



News from Floresville Electric Light & Power System

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Energy Program Helps Save Electricity

Floresville Electric Light & Power System offers a powerful tool to help you reduce your electric bills. Check out Energy Depot® on the FELPS home page at www.felps.us for help in saving money.

The “Energy Snapshot” will provide a report about your energy usage based on your answers to eight questions. The program gives you a comprehensive analysis of energy use and personalized cost-saving opportunities for your specific situation. The information can be saved for future reference and for updating.

The buying decisions you make can have a long-term effect on your electric bills. The energy comparison tool lets you compare costs of purchasing and operating large electricity users in your home, such as heating and cooling systems, water heaters and lighting. By providing information about the purchase price and installation, you can get an estimate of the amount of time required for payback.

The appliance calculator provides information about annual energy use and operating costs for most household appliances so you can see where your energy dollars go.

The energy library has fact sheets on everything from insulation to appliances so you can make informed buying decisions. A glossary of terms and frequently asked questions also are included.

Summer is an important time to be aware of your use of electricity, since air conditioning is the largest user in our warm climate. You can save money by following some tips to reduce your usage:

- Set the thermostat at 78-80 degrees and use ceiling fans to circulate the air and increase your feeling of comfort.
- Be sure the air conditioner is clean to reduce the strain on the equipment.
- Change the filters every two weeks during the cooling season.
- Close blinds and drapes during the day, particularly on the south and west sides of the house, to keep out the sun.

FELPS Briefs

- Please note that the FELPS office will be closed on Sept. 2 for Labor Day. Regular office hours will resume at 8 a.m. the following day. To report outages, including on holidays and after business hours (Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:45 p.m.), please call 830-216-7000 and select sub-option 2. Report outages online at www.felps.us and select the tab labeled “Report Outage.”
- Your call is easy with the FELPS telephone system. When calling the office, first press 1 for English or 2 for Spanish. Then select one of five sub-options: 1 to make a payment or for Customer Service, 2 for outages or emergencies, 3 for new construction, 4 for street or security light repair or 5 for field service maintenance.
- Please note that before existing service can be transferred to a new owner or tenant’s name, FELPS must receive either a lease agreement or proof of ownership. FELPS will not transfer service into the new occupant’s name unless all requirements are met.
- Mark your calendar and plan to attend the 75th Annual Floresville Peanut Festival starting on Oct. 8 with the Goober Games and continuing through Oct. 12 in downtown Floresville. Check online for information about activities for the whole family.

Tree Trimming to Begin

FELPS has hired a tree trimming company to inspect and prune trees near electrical lines and related electrical equipment. Trees will be pruned according to accepted arboricultural standards and will begin in the next few weeks.

You do not have to be home while the work is done. However, if you need to schedule a date and time for the work, or if you need more information, please call 830-216-7000, ext. 272 between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Cool Air Can Be Lost Many Ways

If you have a central air conditioner, the duct system represents an important source of potential energy loss. You may be wasting energy because of poorly insulated ducts that allow cool air from your air conditioner to escape into the attic. Joints in the ducts also can leak, allowing cooled air to be forced out or unconditioned air to be drawn into return ducts.

Minor duct repairs are easy to accomplish using sealing materials. First look for holes and for sections of ductwork that have separated. Cover the holes using tape with the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) logo to ensure the tape will not degrade, crack or lose its bonding capacity. The tape also can be used to join sections of ductwork that have come apart.

Insulation on ducts represents a big energy saver. Because replacing insulation can be a difficult job requiring not only the insulation but also a moisture barrier, plan to get professional assistance.

While looking for escaping air, check for cracks around doors and windows. Seal up air leaks with weather-stripping and caulk.

Other ways to reduce air conditioning costs include:

- Limiting heat-producing activities, such as hot showers.
- Doing laundry during the coolest time of the day and with the coolest water needed to clean your clothes.
- Using a microwave for cooking. It uses less electricity and does not increase heat in the kitchen.

Plan Ahead for Storm Outages

Summer weather usually means electrical storms that can cause outages. Plan ahead so you're ready when the electricity goes off.

- Keep flashlights in areas where you can find them easily, even in the dark. And be sure they are ready with fresh batteries.
- Your cell phone is another option for light, so try to keep it in a convenient location.
- Put the FELPS phone number (830-216-7000) in your cell phone address book so you can use it to report the outage. Or you can report outages online at www.felps.us and select the tab labeled "Report Outage."

Keeping your food in the refrigerator and freezer cold during an outage can be a challenge. The key is to keep the doors closed. Resist the temptation to check the temperature until the electricity is restored. Then you can use a thermometer specifically for a refrigerator.

Most refrigerators and freezers purchased during the last few years are insulated well enough that food will remain cool for several hours during an outage. You can check with the manufacturer to determine the standards for your models.

If frozen foods are partially thawed, they can be defrosted in the refrigerator and eaten within a couple of days. In most cases, frozen foods that have defrosted should not be refrozen.

Lightning Storms Can Mean Danger

Lightning not only can cause problems with your electric service but also can be dangerous if you are unprotected.

The National Weather Service reports that July is the peak month for casualties from lightning strikes, because outdoor work and leisure put people at greater exposure.

While any outdoor location can represent danger, people are most vulnerable:

- Near water while boating or fishing or lying on the beach.
- In open areas, such as on the golf course or picnic grounds or when working in open fields.
- On high places, such as roofs.
- Near vehicles, airplanes or heavy equipment.

To protect yourself from the potential of being struck by lightning during a storm, find shelter in a building, preferably one that is totally enclosed, rather than a carport or covered patio. A hard-topped metal vehicle also offers protection if a building is not available.

Avoid open spaces and isolated trees. On a golf course, do not seek shelter under a tree and avoid contact with anything metal, such as golf clubs and fences.

If a storm approaches while you are on a lake or at the beach, get out of the water as quickly as possible. If you are caught in a boat crouch down in the center of the boat away from metal hardware.

Avoid being the tallest object in the area and never seek shelter under a metal object or equipment.

Following these safe practices can help protect you and your family.



Contacting FELPS

Floresville Electric Light and Power System

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Business hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

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

The Floresville Electric Light and Power System Board of Trustees meets the last Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the utility offices, 1400 Fourth Street, Floresville.