August 2022 | Volume 14, Issue 8 Published for Members of Great Lakes Energy

power talk
A SUPPLEMENT TO *MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES*

GREAT LAKES ENERGY

Cool it with care

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Here are some tips for cutting your home's energy use for summertime cooling. They'll not only help you do your part to reduce power demands on the hottest days, but they can also save you on cooling costs.

PREVENT HEAT GAIN FROM THE SUN:

Sun shining in through windows and doors warms your home like an oven. Use window coverings to keep the sun out and your home's temperature cooler.

RUN CEILING FANS:

Run ceiling fans at a fast speed in a counterclockwise direction to create a wind chill effect. Turn the fan off when you leave the room; fans cool people, not rooms.

SEAL LEAKS:

Cracks and leaks around windows, doors, and utility cutouts allow warm air to enter the home and cause your A/C unit to work harder. Seal or caulk leaks and holes.

MAINTAIN YOUR A/C UNIT:

For central air, have a professional check the unit annually. He or she will perform a proper tune-up and can spot some potential problems before they become emergencies.

Change the filter on your HVAC unit regularly all year long.

GREAT LAKES ENERGY ENERGY wise

For information about GLE's new Energy Wise program and incentives, visit gtlakes.com/energy-wise/.

USE YOUR THERMOSTAT WISELY:

Try to keep your thermostat as close to the outdoor temperature as possible. The Department of Energy recommends at least 78 degrees when you are home. Turn up the thermostat even higher when you are away to prevent your A/C unit from running unnecessarily. A programmable or smart thermostat automatically adjusts the temperature to ensure you are cooling your home when you need to.

When first turning on the air conditioner, don't turn the temperature way down to jumpstart the cooling effect. Your A/C unit doesn't work faster because the temperature is lower, but it could cause it to run longer than necessary.

BE SMART ABOUT APPLIANCES:

Only run full loads in your washer and dishwasher.

Let your dishes air-dry instead of using the heat setting. Prop the door open once the final rinse is complete for faster drying.

Cook or grill outside when you can to avoid running your stove or oven.

Buy Energy-Star certified appliances; these appliances are guaranteed to run more efficiently than non-certified ones.

Playing the waiting game

Savings aside, some home appliance habits can be adjusted to lighten the load during peak demand—typically from 3-8 p.m.—this summer. You can help by limiting or not using high-electric-demand appliances until cooler times of the day. Some top examples of high electric demand activities include doing laundry or cooking.

Take a look at how much energy some of these typical household appliances use:

- **Washing machine:** 400 – 1,400 watts
- **Electric clothes dryer:** 2,000 – 4,000 watts
- **Electric oven:** 2,000 – 5,000 watts
- **Electric cooktop burner:** 1,200 – 3,000 watts
- **Microwave oven:** 700 – 1,100 watts
- **Electric household tank water heater:** 4,500 – 5,500 watts
- **Dishwasher:** 1,200 – 2,400 watts

With a load of laundry in the washer and one in the dryer, that could be as much as 5,400 watts on top of the 3,500 watts your central air might also be using at the same time. Additionally, many of these high-demand activities, such as cooking, drying clothes, or taking a hot shower are adding heat to your home which will make your air conditioning work that much harder to keep your house cool during the hottest times of the day.

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