

the Wire

A Newsletter for Energy Customers | Winter 2009

- See inside for Cold Weather Program and Payment Options Information

Simple Tips to Help Save Energy and Dollars



Sometimes simple changes can reap big savings. According to the government's ENERGY STAR® Web site the best place to start is where you use the most energy. The average American household spends \$1,900 annually on energy bills. Almost half of that energy goes to heating and cooling your home. Lighting and appliances represent about a quarter, and home electronic products like computers, TVs and cell phone chargers use an increasing amount of the remaining amount spent on energy.

You might try these simple ways to save money while staying comfortable.

- Open your window shades and drapes to let the sun's natural warmth in during the day. At night, close them to help insulate your windows against heat loss.
- Set your hot water temperature at the "normal" setting — no higher than 120 degrees F. This can cut your water heating costs by 10 percent.
- Set back your thermostat when you're asleep or away. When used properly, an ENERGY STAR-qualified programmable thermostat, such as the one offered through KCP&L's Energy Optimizer program, can save you \$100 each year on energy costs.
- Replace your five most frequently used light bulbs with ones that have earned the ENERGY STAR, and save more than \$60 each year in energy costs.
- Activate your computer's power management features, so it powers down when sitting idle.

For more tips, visit www.energystar.gov.

It's been a long winter and all of us are feeling the pinch of cold, inclement weather and today's difficult economic environment. At KCP&L, we understand your concerns, because they reflect our own.

Over the past few weeks, customers have asked us the following Cold Weather questions. We hope you'll find the answers helpful. If you still have questions, please call one of our customer service representatives. Always eager to help, they are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Does KCP&L follow a Cold Weather Rule?

Yes. We will not disconnect electric service in Missouri on days when the 24-hour weather forecast predicts temperatures to drop below 32 degrees. In Kansas, service is not disconnected on days when the 48-hour weather forecast predicts temperatures to drop below 35 degrees.

Staying Safe When It's Cold Outside

- Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Have your furnace or heat pump inspected professionally to make sure it is operating efficiently and correctly.
- Have your chimney inspected annually and cleaned if necessary.
- If you use an electric heater, don't overload the circuit. Use extension cords wisely and don't overload them.
- Keep clothes, curtains and other potentially combustible items at least three feet from all heaters.
- Never use a range or an oven for supplemental heating. Not only is it a safety hazard, it can be a source of potentially toxic fumes.

Source: U.S. Fire Administration

*Our customer service representatives are always eager to help.
Please give them a call if you need assistance or have any questions.*



Tell me more about the Cold Weather Program.

Our Cold Weather Program helps customers with delinquent accounts avoid loss of service during the coldest months of the year. The program began on November 1 and continues through March 31, 2009. Participation is simple.

- If you are worried about paying your bill in full, call our customer service representatives at [816-471-5275](tel:816-471-5275) or [1-888-471-5275](tel:1-888-471-5275) toll-free and ask for a Cold Weather Payment Program plan.
- You will be asked to make an initial payment and continue making monthly payments for the next 11 months. This allows you to manage your past due and current amount due over the next 11 months.
- You can ask for a Cold Weather Program payment plan, even if service has been disconnected. Simply make the initial payment and continue making monthly payments for the next 11 months.

Additional information is available in our Brochure Center at www.kcpl.com.

I'm concerned about missing a payment. What should I do?



If you are worried about missing a payment, don't wait until you get a disconnect notice to contact us. Our customer service representatives will work with you to make arrangements so you can avoid service cancellation. Call [816-471-5275](tel:816-471-5275) or [1-888-471-5275](tel:1-888-471-5275) toll-free. Spanish-speaking representatives are also available.

What other types of payment options does KCP&L offer?

KCP&L offers an array of payment options designed for your convenience. Two options that may be particularly helpful to you are:

- **Budget Billing.** Budget billing averages your last 12 bills, giving you a fixed monthly payment regardless of seasonal ups and downs. Your account is reviewed annually and adjusted as needed based on usage and rate changes. Each month, an up-to-date account status will be shown on your bill. Please note that discontinuing this program could result in a higher than average payment, depending on where you are in the 12-month cycle.
- **Credit Card Payments.** All residential customers have the option of making payments by credit or debit card. Currently, the process differs depending on whether you are a former Aquila customer or you have always been a KCP&L customer.

For information about the payment options available in your area, contact our customer service representatives at [816-471-5275](tel:816-471-5275) or [1-888-471-5275](tel:1-888-471-5275), or visit www.kcpl.com.

I may need additional help. Where can I turn for financial assistance?

- **United Way.** United Way may be able to connect you with local agencies that can help. Dial [2-1-1](tel:2-1-1) to find out if you are eligible to receive funds. Note: United Way's 2-1-1 number may not work in all areas. Visit www.kcpl.com or call us at [816-471-5275](tel:816-471-5275) or [1-888-471-5275](tel:1-888-471-5275) to find out which agency serves your area.
- **LIHEAP.** The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, a federally funded program, helps eligible households pay their energy bills during the winter months. For more information or an application, please contact them at:
Missouri: Call United Way at [2-1-1](tel:2-1-1) to locate your local office or visit www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/liheap.htm
Kansas: Call [1-800-432-0043](tel:1-800-432-0043) or visit www.srskansas.org/ISD/ees/lieap.htm
- **Weatherization.** Our free weatherization service is available to homeowners and renters whose income qualifies. To qualify, you must have household earnings at or below the current income guidelines, have received service from KCP&L or Aquila for at least one year, and have household energy consumption of more than 3,000 kWh per year. Managed by county community action agencies, services include caulking and weather stripping. Call us or visit www.kcpl.com for local agency information.

How can I help others in need?

- **Energy Gift Program.** Our Energy Gift program lets individuals give the gift of energy to family or friends. Anyone can place an

Energy Gift on a KCP&L customer's account. They may be purchased by check or money order, and can be given anonymously. Energy Gifts are nonrefundable and considered a gift, not a tax-deductible donation. To arrange for an Energy Gift, contact us at [816-471-5275](tel:816-471-5275) or [1-888-471-5275](tel:1-888-471-5275).

- **Dollar-Aide.** Dollar-Aide has helped thousands of families pay their heating, cooling and water bills during financially pressing times. The program is funded by customer donations, which KCP&L matches with a 50-cent energy credit. Contributions may be made online or by check payable to Dollar-Aide. Administered by the Mid-America Assistance Coalition and United Way of Greater St. Joseph, checks may be sent with monthly KCP&L payment or mailed directly to *Dollar-Aide; c/o US Bank; 8600 Shawnee Mission Pkwy, Suite 105; Merriam, KS 66202.*

What if I need special assistance? KCP&L also offers these services to help customers with special needs.

- **Special Medical Conditions.** If a member of your household depends on electrically operated life-support equipment, contact us online or by phone for a "Medical Customer" application form.
- **Special Friend Registration.** Customers 60 or older who are disabled or expect to be away for long periods may give KCP&L the name of a relative, friend or agency to contact if their payments become overdue. This "special friend" is not responsible for payments but could help mitigate service issues. Contact one of KCP&L's customer service representatives for information.

What can I do to keep my bills down?

KCP&L continues to develop and offer energy-efficient products and services that will help you save money and energy.

- **Energy Analyzer.** Use this free, online tool to understand your home energy use and get tips on how you can conserve energy.
- **Energy Optimizer.** Receive a free, professionally installed Honeywell programmable thermostat to save up to 20 percent on energy costs.
- **Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®** (Missouri only): Receive rebates for improving efficiency in your home after having a Home Performance with ENERGY STAR contractor perform a home audit.
- **AccountLink (Paperless Billing).** Save the cost of postage each month by signing up for paperless billing through AccountLink. E-mail reminders are sent each month. With AccountLink, you can always check your usage, account balance and even submit payment anytime. Note: AccountLink will not be offered to former Aquila customers until Spring.

For more information about these programs, visit www.kcpl.com or call our customer service representatives at [816-471-5275](tel:816-471-5275) or [1-888-471-5275](tel:1-888-471-5275) toll-free.