

Cold weather's impact on electric bills

This month, you might see a higher electric bill than typical because of the extended cold weather that hit the Tampa Bay area in January. That's in part because it takes more energy to heat areas and spaces in your home or business than to cool them. For comparison, look at the *Average kWh per day* column on your electric bill to see how your electric usage from January differs from past months' usage.

It's a top priority at Tampa Electric to help you save energy as a way to save money on your electric bill. All year round, our energy-saving programs can help you create a more energy-efficient home as a way to manage your energy costs. With our Free Home Energy Audit, a trained Tampa Electric team member will inspect your home to find ways it can be more energy efficient – and we'll give you eight free energy-efficient light bulbs too.

In addition to the energy-saving programs you can learn about at tampaelectric.com, here are some tips to help you save energy during cold weather:

- Set your heating equipment's thermostat at 70 degrees or lower.
- Keep your heating system serviced and cleaned for maximum efficiency.
- Lower the thermostat on your electric water heater to 120-140 degrees, and install flow-restricting devices in showers and faucets.
- When appropriate, open blinds on the southern or western exposures of your residence to allow sunlight that might provide additional warmth.
- Close fireplace dampers when not in use.
- Change or clean the filter on your heating system monthly.

Visit us online for more about our energy-saving programs and more tips that can help you balance your comfort at home with savings on your electric bill.

[» Learn More «](http://tampaelectric.com/saveenergy)

tampaelectric.com/saveenergy

Helping the homeless with clothing and hope

Debbie Esperon isn't just a Tampa Electric associate compensation analyst – she's an advocate for the homeless in our community too.



Her work began two years ago with a Hillsborough Community College film class project. She has since worked with organizations that help

the homeless, including the Salvation Army and University Community Church. The donation drives she led for the homeless in 2008 and 2009 encouraged her Tampa Electric team members to give hundreds of articles of clothing, blankets and pantry items.

“Not all homeless people are addicts or alcoholics; some simply can no longer support themselves, and many have lost their jobs in the recession,” Esperon said. “The fact that 16 percent of our community's homeless are children underscores how important it is to work to bring help and hope to those who truly need it.”

COMMUNITY

Please be counted during the 2010 Census – your questionnaire will arrive in March

The 2010 Census is upon us. An accurate count of Florida's population is essential to the future of the Sunshine State. Florida's federal funding during the next 10 years depends on an accurate count of Florida's population. In addition, Florida's representation in the U.S. House of Representatives is based on census numbers. Census data also is used for planning Florida's schools, infrastructure and government services. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's answers with anyone. For more information, log onto SunshineCensus2010.com.

2010 Free Men's Health Forum

Moffitt Cancer Center, in partnership with other local health providers, offers a free, bilingual Spanish/English event with wellness checkups, cancer screenings, education about men's health issues and more. The event is 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 6 at the Marshall Center on the USF Tampa campus. For more information, visit mhftampa.com or call **813-745-1808**.

The 2010 Florida Strawberry Festival*

"Come celebrate with us!" is the theme of the 75th Florida Strawberry Festival, March 4-14 in Plant City. For details on ticket prices, special days and discounts, ride specials, event schedules and to review the 2010 star-studded headline entertainment lineup, visit flstrawberryfestival.com or call **813-752-9194**. Discount admission ticket prices are \$8 for adults and \$4 for children ages six to 12. Children five and under admitted free with paid adult. Gate admission tickets as well as headline entertainment tickets can also be purchased by calling **813-754-1996**.

Follow Tampa Electric on Twitter

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What's happening? Visit twitter.com/tampaelectric and join today to start receiving Tampa Electric's tweets via mobile texting, instant message or the Web.



Momentary interruptions of power and what you can do

While Tampa Electric's protective equipment works automatically to prevent long power outages, short circuits beyond our control – a tree limb or animal touching power lines or another problem – can cause momentary interruptions lasting less than a second. These interruptions are the result of a device on our system designed to automatically open the circuit to prevent damage that can lead to an extended outage. To minimize outages, we trim trees near electrical infrastructure and work with environmental experts to prevent animals from making contact with power lines.

If momentary interruptions leave the displays on your home's digital clocks blinking 12:00, there are things you can do. Before buying a TV, DVD player, microwave or other appliance with a digital clock, look for models with a battery backup and test them by turning them off to see if they can ride through a short outage.

At tampaelectric.com, click *Residential* and then *Smart and Safe* for more tips.

New program helps lower your electric bill

Electricity available for your home at a lower cost – it's why a growing number of Tampa Electric customers are using our new Energy PlannerSM program. With Energy Planner, you can take advantage of electric rates that are less than the amount residential customers pay under the normal residential service rates. The lower rates are available 87 percent of the total hours in a year. Signing up for Energy Planner is free.

When you participate in Energy Planner, Tampa Electric will install a free, easy-to-use, programmable thermostat in your home. The thermostat will let you choose how to run your central heating and cooling system, your electric water heater and pool pump to take advantage of lower rates for electricity.

Energy Planner has four pricing rates for electricity: Low, Medium, High and Critical. Your usage, the time of day and the day of the week affect the price you pay. By programming your pool pump and water heater to only run during the Low and Medium rates, and by programming your air

conditioning and heating equipment to run a little less during higher-cost periods, you can save money. You also can program your air conditioning and heating settings to automatically adjust throughout the day according to your desired comfort level and the pricing rates. The Critical rate cannot be used more than 1.5 percent of the total hours in a year. As a pilot program, Energy Planner helped participating customers save up to 10 percent annually on energy costs.

Learn more about Energy Planner at **tampaelectric.com** by clicking *Residential* and then *Save Energy*. To sign up, call the phone number for Tampa Electric Customer Care that serves your area listed in the gray box to the right (select *Home Account*, then *Energy Saving Programs* to reach the Energy Management Services Department).

* Due to equipment compatibility limitations, Energy Planner is not currently available for multifamily, mobile and manufactured homes.

» Learn More «

tampaelectric.com/saveenergy

WELLNESS TIP

The American Institute for Preventative Medicine urges everyone to find time this year for a basic medical exam. One of the best ways to address potential health concerns is through early detection and with the advice of your doctor. To learn more about the benefits of preventative medicine, go to the American Institute for Preventative Medicine's Web site at **healthylife.com**.

To search for job openings, visit **tampaelectric.com** and click *Careers*.

We're here to serve you:

Remember, you can handle almost all your account needs and hear a list of payment agencies by using our automated phone system. Just follow the voice options when you call – it's easy.

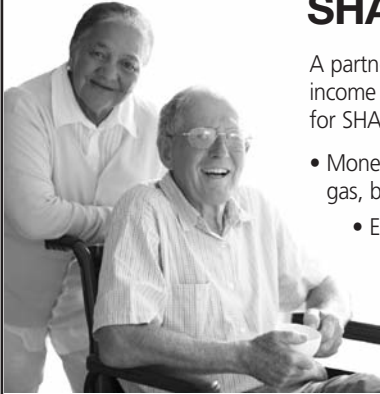
Customer Care:

Hillsborough: 813-223-0800
Polk: 863-299-0800
Others: 1-888-223-0800
Toll Free

Power Outages: 1-877-588-1010
Toll Free

Open Lines is also available online at **tampaelectric.com**. All offers are redeemable with a printed copy of this issue.

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SHARE for those in need

A partnership between Tampa Electric and the Salvation Army, SHARE lets you help low-income elderly and disabled customers pay emergency energy costs. Customers who qualify* for SHARE benefits must have temporary or permanent disabilities or be age 60 or over.

- Money you contribute to SHARE helps pay home energy-related costs, including natural gas, bottled gas, oil and electric bills.
 - Every dollar you donate goes directly to SHARE.
 - Your donation is tax-deductible.

Donate at tampaelectric.com/community or call 813-226-0055 to learn how you can SHARE.

**Eligibility options determined by the Salvation Army. Recent cold weather may not qualify as emergency-related.*

LIFE RUNS ON ENERGY®
tampaelectric.com



Working with the community to keep our streets bright

At Tampa Electric, we're working with our customers and the community to help ensure malfunctioning lights are working again as quickly as possible. How can you help? Simple.

If you see a malfunctioning streetlight:

- Write down the six- or 10-digit light ID tag number on the light pole, or write down the nearest street address or intersection to the light.
- Complete the convenient *Lights Out* form on tampaelectric.com.
- Or call: **813-223-0800** (in Hillsborough County), **863-299-0800** (in Polk County) or **1-888-223-0800** (outside of Hillsborough or Polk counties). Press option 4 for streetlights.

When you report a malfunctioning streetlight, it is important that you provide the location of the streetlight so that technicians are sent to the correct location, and that you provide your contact information so that we may acknowledge your request.

By working together, we can all help keep our streets bright.



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