

Citizens Utility Board: Heat warning: tips for saving energy while staying cool

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With some of the hottest temperatures to hit Wisconsin in years gripping the state, CUB wants you to be safe, check on your neighbors and try to use energy efficiently as you're working to stay as cool as possible.

Cities and counties around Wisconsin announced that cooling centers will be open Wednesday to accommodate people who are suffering from the heat. More information is available [here](#), and [here](#), and [here](#). [ReadyWisconsin](#) advises to head to a local library or cooling center to get some relief.

For parts of southern Wisconsin, the heat wave is expected to result in the highest temperatures and "feels-like" conditions in more than four years.

Local health departments issued advisories encouraging Wisconsinites to stay hydrated, wear cool, comfortable clothing and stay up to date on the latest forecast.

No shutoffs: The [Public Service Commission](#) issued a reminder to residential customers that a utility may not disconnect service while a heat advisory, heat warning or heat emergency issued by the National Weather Service is in effect. Find out more [here](#).

Here are some summer energy tips to keep comfort - and energy costs - in mind.

Stay safe while reducing energy waste. Raising your thermostat by a few degrees and using a ceiling fan can lower air conditioning costs. The Department of

Energy suggests setting the thermostat to 78 degrees. But don't raise the temperature to an unsafe level. See more from [Energy Star](#).

- **Help your home run more efficiently.** Have you forgotten to clean the coils behind your fridge or replace your home heating and cooling system's air filter? This may be a good time to do that.
- **Don't let chilled energy leak straight outside.** Seal the gaps around windows and doors. Shut blinds and shades during daytime hours to keep the sun from heating the indoors which makes your air conditioner strain to keep up.
- **Use fans, but don't rely solely on a fan.** Fans alone aren't adequate in a heat wave, but they can be used with an air conditioner—so you don't have to blast the AC. Run a ceiling fan counter-clockwise, from your position looking up at it, to create a downdraft, and make sure to turn off your fan when you leave the room. (Fans cool people, not rooms.)
- **Delay energy-consuming and heat-causing tasks.** Avoid using the oven and delay other dishwashing, cooking and laundry until cooler night or early morning hours, if possible.
- **Turn off extra appliances to save energy and keep cool.** That includes TVs, computers, laptops and lights. Unplug your phone charger when not in use. Do what mom always said and remember to turn off the light when you leave the room.
- **Looking forward,** take advantage of the [state Focus on Energy program](#) to help you prepare for the next heat wave, or to help keep your home warm this winter.
- **Consider getting a smart power strip.** For computers and entertainment systems a [smart power strip](#) can be helpful. These strips help you cut down energy costs associated with products that go into standby mode.
- **Manage your energy use with a smart thermostat.** Smart thermostats can produce savings for you. They are currently on sale thanks to discounts from manufacturers as well as from the state Focus on Energy program.
- **Smart thermostats and power strips** are available with discounts at [the Focus on Energy Marketplace](#).
- **Get free energy-saving gizmos.** Most Wisconsinites are eligible to receive a free energy-saving pack from the state Focus on Energy program. [Check them out here](#). You'll need to provide your utility account number when ordering the free pack.
- **Find out your home's "MPG."** Try Focus on Energy's online [home energy](#)

[assessment](#) tool. Homeowners who want to take steps to cut energy waste can hire an energy auditor to evaluate which projects make sense to shore up their home's comfort and efficiency. Energy audits currently qualify for a [federal tax credit](#). Getting that evaluation will help you prepare for the [rebates](#) available now through Focus on Energy and more incentives coming in 2024 via the IRA.