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# RG&E AND consumer news

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## Energy Consumption Information

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Reports of energy use tell us that the United States has 6% of the world's population and consumes more than 30% of the world's energy. Who is using all this energy you may ask? According to the Stanford Research Institute the total national consumption of energy is divided as follows: 41.2% industrial, 25.2% transportation, 19.2% residential and 14.4% commercial.

In view of the present short-term shortages of energy there is a need for all these classes of customers to use energy more efficiently and to develop a more conserving attitude toward energy use. RG&E engineers are meeting with RG&E's largest commercial and industrial customers to suggest ways these customers can reduce their use of energy. They are also providing literature to enable other business customers to conserve energy. I will confine my discussion now to the residential sector where consumption represents about 20% of the total national demand for energy.

Residential customers who wish to reduce their energy use will be interested to know the areas within the home where energy use is greatest. According to the Stanford Research Institute, the breakdown in the residential sector is as follows: space heating 57.5%, water heating 15.1%, other 10.9%,

## Use Electric Space Heaters Wisely and Safely

Some of our customers are using electric space heaters in their homes this winter in an effort to adjust to today's energy situation. If you choose to heat small areas in your home this way, please remember the following:

—Use an electric space heater judiciously. If the space being heated has not been properly weather-proofed the cost may be excessive. Use an electric space heater to warm the room you are in while you are in it, but don't expect it to perform around the clock like your home's heating system.

—If you use a radiant-type electric space heater, keep combustible material far away from it and make sure there is plenty of open space around it for proper air circulation.

cooking 5.7%, refrigeration 5.7%, air conditioning 3.6%, clothes drying 1.6%. These percentages include all forms of energy — oil, gas and electricity.

As you can see 88% of the energy used in the home is consumed in just five areas: heating, cooling, water heating, refrigeration and cooking. With these figures in mind you know the areas where efficient use of energy is most important.

RG&E is offering two booklets which suggest ways in which residential customers may reduce their use of gas and electricity. The booklets are "The Watt Watcher's Handbook" and "53 Ways to Save Money on Your Gas and Electric Bills." Fill in the coupon below and send it to RG&E to receive these complimentary booklets.

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—Any unit you buy should have a seal of approval from Underwriters Laboratory, indicating that it meets established safety standards. It should also have a "tip-over" switch so that if it is accidentally knocked over it will shut off.

—If you must use an extension cord with your heater, make sure it is a heavy-duty one. A light-weight extension cord for use with a lamp is not heavy enough to carry the heating load.

—If your fuse blows or trip circuit breakers you are overloading the electrical system in your home, Call your electrician or our Residential Dept. for advice.

## Moisture Damage Can Occur During Heating Season

This month we have been telling you about the effects of low humidity. You should also know, however, that damage from too much moisture can occur during the heating season. If the window glass is cold enough and the indoor relative humidity is high enough, condensation of moisture on the windows takes place. The moisture can harm window sills and the walls beneath by causing mildew and rotting of wood. Windows with tight-fitting storm windows have a higher temperature, so a higher relative humidity will not produce so much condensation.

This condensation accounts for the fact that in the chart for recommended humidity levels

the recommended interior relative humidity decreases as the outside temperature decreases. When the outside temperature drops to 0 degrees and below, the interior window panes will get cold enough to cause condensation even though the storm windows are tight fitting. Therefore, it becomes necessary to lower the relative humidity to reduce chances of condensation on windows. When a condensate does form on the inside of your windows, you know that the relative humidity in your home is too high.

Moisture damage can also occur through condensation in exterior walls. However, most homes built today have well-insulated exterior walls. These walls should have a moisture barrier between the in-

sulation and the back of the interior wall finish to resist the passage of water vapor through the wall into the insulation.

There are several ways you can prevent the occurrence of moisture damage. The first is to ventilate those areas in your home that put excess moisture into the air, such as kitchens and bathrooms; strategically located ventilations fans will do this.

Second, by installing storm sashes on windows and doors, or by having windows and doors made of insulated glass, you can keep the inside surfaces above the condensing point. Exterior walls should be well insulated, too. Insulated windows and walls also markedly reduce your heating fuel consumption.

And third, regulate the moisture your humidifier puts into the air. If you have a portable humidifier, the operating instructions for it should tell you how to set it to get the correct humidity level. A central humidifier that is a part of your heating system can also be adjusted to the right setting. Your heating contractor can show you how.

So, you see, even though you cannot control the humidity level outdoors, you can control it and its effects indoors. If you, like most homeowners, have not given much thought to the matter of humidity control, resolve to change that situation today. Controlling the humidity level can make you more comfortable, can help you cut down on your heating bills, and can prevent costly damage to your home and furniture. If you have questions about humidity control, feel free to call one of RG&E's Residential Representatives at 546-2700, extension 2751, or stop in our Consumer Information Center, which is featuring "Humidification" this month.



## Visit Consumer Center Home Service Department Wins Award

Recently Miss Verna Parmelee, Manager of RG&E's Home Service Department, received a MACAP Volunteer Award in recognition of the Home Service Department's "on the spot" technical assistance to customers who have issued complaints with MACAP regarding in appliance.

MACAP is the Major Appliance Consumer Action Panel, which was set up in 1970 and is sponsored by the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, the Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association, and the National Retail Merchants Association. MACAP is an independent consumer panel which serves as a direct communications channel between the consumer and the appliance manufacturer and retailer.

In addition to an award certificate, Miss Parmelee accepted a \$50 check on behalf of the Home Service Department. She and her Department in turn awarded the money to the new Consumer Education Center at 926 Clinton

Avenue, North. Funded by the State, the Center is under the jurisdiction of the Rochester Board of Education. The Center used the money to purchase a tape recorder and educational material needed to help teach consumer and money management education.

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