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Reasons for High Bills

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If you deliberately have tried to conserve energy recently, have expected a lower RG&E bill, but instead, have received a higher one, you are not alone—and I would like to explain why. There are two major reasons why bills have increased substantially during the last two months.

The first reason involves a part of the bill called the "cost of gas adjustment." As you know, RG&E cannot raise its rates on its own, but must apply to the New York State Public Service Commission for a rate increase. The request is examined by the Public Service Commission, public hearings are held, and their decision announced about 11 months after the initial request. There are exceptions to this procedure, however. One is the cost of the gas which RG&E buys from its supplier. Changes in this cost can legally be passed on to the customer without going through a rate proceeding. The cost of gas has increased rapidly in the last few months because it is in relatively tight supply, and as a result, the Federal Power Commission has allowed gas producers higher prices for the new gas they discover in the fields.

Every month RG&E puts the variable cost of gas adjustment rate on your bill. To find the gas cost adjustment, multiply the factor shown on the bill by the number of hundred cubic feet (ccf) of gas consumed for the billing period. For example— $0.33553 \times 315 \text{ ccf} = \10.57 .

You will also notice a "fuel cost adjustment" rate on your bill which applies to the electric energy charges. The change in the cost of the fuel used to generate electricity is also passed on to you. The electric ad-

justment is figured the same as that for gas. These costs are passed on just as the Cost of Living Council allows increases in gasoline, fuel oil or food to be passed on.

The second factor is the weather. RG&E keeps track of weather conditions using a "degree day" system which indicates the relative coldness of a month compared with other months. This information is based on official Weather Bureau figures and will indicate whether this month's heating bill should be higher or lower than that of last month's heating bill should be higher or lower than that of last month or of last March, for example. Degree days are figured by adding together a day's high and low temperatures, dividing by two, and subtracting from 67° — the temperature at which it is not necessary to heat your house. For example, if the day's high is 40° and the low is 10° the added result is 50°. Dividing by two gives you 25. Subtracting 25° from 65° gives you the answer 40 degree days for that day. RG&E divides its service area into twenty billing districts, each with its own scheduled meter reading, bill delivery and payable dates. Some billing periods in February include more cold days than others and it all depends on your billing district. Some billing periods for this February were as much as 28% colder than February 1973, while others were up to 8% warmer. Therefore, it is important that you know what dates your bill covers in order to determine the degree day heating requirements on which your bill is based.

RG&E will willingly investigate any billing inquiries. The cost of gas and fuel cost adjustments and the coldness of the weather have meant that most customers' bills have increased, however

From the Home Service Department Lighting Conservation: You Can Help

Energy conservation has become a part of our daily lives in the past months. The Illuminating Engineering Society (IES), the recognized lighting authority in North America, has prepared guidelines to help us do our part in this nation-wide drive.

1. Use lighter finishes on ceilings, walls, floors and furnishings. This gives your rooms a brighter appearance by reflecting more natural or electric lighting.
2. Turn lights off when they are not needed. You will use less energy by turning a light or appliance off, and then on again, even just a few minutes later.
3. Control window brightness. Use daylight when possible; at night, cover windows with light colored draperies or shades to reflect light

back into the room.

4. Keep lighting equipment clean and in good working condition. Dirty fixtures or lamp shades cut down on the amount of light. Lamp shades with white linings will reflect more light.
5. Use the most efficient light source — the one with the most light output for the wattage. This information can be found on either the package or the bulb itself and is expressed in lumens.

To reduce fatigue, always provide sufficient lighting on your work as well as surround lighting of less intensity. Be sure to keep halls and stairways safe by providing adequate lighting. These few steps are an easy reminder that every little bit counts!

Insulating your home: Part 4

Plastic foams, sprayed & boards

The newest form of insulating material on the residential market is petrochemical foam. There are several different formulas; most of them consist of a plastic base, a foaming agent, and air. The plastic base may be polystyrene, polyurethane, urea-formaldehyde, or other. These products

are either foamed in place with special spraying equipment or sold in rigid boards.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of foam insulation is its high resistance to heat flow. Its R-value per inch often is around six. (Insulation is rated by R-values; the

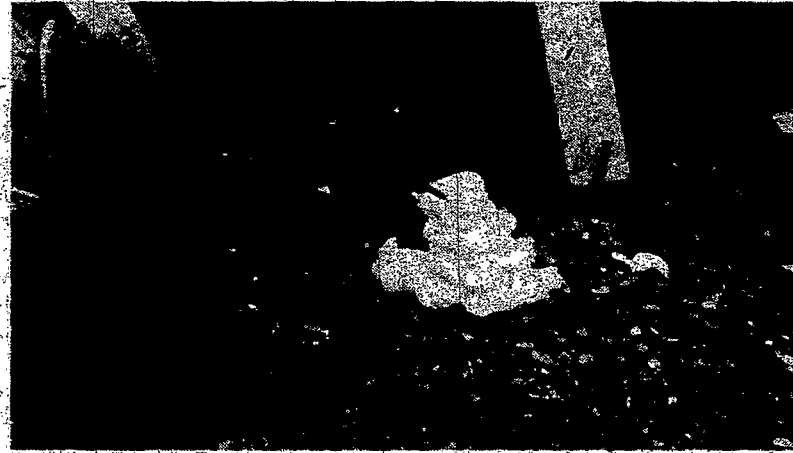
higher the R value number the more effective the insulation.) It is useful in places where space is at a premium. The foamed-in varieties can be used to get at places, also.

Foam boards can be used wherever a finished appearance is desired, such as a cathedral ceiling or a basement wall. It is easy to install; the boards are cut and glued into place. You could do this yourself. Foaming-in insulation, however, must be done by a professional with special equipment. Foam insulation is generally expensive whether it's foamed-in or bought in boards, but frequently the cost per R-value per inch is competitive with other materials. In many cases it is the most effective way to solve an insulating problem. There is controversy over its flammability. There are different grades of foam insulation with different amounts of fireproofing.

Foam insulation serves as its own vapor seal, therefore, you need no additional barrier with it.

A very new and somewhat experimental concept in residential insulation is the use of one-inch polystyrene boards all around the outside of the house under the siding or facing. The boards are tongue-and-grooved so that they fit together. This combined with regular insulation inside the walls provides a highly effective insulating barrier. Even newer is the possibility of using these boards sandwiched between interior panelling and exterior facing. The combined result might be strong enough to make conventional stud construction unnecessary altogether. As in many other fields, new ideas and products on the home-building market may change our ways of doing things.

This month at RG&E's Consumer Information Center you can learn a lot about insulating your home. Come in and see what a difference proper insulation makes. The Center is located on the Main Floor of 89 East Avenue and is open during all office hours.



This is how foamed-in insulation comes out of the special equipment used to install it.

Relive the past at Faire

The Middle Ages is coming to Rochester next month, March 2 - March 24 the Memorial Art Gallery will be transformed into a medieval town with an inn, guild houses, a cloister garden, booths with medieval wares for sale—all the sights, sounds and delights of life in the 12th-14th centuries.

The Medieval Faire is being jointly sponsored by the Memorial Art Gallery, the Women's Council, and the Junior League of Rochester.

During the month you will see the art, culture and quality of life in France in the late Middle Ages presented in an exhibition of art objects from this period that are part of the Gallery's own collection and are on loan from other museums. Shops and streets of a medieval town will be recreated.

Highlighting the Faire days, however, will be a series of special events — drama, demonstrations, musical performances, puppet shows, strolling minstrels, jugglers, craft workshops and storytellers.

Participating in the Faire will be several well known arts groups from the Rochester area; groups such as the Rochester Shakespeare Theatre, the Folk Art Guild, Wakefield Players, the Elizabeth Clark Dance Company, and the Joseph Brickler Marionettes. Also featured in the Faire will be individual artists, craft-people, poets and musicians — Jim Haviland and Pat Janus, Mitzie Collins, folk instrument maker Dennis Dorogi, stained glass artists John Superty and James O'Hara, wood worker Tom Newcomb, tapestry weaver Freida Peisley, and others.

Several local school groups will also perform. Harley School students will do the "Play of Daniel;" the Brighton High School madrigal singers will perform medieval choral music. The earliest known French comedy, "Play of St. Nicholas," by Jean Bodel, will be presented by the students from the University of Rochester. Also performing will be students from Geneseo State College, and the Brockport Student Dance Group.

Directing the entire Faire will be Carl Zollo. The New York State Council on the Arts has awarded a grant to the Gallery to cover some of the expenses.

All events with the exception of the dance program on March 4 will be free with admission to the Gallery. Saturdays during the Faire there will be program in the Town Square every half hour from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sundays programs will take place every half hour from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Social events will take place at different times during the month. Watch the paper for a complete listing of events.

Reservations are being taken for group tours of the Gallery.

FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS COUPON TO:

CJ-4

Dept. 34 Rochester Gas and Electric
89 East Avenue, Rochester, N.Y. 14649

I would like more information on the following items:

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