



## News from Floresville Electric Light & Power System

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### Think Safety When Selecting and Installing Decor

## Holiday Decorating Can Be Done at Low Cost

The newest type of light bulb, the LED (light-emitting diode) bulb, can mean festive Christmas decorating at a fraction of the cost of older types of lighting. Using 90 percent less electricity than regular Christmas lights, LED lights do not get hot, so they can be used on a live tree without concern for setting it on fire.

Because LED lights are plastic, rather than glass, they are less likely to break and are therefore easier to string up and to pack after Christmas. And they last up to 100,000 hours so will not need to be replaced for years.

LED lights come in a variety of styles—large bulbs, small bulbs, colors, white and even some shaped like snowflakes. Some indoor/outdoor strands can be purchased for as little as \$10.

To get the most benefit from holiday lighting, turn off other lights in the room when the decorative lights are on.

Christmas 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 to make your holiday season safe:

- 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 circuits. If your house lights dim or fuses blow, you have too much wattage on the circuit.
- Locate the tree away from the fireplace and other sources of heat.

## Be Sure Your Information Is Current

Now is the time to update your FELPS records. Be sure FELPS has the number for the telephone you use (whether land line or cell phone) and your email address.

You may want to consider adding names on your accounts, since FELPS will provide information only to the person or persons listed on the account to protect the account holder. So, if you want additional family members to transact business on your account, they must be listed.

To update your contact information, please visit the FELPS website at [www.felps.us](http://www.felps.us) or call customer service at 830-216-7000, sub-option 1.

## FELPS Offers Mobile App

The FELPS mobile app is available in the App Store and in the Google Play Store. You can use the app for all your account needs: view your account information, pay your bill, view your electricity usage and usage history, set up alerts and reminders, report outages and more.

The app provides convenient 24/7 access, wherever you go.

### FELPS Briefs

- Please mark your calendar for holidays when the FELPS office will be closed: Nov. 23-24 for Thanksgiving, Dec. 25 and 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.-4:30 p.m.), please call 830-216-7000 and select sub-option 2. Report outages online at [www.felps.us](http://www.felps.us) and select the tab labeled "Report Outage" or text 55050.
- You can receive your FELPS bill by email in addition to receiving it by regular mail or you can get it only by email, if you wish. Sign up for the email option on the FELPS web site, [www.felps.us](http://www.felps.us), under the "E-Notifications" link located on the "My Account" tab.

# Consider Improvements to Save on Electric Bills

Heating represents the second largest user of energy in South Texas—after air conditioning. But some improvements to your home can save money on your utility bill during both the heating and cooling seasons.

Your house can lose energy from four big areas:

- Windows and doors - 25%
- Floors and below-grade space - 15%
- Walls - 35%
- Ceilings and roof - 25%

Some improvements can reduce your utility bill

**Ventilation** is necessary to keep moisture and extreme heat from forming inside the attic in both summer and winter. The presence of moisture may contribute to mold problems. Attic ventilation can be achieved by installing soffit and gable vents or installing through-the-roof vents, such as turbo-vents, or a continuous ridge vent.

**Insulation** is needed in attics and walls to provide a thermal barrier. In some cases, insulation also can be added under the floor in the crawl space.

Insulation is measured by the R-value, which is the resistance to heat flow. The higher the R-value, the better the insulation properties.

The attic does not have adequate insulation if ceiling joists are exposed. Even in homes where ceiling joists are not exposed, the amount of insulation still may not be adequate for the South Texas climate. The attic should have insulation of at least R-38, which requires about 12 inches, depending on the type.

Fiberglass insulation, made of sand and recycled glass, has an R-value of 3.14 per inch, while cellulose, made of recycled newspaper, has an R-value of 3.7 per inch. If blown-in cellulose insulation is used, remember to take into account that it will settle and that it should be kept away from heat sources.

To learn more about the different types of insulating materials and to determine the best for your home, consult with installers and with insulation manufacturers on their web sites.

**Weather-stripping and caulking** around doors and windows will help prevent the escape of heated air from your home and the entrance of cold air. Weather-

stripping, caulk and energy-efficient windows are investments that will save money on utility bills during all seasons.

## Take Steps to Save on Electricity

You can take additional steps to reduce your utility bill this winter:

- 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.
- Service the furnace to be sure it operates properly and is clean. A well-maintained furnace is more efficient and lowers heating costs.
- Change filters at least monthly to be sure they are clean, so the furnace is not taxed unnecessarily.
- Consider installing a programmable thermostat so you can reduce the temperature at night and when you are away from home for an extended time.
- Resist the temptation to cover the rotating vents on your roof. These vents circulate air to reduce attic moisture and are necessary both in winter and summer.

## Check for Rebates and Tax Credits

If you plan to buy appliances, replace an air conditioner or make improvements that will help make your home more energy efficient, this may be a good time to make the decision. Check online for rebates and tax credits that will reduce the cost.

Go to the Department of Energy website at [www.energy.gov/save](http://www.energy.gov/save) to investigate the offers available. Go to “Save Energy, Save Money” then scroll to “Energy Tax Credits and Rebates.” Information is available in three categories: Appliances, Electric Vehicles and Home Improvement.

Whether you replace an air conditioner or update your windows to energy efficient ones, you can get a credit to save money on your taxes as you save on the cost of your monthly electric bill.

The Department of Energy website has a wealth of information to help you save electricity, including information about the Energy Star program. Check it out as you're looking for rebates and tax credits.

# FELPS

### Contacting FELPS

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Business hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Drive-through closes at 4:15 p.m.

The FELPS Board of Trustees meets the last Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the utility offices, 187 Highway 97 E., Floresville.

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/FELPS.OnLine](http://www.facebook.com/FELPS.OnLine)