

Saving Energy Saves Money: Here's How

You may have seen an increase in your energy bills this winter due to colder than normal temperatures. If so, you're not alone. Read on to learn about several actions you can take to reduce your energy costs right away.

In 2017, Rhode Island was Ranked #3 in the country by an independent, national evaluation association (the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy) for its programs and policies that improve energy efficiency for residents and businesses. With these nationally recognized programs, Rhode Island's electric and gas utilities can help all types of customers – residential, income eligible, and businesses – to reduce their energy use and save money. Exploring these options and incentives should be your first step.

1) Schedule a no-cost energy assessment – There are many ways to start reducing your energy use this month at little to no cost. You can learn about them all by requesting a free energy assessment of your home, apartment, or business. A certified energy specialist will visit you to show you how to save energy. They may install energy-saving products, such as LED lightbulbs, at no cost to you to help lower your utility bills immediately. Additional rebates and incentives are available if you implement other energy upgrades like insulation or new high-efficiency heating, cooling, and water heating equipment. To request your free energy assessment, call 1-888-633-7947 or visit www.myngrid.com/energywise. If you live in Pascoag or New Shoreham, contact Pascoag Utility at 401-568-6222 or the Block Island Power Company at 401-466-5851, to learn more. Or, to find out if you qualify for low-income eligible services, contact your local Community Action Program to get started: www.ricommunityaction.org/member-agencies/.

2) Enroll in a budget plan – In the coldest days of winter and the hottest days of summer we use the most energy of the year, which causes our bills to spike. This can make it hard to pay your bills. However, you can remove the peaks and valleys from your energy bills by spreading your projected annual costs into more predictable monthly payments, making your bills easier to afford. For more information, visit www.ngrid.com/billhelp. If you are not a National Grid customer, contact your local utility to ask about available programs: Pascoag Utility (401-568-6222), Block Island Power Company (401-466-5851).

3) Sign up for payment assistance - If you are still struggling to pay your electricity and/or natural gas bills, there are programs that can help you. National Grid customers may view options for bill assistance at www.ngrid.com/billhelp, Block Island Power Company customers can learn more by calling 401-466-5851, and Pascoag Utility customers should call 401-568-6222 for more information.

4) Switch to an electricity supplier that offers a competitive rate – If you are a National Grid customer and you want to lower your electricity rate, you have options. Rhode Island has an online marketplace where you can shop for competitive electricity supply: www.ri.gov/app/dpuc/empowerri. This free online resource helps you compare energy supply prices and terms to meet your energy needs. You can use this information to make an informed choice when comparing National Grid electric supply rates to those offered by third-party competitive suppliers. However, make sure to read and understand all the terms before you switch. The Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities & Carriers is available to answer any questions you have about switching electricity suppliers. Call (401) 780-9700 or visit www.ripuc.org/utilityinfo/electric/faq1a.pdf.

The Rhode Island Energy Efficiency & Resource Management Council, a governor-appointed volunteer council, oversees the administration of energy efficiency programs that lower electricity and natural gas demand, and thus, lower costs for all Rhode Islanders. Learn more at: www.rieermc.ri.gov.

Energy efficiency is both a short-term and a long-term solution. Reducing your energy use now lowers your monthly bill and reduces stress on energy infrastructure, which keeps costs more stable and predictable throughout the seasons.

Together we can become more energy efficient and alleviate the pain of our energy costs.

SIGNATURE

Christopher Powell, Chairman

On behalf of the Rhode Island Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council

DRAFT