

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting together, smiling warmly at the camera. The man is on the left, wearing a grey t-shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a red long-sleeved shirt. They are both looking directly at the camera with bright, happy expressions. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a wooden surface.

Your Apartment
Electricity Guide

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Tips to Save Energy and Money



Your Apartment Electricity Guide

Many higher electric bills are the result of a problem in the apartment or changes in a Member-Owner's habits. A few areas where problems may occur are:

- air conditioning/heating,
- electric water heating
- and consumer living habits.

Air Conditioning or Heating – #1 User of Electricity

Heating and cooling accounts for 56 percent of the average energy bill in a typical U.S. home, making it the largest energy expense for most homes including apartments.

Change filters

Clean filters improve airflow which reduces the amount of effort your heating or cooling system works. Dirty filters block airflow.

Request a yearly checkup

Ask your landlord to have your heating or cooling system tuned-up. Have a qualified service person or contractor check the unit at least once a year. Preventive maintenance saves you money in the long run by making your system efficient enough to cut up to 10% from your energy bill.



Program your thermostat

One of the best ways to save on your apartment's heating and cooling bill is to control the temperature at which you keep the home. In the winter, save energy by setting the thermostat to 68°F while you are awake and then lower it while you are asleep or away from the apartment. In the summer, keep the house warmer than normal while you are away and set the thermostat to 78°F while you are home.



Use a fan first

During the summer, use a ceiling fan or portable fan to supplement your air conditioning. A fan can make you feel three to four degrees cooler so you can set your

thermostat a few degrees higher and save on cooling costs. Use in occupied rooms since fans cool people, not rooms.

Bundle up

During the winter, slip into a cozy sweater and thick socks or cover up with a blanket before turning up the heat. Use portable heaters in occupied rooms only.

Operate blinds

In summer, close blinds or curtains on the east side of your apartment in the mornings and on the west side in the afternoons. In winter, open the blinds to let warm sunlight in.

Seal air leaks

Inspect for air leaks around windows and doors. Use caulk or silicone to seal around outside openings. By purchasing supplies and doing the work yourself it will cost less and save money on your energy bill.

Ensure proper air flow

Getting the proper amount of air across the indoor and outdoor coils is very important. Keep the area around the outside unit clear. Use water pressure from a hose to clean the outside coils once a year. Do not close off individual room supplies. Closing supply registers may restrict airflow through the system resulting in less efficient operation. Keep the return grills free so that unrestricted air can flow back to the indoor unit. Make sure your registers are clean. Wipe them down with a damp cloth.

Electric Water Heater - #2 User of Electricity

Water heating accounts for 13 percent of your electric bill, second only to your apartment's heating and cooling system, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

Turn it down

Setting the thermostat on your water heater to 120°F is one of the easiest ways to save.



By turning down the thermostat from 140°F to 120°F, you will save between 6 and 10 percent on your energy bill. The lower setting prevents scalding from extra hot water, which is a great safeguard if you have young children in your apartment. In addition, lower temperatures slow the buildup of minerals and corrosion in the water heater and in the pipes. If you are going away for an extended period, turn down the thermostat even more or turn it off completely until you return for added savings.

Take showers

Showers use less hot water than baths. Also, installing a low-flow shower head can help with water heating costs. A low-flow shower

head uses one-third to one-half the water that regular shower heads use.

Repair leaky water faucets

Ask your landlord to repair that leaky water faucet. Thirty drops of water per minute can waste up to 50 gallons of water per month!

Cool it

When washing everyday clothes, use the cold water settings. Only use hot water for extra dirty loads. Wash full loads only! When possible use an Energy Star® rated washer. Typically, they have greater capacity which means you'll have fewer loads and spend less time doing laundry.



Consumer Living Habits - Apples and Oranges

Don't compare your electric bill to your neighbor's. Each household's living habits are as different as apples and oranges. It is very important to consider every possible circumstance that could contribute to a higher bill. We ask you to compare your living habits to the dates of consumption on your bill. Be familiar with what time period actually makes up the bill in question. Ask yourself these questions:

- Did I have guests during that period?
- Were my living habits different? Did I stay at home more? Watch TV more?
- Was it extremely cold? Or was it extremely hot or humid?
- Did I turn off the air conditioner or heat while I was out of town?
- Did I turn the water heater down/off during my absence?
- Was there an illness during that period?
- Any new additions to the family?
- Did I use extra lighting or other electric equipment?
- Have I added any major appliances?
- What is the condition of pumps or other outside equipment?
- Did I celebrate a holiday?

Other Energy Saving Tips

Looking for other ways to save? Here are some simple tips that can give you additional savings on your electric bill.

Electronics

- **Unplug**

When not in use, unplug chargers for cell phones, digital cameras and other small personal electronics.

- **Use power strips**

Plug your larger electronics like the DVD player, game console, monitor and laptop into power strips to make shutdown easy. Turn off power strips while you are at work or asleep so electronics don't needlessly waste energy.

Chores

- **Run full loads**

Run the dishwasher only when there is a full load. That goes for the washing machine and dryer too.

- **Air dry**

Air dry your laundry and dishes when possible. If you do use the dryer, use the moisture sensor to avoid over drying.

- **Cook smarter**

Choose the right pot or pan for the job. If it is too small for the burner, 40% of the heat gets wasted. Use a lid to cook food faster. Keep the inside of the microwave clean for better performance. Use a slow cooker or the microwave for most meals.

Lighting

- **Use free lighting**

Use daylight to light your apartment – it's free! North and south windows provide

natural light without heat or glare. East and west windows are best in the morning and evening when the sun's rays are less direct.

- **Lights out**

Turn off the lights when you leave the room.

- **Replace bulbs**

CFLs produce 6 times as much light and may last 10 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. Though they cost a little more, Energy Star rated LED lights may last 25 times longer than even CFLs and offer extra savings.



If your electric use suddenly increases, take time to consider all factors.

- Possible changes in lifestyle that could increase electric usage.
- Problems with an appliance or other electric equipment.
- Seasonal changes that increase electric use.

If you cannot determine the problem, but feel something is wrong, contact Flint Energies for assistance at 1.800.342.3616.

Just starting out?

Pay Your Way, a prepaid energy solution, helps you get out on your own faster. Say goodbye to deposits, late fees, disconnect and reconnect fees today. For more info, contact us at 1.800.342.3616.



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