

## Managing Your Energy Costs While You're Away

When you leave on a vacation, it's important to remember your maps, traveler's checks and luggage. However, it's equally as important to prepare your home for your departure.

Often, while you're away, your home is using more energy than it needs. This can increase your energy bill and cost you money. That's why APS has prepared these tips for managing your energy costs while you're away on vacation.

### The Big Users

These big users of electricity can have a significant impact on the energy your home uses while you're away.

- Heat pump or air conditioner – If you prefer to leave your heat pump or air conditioner on while you're gone, set it between 85 to 90 degrees. For each degree you raise the temperature, you'll save 2 to 3 percent on the cooling portion of your electric bill. Remember though, turning your thermostat to a very high setting may affect how hard your refrigerator and freezer have to work to stay cool.
- Swimming pool pump – If your pool pump is not operated with a timer, it will run 24-hours a day while you're gone. If you normally turn the pump off for a period of time each day, the 24-hour operation can result in a large increase in your usage.
- Water heater – If you don't attend to your water heater before you leave, it will continue to work to maintain water temperature. Turn it off at the circuit breaker. (Before you turn the breaker back on, run water from the hot water faucet to be certain the water heater still has water in it.)
- Refrigerator and freezer – If you'll be gone for a few days, turn your refrigerator's thermostat to a warmer setting — 42 degrees for your refrigerator, 5 degrees for your freezer. If you'll be away for as long as four weeks or more, you may want to clean it out and turn it off.

### Before You Leave

- Turn off lights except those needed for security. Use timers to control security lighting.
- Unplug waterbed heaters. Like water heaters, waterbed heaters operate to keep the water at your selected temperature.
- Unplug "instant on" televisions.
- If you're going on a lengthy vacation, sign up for APS' SurePay program. SurePay allows you to pay your bill automatically from your bank account.

## When You Return

If you are currently on APS' Combined Advantage or Demand Advantage plan, be sure to spread out the usage of your major appliances when you return home.

For example, if you turn the heat pump or air conditioner back on, do the laundry and everyone in your family lines up to take hot showers, you may end up with a much higher bill because of the increased demand charge. For this reason, it's a good idea to wait until the house cools off and the heat pump stops running before you take showers and do the laundry.

If you are a **Time Advantage** or **Combined Advantage** customer, you'll save a considerable amount if you wait to do these activities during lower cost, off-peak hours (Monday through Friday, 9 p.m. to 9 a.m.; and all day and night on Saturday and Sunday).

## Protect Your Home While You're Away

- Secure all windows and doors.
- Use a timer to turn a radio on and off throughout the day and evening.
- Use a timer to turn lights on and off during the evening. Close the draperies in at least one lighted room, or a burglar could walk or drive by and see that no one is home.
- Use a timer or motion detectors to control outdoor lighting – making sure your yard is well lit at night.
- Ask the police if they have a “vacation home check” program. If they do, ask them to check your home while you're away.
- Have your lawn watered and cut, and have all shrubberies cared for.
- Have mail, newspapers and other delivered items picked up by a trusted neighbor or stopped until you return.
- Have a neighbor put trash in your garbage cans, and on collection day, have the cans placed where they are normally emptied by the trash collection service.
- Leave a phone number where you can be reached in case of emergency with a neighbor or family member.
- Consider leaving a key with a family member or trusted neighbor.

## Want More Information? Have Questions? Contact APS.

APS is available to assist you 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. In the metro Phoenix area call 602-371-7171, elsewhere call 800-253-9405 or logon to [aps.com](http://aps.com).