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RG&E consumer news

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Use Air Conditioners Efficiently To Conserve Energy

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With winter behind us it may seem that the urgency of the energy crisis has passed, but this is still a long-term problem, so it is still necessary to conserve energy.

Although the air conditioning season in Upstate New York is short, air conditioners consume a great deal of electricity when they are operating. Pre-season maintenance is helpful to save energy later on. To clean a central air conditioning unit, first shut off the electricity at the fuse box. Spray the outside condenser coils with a garden hose from inside out, taking care not to spray the electric fan motor. Clean or replace the filter on the central unit, oil the motor and check the fan belt. Make sure the furnace switch is in the "off" position before doing this.

Window units should also be cleaned before use. Unplug the unit and, if practical, remove it from the window. Clean the filter and either vacuum or wash the condenser coils. Check your owner's manual for instructions on the proper procedure for your particular unit.

To save energy when using the air conditioner follow these guidelines: Turn the thermostat of a central system to the warmest setting which is comfortable, preferably 78°. It is not advisable to

set it for a colder temperature than you really want because it won't cool the room down any faster. Always keep windows and outside doors to the room closed when the unit is on, or the air conditioner will have to run much longer to reach the proper temperature. Attic insulation is helpful in keeping a house cool. Proper insulation is particularly important around the air ducts in the attic. Don't leave a window air conditioner running if you will be away all day; rather, turn it on only when you are home. If it is properly sized it will cool the room in a reasonable time. You can buy a clock-timer which will turn an air conditioner on and off at pre-set times. For example, set it to come on shortly before you come home when you are away all day, and the room will be cool when you arrive.

In future articles I will discuss choosing an air conditioning unit with the proper cooling capacity, for the particular room. If you would like further information, call RG&E's Residential Department at 546-2700, Extension 2751 or Appliance Department at Extension 2428.

Make a Habit Out of Safety

Safety is everybody's responsibility. Appliance manufacturers continually strive to produce safe products. The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers maintains an Engineering Standards and Safety Board that is directly responsible for developing safety. The Consumer Product Safety Commission has authority to set mandatory safety standards to protect the public from unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. There are many factors working for the consumer to ensure safe products. However, in a fully effective safety program the user also has a responsibility for correct and safe use of the appliance.

Following are some suggestions for **Safe Use of the Range:**

Turn the handles of pots away from the edge to avoid having them accidentally tipped over by both adults and children.

Use pot holders, not towels, to move pans on the range. Towels may come close to the burner and be ignited.

Use aluminum foil carefully and in accordance with instructions contained in your use and care book.

Use the correct size burner for each pan. Don't put a small pan on a large burner because the exposed part of the burner could ignite your clothing. And it wastes energy too.

When you are working around the range, tie back long hair for both sanitary and safety reasons. Synthetic wigs may become singed and melt when subjected to high heat.

When using the oven, pull oven shelf out to the shelf stop when placing or removing food, protecting hands with a dry pot holder.

Accumulated grease and spillovers can ignite. Develop the habit of cleaning after each use.

Remember, range maintenance is important to safety as well as service. If your range is continually used properly, it will give you years of safe, reliable service with fewer repair problems.

Why Do We Pay What We Pay for Electricity and Gas?

For years RG&E used a slogan in our advertising, "Electricity is the Biggest Bargain in Your Family Budget Today." It was your biggest bargain and in fact, it still is. And will continue to be.

Reddy Kilowatt used to have another slogan, "Plug in, I'm Reddy" and all of us did. At the flip of a switch we turned on all sorts of things that warmed, cooled, cooked, entertained. A flip of the switch put life on a pretty convenient, comfortable — and by most of the standards around the world — luxurious basis.

Because for most of this century we had a national policy of having low cost energy in this country we

all took electricity and gas for granted. Not any more. Lately more people are noticing it — especially once a month.

So, more and more of us are asking, "With bills increasing, why do we pay what we pay for electricity and gas?"

On May 12, 1975, RG&E asked the Public Service Commission for permission to increase our gas and electric rates. There are many reasons why we did this. We did it reluctantly because we are aware of how the hardships of inflation have hit all our customers.

For regular readers of this page we shall try to give

you the reasons why we have asked for these increases. To begin with here are the basic facts you want to know. It granted by the PSC, our proposed increases will probably not take effect until April 1976. You also want to know how much the average bill will go up. The answer is that the average residential customer who used 500 kilowatt hours of electricity per month can expect an increase of \$4.79 a month. The average customer who heats with gas at the rate of 15,000 cubic feet per month can expect an increase of \$2.30 a month.

Another question that may be on your mind is how RG&E rates compare with other utilities in New York State. You may think ours are the highest in the State. However, a look at the two charts below will show that in spite of the increased costs of producing electric and gas services and the high rates of inflation that have affected us, your gas and electric rates still compare favorably with those in other areas of the State.

It is fair that you ask how our rates here in the Rochester area will compare with other rates in the State after the proposed increases should be granted. The answer is our rates will still compare favorably even after an increase of the amount we are proposing.

We have prepared a factual folder describing all the reasons why RG&E must ask for permission to raise our gas and electric rates.

You should have received one at home. If you didn't for some reason or have misplaced it and would like another, please use the coupon at the bottom of the page and we will see that you receive one.

Average Monthly Utility Bills In New York State — Now	
Net Electric Bills (500 KWH)	Gas for Home Heating (150 CCF)
\$40.75 New York City ¹	\$45.16 Brooklyn
33.14 Nyack	43.57 Poughkeepsie
26.93 Mineola ²	42.27 New York City
25.77 Poughkeepsie	40.18 Mineola ²
18.52 Geneva	33.29 Rochester³
18.29 Rochester³	32.31 Syracuse
18.24 Buffalo/Syracuse	31.69 Binghamton
	29.55 Buffalo
	29.17 Geneva
	28.03 Nyack

(¹) Includes Revenue Tax Adjustment at 6.10%
(²) Includes Revenue Tax Adjustment at 1.00%
(³) Includes Revenue Tax Adjustment at 4.75%

Average Monthly Utility Bills In New York State — Proposed*	
Net Electric Bills (500 KWH)	Gas for Home Heating (150 CCF)
\$40.75 New York City ¹	\$45.16 Brooklyn
33.14 Nyack	43.57 Poughkeepsie
26.93 Mineola ²	42.27 New York City
25.77 Poughkeepsie	40.18 Mineola ²
*23.08 Rochester³	*35.59 Rochester³
18.52 Geneva	32.31 Syracuse
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(¹) Includes Revenue Tax Adjustment at 6.10%
(²) Includes Revenue Tax Adjustment at 1.00%
(³) Includes Revenue Tax Adjustment at 4.75%

Used Furniture and Appliances Needed!

The Monroe County Department of Social Services urgently needs your help in securing used appliances and furniture, in working order and good shape, for many families seeking them.

The most requested items are gas ranges, refrigerators, beds, dressers, sofas, chairs, and kitchen sets. The Department will arrange for a pick-up of donated items, which are then delivered to families on the waiting list.

Please call the Home Economics Division, 442-4580, and help a family out today.

Summer Hours for Brookwood

RG&E's Brookwood Science Information Center will be open to the public Sundays through Thursdays from 10 AM to 4 PM.

You'll find the short drive along Lake Ontario scenic and Brookwood's story of electrical generation fascinating. Admission and parking are free. Visit soon!

FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS COUPON TO: CJ 26
Dept. 34 Rochester Gas and Electric
89 East Avenue, Rochester, N.Y. 14649
546-2700

I would like more information on the following items:

Name _____
Address _____ Phone _____
Town _____ Zip Code _____