



## **Conservation a Key to Keeping Rates Reasonable**

Washington electric cooperatives began investing in conservation efforts back when the term “green” referred to money, not clean energy. Conservation is a component of most energy bills in the state legislature and the U.S. Congress addressing climate change. It is a cost-effective way to reduce demand for energy, lessening the need to develop further resources thereby reducing members’ electric bills and our carbon footprint.

“Nespelem Valley Electric Cooperative began implementing conservation programs in the early 1980s. Our board and staff still recognize the long-term benefits to our members.” said Laura McClure, general manager. “Investing in energy efficiencies will pay off immediately and for years to come for the members of our co-op.”

These programs have saved almost 1.7 million kWh with an investment of over \$750,000 by the NVEC – the smallest utility in Washington State. Nationwide the electric utility industry has made energy efficiency improvements in the last 2 decades that have saved nearly 750 billion kWh or enough electricity to power 69 million homes for a year.

Conservation efforts also help reduce the cost of meeting future load growths. As populations increase, the amount of energy needed to serve the population grows too. The cost of energy to meet future load growth will not be fulfilled by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) at the same rates that this region has become accustomed to from the benefit of the federal hydropower system.

NVEC has offered the following programs to its members. Many of the incentives are wholly or partially funded by wholesale power marketer, the BPA.

- Street & Area Lighting Improvements (1983-1986)
- Super Good Sense (1988-1998)
- Water Heater Wraps (80’s and 90’s)
- Weatherwise/Residential Weatherization (1990-1998)
- Energy Smart® Design (1993-1998)
- Showerheads and aerators (1996-1997)
- Irrigation Rate Mitigation (2002-2006)
- Waterwise program (1991-1996)

- Free CFLs (current)
- Marathon water heaters rebate (current)
- Energy Star® Appliance rebates (current)

A few conservation tips for around the house that could help lower your electric bill:

In the Laundry Room....

- ✓ If your clothes dryer has a moisture sensor, use it to avoid over-drying your laundry. Or air-dry your loads on racks or a clothing line!
- ✓ Use the cold-water cycle with cold-water detergents doing laundry whenever possible.
- ✓ Wash and dry full loads of laundry. If you need to run a small load, choose the lowest water setting that is appropriate.

In the Kitchen....

- ✓ Recommended temperatures for freezers and refrigerators are 37-40°F for the 'fridge and 5°F for the freezer. If you have a long-term freezer that is a stand-alone, it is recommended to keep it at 0°F. Any colder than these ranges and energy is wasted.
- ✓ When running your dishwasher, wait until it is full. And skip the heat-dry cycle for more savings. If you don't have an air-dry switch, just stop the dishwasher after the final rinse cycle and prop the door open a little.
- ✓ Don't run the exhaust fan continuously after cooking – give it 20 minutes to clear the air and then turn it off.

In Your Living Spaces....

- ✓ Many appliances continue to draw a small amount of power when they are switched off. These "phantom" loads occur in most appliances, such as VCRs, televisions, stereos, computers, and kitchen appliances. In the average home, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off.
- ✓ If you haven't already, swap out all your incandescent light bulbs for compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They are FREE to members from NVEC. Just call the office for details!
- ✓ It's an oldie but a goodie: Turn off the juice when not in use! Another option to turning off all the lights in a room that you are not using is to install photo cells or occupancy sensors to turn off lights when they are not needed.
- ✓ When it's cold out, keep your window coverings open during the day to allow the sun to help heat your home and then close them at night to retain heat. Then when it when the summer heat comes, just reverse the process to keep your home cooler.