

Simple tips help reduce electric usage, bills

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June is the first month for which summer tiered residential electric rates are in effect for Ft Collins Utilities (FCU) customers. Households using significantly more electric energy than average will see a significant increase in their electric bills this summer compared to last summer. Fortunately, there are a number of ways for households to reduce their electricity costs, many of which are subsidized by FCU.

No-cost ways to reduce electric bills include turning lights off when not needed, setting thermostats up when no one is home, and opening windows at night to take advantage of “free cooling.”

Probably the best low-cost way to reduce electric bills is to replace incandescent lamps used more than a few hours per day with compact fluorescent or LED lamps. Many local retailers offer discounted pricing on these lamps, thanks to FCU and the Platte River Power Authority. FCU also offers a \$35 credit for recycling old, inefficient refrigerators and freezers to offset the cost of a new, more efficient unit.

For a greater investment of time and money, FCU customers can sign up for a \$60 home efficiency audit. Once this has been completed, customers are eligible for a number of rebates on equipment and other home efficiency improvements, such as whole-house fans, evaporative coolers, and attic insulation.

More information on discounts and rebates offered by FCU is available at www.fcgov.com/utilities/residential/conservation/programs-programs. The Fort Collins Sustainability Group strongly encourages people to take advantage of these programs in order to keep their electric bills low.

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