

***Saving Energy...  
It's A Family Affair***  
**(Energy-Saving Tips)**

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# *Introduction*

The Georgia Public Service Commission (GPSC) is pleased to make this publication available to customers of the investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities in Georgia (Georgia Power, Atmos Energy and Atlanta Gas Light Company).

During these times of economic hardship, it is important that each member of the family does what he or she can to help keep the utility bills manageable.

While the suggestions we offer are certainly not the only ones, these are a good place to start. If you have ideas about saving electricity or natural gas that you believe others might benefit from knowing, please share those with us for consideration in future editions of this publications.

# *It's A Family Affair!!!*

Cultivating habits that result in lowering utility bills is a family affair. From the youngest child to the eldest member of the home, each can do things that help keep utility bills low.

There are benefits to be gained by teaching the youngest family members about the importance of energy conservation, as well as, challenging teenagers and older family members to change their behaviors as it relates to energy consumption.

Lowering the utility bill can be fun! Make a game of it. Use the money saved from lowering a utility bill each month to sponsor "Family Night" – rent a movie, buy a special dessert, or any other activity the might enjoy doing together. Not only will you save money when you lower your utility bills, but you will also foster a closer relationship with the family when you make energy conservation a family affair!

# Let The Fun Begin!

Here are some tips to help lower your electric and natural gas bills. There are others you may use, but these will help you get started. NOTE: An asterisk by a measure indicates it may be used to lower both the electric and natural gas bills.

## Electric:

- Set thermostat at 78°. Turn it up between 80° and 85° when you're going to be away for more than a couple of hours.
- Close curtains facing the East in the morning (open after noon); close curtains facing the West after noon. Doing so will help keep the house cool.
- Know what you need from the refrigerator/freezer before opening the door. Leaving the door open longer than necessary will cause the temperature to rise thus requiring the unit to run longer to reach the thermostat setting.
- Set your hot water temperature at no more than 120 degrees. Don't forget to use the vacation setting when you going to be away from home three or more days.\*
- Have all appliances checked by a qualified contractor to make sure these are in proper working condition.\*
- Repair leaky hot water faucets.\*
- Decrease the amount of time spent taking a shower.\*
- Turn off the lights and television when leaving the room, especially if you don't plan to return within the next 10 or so minutes.
- Use fans (ceiling or floor) to circulate the cool air.
- Use the cold water setting on your washer to rinse clothes.\*
- Check with your provider to see whether the account is eligible for a senior citizen discount.\*

### **Natural Gas:**

- Set your thermostat at 68°. Lower to 65° if you plan to be away for more than a couple of hours.
- Use “draft blockers” at the base of your doors (rolled up towel or a small blanket are a great alternative to store bought ones).
- Preheat oven no more than five minutes before beginning to bake. Use a timer to gauge baking time to minimize the number of times the oven door is opened.
- Open curtains during the day to allow sunlight to enter; close curtains at sunset to help lessen the loss of heat through windows.
- Wear long sleeve clothing or a sweater or light jacket while at home.
- Decrease the amount of water used when boiling food. Keep a lid on the pot while the food is cooking.
- Comparison shop to get the best per-therm price (if you live in an area that allows you to choose your provider). Check the PSC website for the prices charged by the Natural Gas Marketers in the Atlanta Gas Light Area.

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