA also funds one of the largest fish and wildlife programs in the world, and, with its partners, pursues cost-effective energy savings and operational solutions that help maintain affordable, reliable and carbon-free electric power for the Northwest. www.bpa.gov