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Change habits with the season to save on energy costs



Nate Johnson
President & CEO

By Nate Johnson

As we look forward to the milder months of spring and summer, many customers may be breathing a sigh of relief to leave behind the typically higher energy bills of the winter heating season. As you enjoy the weather warm up, it's a good time to be proactive about summer energy conservation by considering some of the energy-saving steps below.

Get a breath of spring air and let your home have one too. Once the hot months of summer arrive, it's typically more efficient to keep an air-conditioned home closed to avoid overtaxing AC systems, but spring is a great time to let nature do your heating and cooling. Open windows when the temperature outside is comfortable; close them to retain that temperature throughout the day or night. Running a ceiling fan and allowing your HVAC fan to run also helps to keep your home feeling cool.

Break out the summer wardrobe. No, this isn't fashion advice from your utility company. Many of us have spent the winter at home in hoodies and sweatpants, hiding under blankets to avoid ticking up the thermostat. As the season changes, it can be hard to break the habit of warm and cozy clothes and mounds of blankets on top of us at night. Dressing the part for warmer weather goes a long way to resisting the temptation to bump the thermostat down a few degrees on those hot days.

Put on your shades. Window shades, that is. As spring progresses, the sun's intensity increases. This can turn rooms into greenhouses as sunlight that was so welcome a few months ago now contributes unwelcome heat. Consider light filtering shades for rooms that are commonly used, and draw the blinds on rooms that aren't in use.

Time for a tune-up. Air conditioning systems should be serviced regularly. For whole-home systems, spring and fall are ideal times to bring in your preferred HVAC service for preventative maintenance. Even for window and wall unit air conditioners, cleaning the filter and ensuring the outside portion of the unit is clean and undamaged goes a long way toward more efficient — and less expensive — operation. If you have a whole-home system, talk to your tech about how to operate the system most efficiently. If you have a programmable thermostat, consult your HVAC tech or system manufacturer to learn what temperature ranges and changes will keep your home comfortable at the lowest cost.

It's grilling season! Ovens and other home appliances that produce excess heat are a one-two punch on your energy bill. Any excess heat is energy you paid for and that your AC system will have to work harder to offset. Cooking outside is fun and can save you money at the same time.

The steps above are just a few of the many easy and inexpensive ways to get your home ready to save this summer. For more helpful tips and tools, check out the Energy Advisor on our website at citizenselectric.com.

We hope you have a safe, fun, and comfortable spring and summer.

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ON THE FLIP SIDE

- Summer storm safety
- Help is Available
- Pole Testing Planned

Summer Storm Safety

We've already had our first taste of summer storms this year in the Buffalo Valley. Thunderstorms are an inevitability in our region, and with them come many hazards, as well as the occasional power outage. Be prepared by taking some proactive steps today.

- **Be aware:** Pay attention to severe weather warnings to avoid getting caught outside or on the road during storms.
- **Be prepared:** Have a 'storm kit' ready in your home. You can see suggestions below and find more info at SafeElectricity.org
- **Be safe:** Take shelter during a storm. When it's safe to venture out, stay alert for road hazards, downed trees, power lines and other hazards that storms may leave behind.
- **Notify:** If you see downed power lines, call us at 570-524-2231. If the lines are blocking a road or creating other immediate safety hazards, alert 911 as well. Never approach a downed power line!
- **Practice:** Make sure you and your loved ones know what to do during a storm by practicing in advance.

STORM SAFETY KIT



Bottles of water

Nonperishable food

Portable phone charger



Flashlights

Batteries

Can opener



First-aid supplies

Hand sanitizer

Prescriptions

Pain reliever



Warm clothing

Blankets

Battery-operated radio

Toys, books and games

Important documents

Money

Baby supplies

Pet supplies



Learn more:

[Safe
Electricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

Pole Testing Planned

Every year, we test hundreds of in-service utility poles to make sure they are fit for continued service.

These tests include taking core samples, digging around the base to check for decay, confirming or replacing guy wire visibility markers, and visually inspecting the condition of the pole from top to bottom.



Geoforce Utility Technologies will be performing this year's testing of poles on the Citizens' Electric system. Geoforce crews will be traveling in marked vehicles, and all employees will carry identification.

We appreciate your cooperation as crews access your property to perform their testing.

Help is available

If you are struggling to pay your electric bill, please contact us as soon as possible at 570-524-2231 or email: billing@citizenselectric.com. Our customer service representatives may be able to help connect you with available assistance through LIHEAP, Dollar Energy Fund, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and local charities.

Our goal is to help keep your lights on and air conditioner humming this summer and always.

The first step is to call.

