



Power Lines

Fall 2012

A Quarterly Publication for Shakopee Public Utilities' Residential Customers

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SPU OFFICE HOURS

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The amount of money the average U.S. household spends each year to power electronic devices while they are off (or in standby mode)

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

The typical U.S. household has 24 electronic devices slowly sucking energy – Energy Vampires

Vampire power is the energy used by some products when they are turned off but still plugged into a power outlet. In addition to your home office and home electronics devices, cell phone chargers, iPods, power tools, etc. suck energy when they're plugged into an outlet, even if they aren't charging.

Slay Energy Vampires

- Enable the power management settings on your computer and monitor, so they go into power save mode when not in use
- Plug electronic devices into a power strip — one for your computer and peripheral equipment and another for your home electronics (TV, DVD, VCR, gaming system, stereo). When the equipment is not being used, turn the power strip off, which completely disconnects the power supply. Remember, though, if you use a digital video recorder (DVR), the device requires power to function as intended.
- Take charge. Unplug your cell phone chargers, camera chargers, battery chargers, power adapters, etc. These devices draw some energy even when not charging (or connected) to the end-use product.
- Look for the ENERGY STAR label. ENERGY STAR qualified products are among the lowest power consuming devices in their category while in standby mode.

For more energy saving tips visit www.energysavers.gov/your_home

Save Energy & Money

POWER MANAGEMENT

Save \$50 annually on your electric bills



Cold Weather Rule

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule was established by the Minnesota Legislature and the Public Utilities Commission to protect residential customers from electrical service disconnection between Oct. 15 and Apr. 15.

Saving energy is as easy as a click of the mouse. ENERGY STAR® estimates that you'll save \$50 each year on your electric bill by activating your computer's power management features. The power management settings are not usually enabled when a computer is purchased, so you may need to manually activate the settings – through your computer's operating system software – to take advantage of the energy savings.

For energy savings and convenience, the EPA recommends the following guidelines when activating the power management settings:

- Set your monitor to enter standby or sleep mode after 5 to 20 minutes of inactivity.
- Set your hard drive to enter standby after 15 to 60 minutes of inactivity.

ENERGY STAR offers step-by-step instructions for activating the power management features for your computer's operating system. For details, visit www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=power_mgt.pr_power_mgt_users

Make sure your monitors, printers and other accessories are plugged into a power strip/surge protector. When this equipment is not in use for extended periods, turn off the switch on the power strip to prevent them from drawing power even when shut off.

A note about screen savers. Screen savers are not energy savers. Using a screen saver may, in fact, use more energy than not using one, and the power-down feature may not work if you have a screen saver activated. Modern LCD color monitors do not need screen savers at all.

2012 Rebate Funds Exhausted

The strong response to SPU's 2012 Conservation Improvement Programs has exhausted all available funding. As a result, the 2012 residential rebate programs have been discontinued.

"Rebates are issued on a first-come, first-served basis. With increased awareness of the benefits realized through energy efficiency measures, rebate requests are at an all-time high," said Julie Ambach, SPU's marketing director. "Because all rebate funding has been exhausted, the popular, fall CFL Instant rebate program will not be offered this year."

The 2013 Residential Rebate program will be announced in January, 2013. The program will offer rebates for a variety of ENERGY STAR products purchased between January 1 and November 30, 2013.

Cold Weather Rule protection is **ONLY** available if all three of the following conditions exist:

1. The disconnection would affect your primary heating source;
2. Your household meets Cold Weather Rule payment plan guidelines;
3. You and Shakopee Public Utilities enter into a mutually agreed-upon payment plan.

The Cold Weather Rule does not forbid all winter disconnections. If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection this winter, **you must act immediately.** If you choose not to assert your rights, or if you choose not to enter into a mutually agreed-upon payment plan, your service may be disconnected.

If you receive a Notice of Proposed Disconnection, you will also receive:

- information about your rights and responsibilities under the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule
- details on payment plans and how to avoid disconnection
- information about ways to reduce energy use
- a Third Party Notice Request form
- a list of agencies that help pay utility bills
- a list of weatherization providers

If you are in need of energy assistance, SPU recommends you contact one of the following energy assistance providers.

CAP Agency (LIHEAP)

www.capagency.org 952.496.2125

Salvation Army - HeatShare

www.heatshare-mn.org..... 651-322-3510

Scott County Human Services Fuel Assistance

www.co.scott.mn.us 952.445.7751

Visit www.spucweb.com for complete details. Applications for Cold Weather Rule protection are available at the SPU Service Center, or call 952.345.2482 to request an application be mailed to you.



Automatic Bill Pay makes paying your utility bill a cinch!

It's Easy

Automatic Bill Pay is a simple way to have your utility bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account each month. It's an electronic funds transfer system that saves you the trouble of writing checks and buying stamps.

It's easy to sign up. Just complete the authorization form, attach a voided check (for checking accounts) or a deposit slip (for savings accounts), and fax the authorization form to 952.445.7767 or mail it to:

SPU Billing Department • PO Box 470 • Shakopee, MN 55379-0470

Once you're enrolled in Automatic Bill Pay, you'll continue to receive your SPU statement at your usual billing time. Please continue to pay your bill by check/cash until you receive written notification from SPU letting you know when ACH will become effective.

It's Convenient

Once Automatic Bill Pay is confirmed, the payment will be transferred from your account on the due date, so there's never a late fee!

It's Free

This is a free service. SPU does not charge you for automatic payments.

Relax knowing your bill is paid

- Each month, your utility bill payment will be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account.
- You still receive an itemized SPU statement for your records.
- Your payments will be recorded on your bank statements.
- If you have a question about your bill, simply call the number shown on your statement.
- You can stop any withdrawal by notifying us five days before the anticipated withdrawal date.
- You may discontinue your participation in the Automatic Bill Pay program at any time by contacting us.

Customer Information

SPU Billing Account No.: -

Residential & Commercial Customers
Location #: _____

I _____ residing at _____ authorize Shakopee Public Utilities to perform the necessary applications for payment of my utility bill through automatic payment from my checking or savings account. I understand this is based upon approval, with a minimum of a one year satisfactory payment history. I understand I will continue to receive a monthly statement itemizing the current charges for the month. I also understand I must attach a VOIDED CHECK FROM MY CHECKING ACCOUNT OR A DEPOSIT SLIP FROM MY SAVINGS ACCOUNTS to this application and MAIL or FAX it to Shakopee Public Utilities.

I understand that a \$35 charge will be added to my SPU bill in the event there is non-sufficient funds in my account.

Bank Name _____

Bank Address _____

Customer Signature _____

Acct No _____

Routing Number _____

Bank Phone _____

Date _____

For Shakopee Public Utilities Use

Authorization Signature _____

Date _____

in this ISSUE



Shakopee Public Utilities
“Lighting the Way—Yesterday, Today and Beyond”

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CELEBRATE PUBLIC POWER

AN AMERICAN TRADITION THAT WORKS

Customer Appreciation Open House

Oct. 9–12 • 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Shakopee Public Utilities • 255 Sarazin Street • Shakopee, MN



The Spotlight's on... Christian Fenstermacher, Engineering Technician

Learning never stops for Christian Fenstermacher, the newest addition to SPU's engineering department. "I am working toward achieving my license in electrical engineering, so I am continuously learning new things to expand my growing knowledge of distribution power systems," said Christian.

Christian initially joined the engineering department as a summer intern in June 2011. He became a full-time, permanent Engineering Technician after receiving his Bachelors of Science in Electrical Engineering degree from the University of Minnesota.



Christian Fenstermacher

The engineering department is responsible for the design or review of all new electric and water facilities, as well as the design of system protection devices to help ensure high quality and reliable power to SPU customers. The department is also responsible for the maintenance and protection of SPU's existing GIS mapping system.

Fast Fact

Utilities worldwide use GIS mapping to manage and map the location of overhead and underground circuits.

SPU manages 100 miles of overhead circuits and 240 miles of underground circuits on its GIS system.

Christian, who grew up on his family's farm outside of Spring Valley, MN, currently resides in Shakopee. Christian enjoys spending his spare time outdoors running, swimming and playing sports. When he's not playing sports, Christian enjoys watching the Twins, Vikings, Wild and U of M Gophers.

Welcome, Christian!