



Current

News from Floresville Electric Light & Power System

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FELPS Completes Falls City Substation Work

Floresville Electric Light & Power System has completed installation and energized a second transformer at the Falls City substation. The new transformer adds redundancy to improve reliability.

In the past, when maintenance was required, all customers served from the single transformer were without power while the work was completed. Now the operation is a seamless transition as the load is moved to the second transformer while maintenance is done.

FELPS personnel also are installing a fourth transformer at the Floresville substation. Work began earlier in the year and will continue through the second quarter of 2018. The transformer is needed to provide redundancy when a transformer requires maintenance.

Analyze Your Electric Usage to Save Energy

Understanding your use of electricity is the first step toward energy efficiency. The following table shows the typical breakdown for electric energy usage in a 2,000 square foot home with all-electric service in South Texas.

Air conditioning	30 percent
Appliances	15 percent
Electronics	15 percent
Heating	14 percent
Water heating	14 percent
Lighting	12 percent

While this breakdown offers some general guidance, you can get more specific information tailored to your individual home. FELPS offers the Energy Depot® program on its Web site at www.felps.us.

The free service lets you learn where your electricity goes through a home energy audit. You provide information about your home’s appliances using drop-down menus, default settings and help screens.

Once the questionnaire is completed, you will receive a Personal Energy Profile report that includes information about your energy usage, annual energy cost by system or appliance and specific recommendations with cost savings estimates.

The Energy Depot® program will offer suggestions about ways to save electricity. Step two then involves implementing these suggestions, which can be done over time. Energy efficiency is a series of steps or processes that you create, rather than a single action.

The Web site also has a library for more information and offers the option to e-mail questions so you can receive more details.

FELPS Briefs

- Please mark your calendar for holidays when the FELPS office will be closed: Nov. 23-24 for Thanksgiving, Dec. 25-26 for Christmas and Jan. 1 for New Year’s Day. Office hours will resume at 8 a.m. on the business day following each holiday period.
- To report outages on holidays and after business hours (Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.), please call 830-216-7000 and select sub-option 2. Report outages online at www.felps.us and select the tag labeled “Report Outage.”
- You can receive your FELPS bill by e-mail in addition to receiving it by regular mail or you can get it only by e-mail, if you wish. Sign up for the e-mail option on the FELPS Web site, www.felps.us, under the “E-Notifications” link located on the “My Account” tab.

Tips for Winter Savings

Heating can represent a fairly large expenditure for electricity in South Texas. To reduce your utility bill this winter, follow some energy-saving practices.

- Set the thermostat at 68-70 degrees to maintain a comfortable temperature. Check the room temperature with a thermometer to be sure the thermostat is accurate.
- Seal up all cracks around windows and doors with caulk and weather-stripping and look for other openings, such as around electrical wall outlets and pipes where your heat can escape and cold air can enter.
- Add insulation in the attic to attain a rating of at least R-38, approximately 12 inches of insulation. The insulation can be installed from rolls or loose insulation can be blown into the attic.
- Service the furnace to be sure it operates properly and is clean. A well-maintained furnace is more efficient and lowers heating costs.

Enjoy A Festive Season With Lighting

Part of Christmas fun involves decorating. Unless you plan a large display, holiday lights are inexpensive to operate, because decorative lights require low wattage.

A string of 100 midget lights operates four hours for about one cent. And twinkle lights cost about half as much.

LED (light-emitting diode) bulbs are even more cost effective, using 90 percent less electricity than regular Christmas lights.

Holiday lights and equipment should be chosen and used carefully to ensure safety. FELPS recommends that only equipment with the Underwriters' Laboratories approval (UL seal) be used. Follow these additional guidelines for safety:

- Discard or repair any frayed extension cords and never use indoor lighting equipment outdoors.
- Be sure lights are unplugged when placing them on the tree and unplug lights when leaving the house and at bedtime.
- To prevent falls, do not run extension cords under rugs or in traffic areas.
- To avoid shock, never drape electrical cords over pipes or other metal objects.

- Do not overload any household circuit. If your house lights dim or circuit breakers trip, you have too much wattage on the circuit.
- If you use a cut tree, place it in water as soon as it is brought inside and add water regularly to reduce the potential for fire.
- Locate the tree away from the fireplace and other sources of heat.
- When decorating outside, use only lights that are rated for outdoor use.

Stay Alert for Home Hazards

While most people think of their house as home, sweet home, it is also a place where hazards can lurk—including electrical hazards. Here are just a few you should watch for:

- Check for frayed extension cords and cords on appliances. These should be repaired or replaced to prevent a shock or a fire.
- Do not cut off the grounding prong on a three-prong plug. Instead buy a three-to-two-prong adapter as a temporary measure until you replace the outlet. Many appliances now use three-prong plugs as a safety measure.
- To avoid shocks near water in bathrooms or kitchens, install ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets. They sense power fluctuations and shut off the electricity immediately, helping to prevent shock. Although the GFCI plugs can be purchased at most hardware stores, it is recommended that a professional install them.
- Another good feature to consider is an arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) that fits into the circuit box and shuts down the power if the breakers begin to arc across circuits. Arcing is a common cause of fire in older homes. An AFCI should be installed only by a licensed professional.
- Use the correct wattage when replacing bulbs to prevent heat buildup, particularly in semi-enclosed areas. If you are unsure of the correct wattage, use the equivalent of a 60-watt bulb or less.
- Because halogen lamps burn at very high temperatures, avoid using them near combustible materials.
- Use protective devices in electrical outlets that are within the reach of small children. The devices can be purchased at most hardware stores.



Contacting FELPS

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After 5 p.m.: (830) 216-7000 (for outages, press sub-option 2)

The Floresville Electric Light and Power System Board of Trustees meets the last Wednesday of each month at 8 a.m. in the utility offices, 1400 Fourth Street, Floresville.