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### NPPD Offers Energy Savings Tips

Columbus, Neb. – It has been a cool and wet spring in Nebraska, but as the official start of summer nears, temperatures are starting to rise. And with higher temperatures comes an increase in electricity usage, which could result in higher than normal electric bills.

The Nebraska Public Power District says there are many simple, cost-effective measures that can be implemented to lower your electric usage between June and September that will not require a large upfront investment.

The best place to start with energy-saving tips is at the thermostat. Air conditioning represents up to 70 percent of the average home or apartment's summer electric bill. If you have a programmable thermostat, set it between 78 and 82 degrees if you plan to leave for an extended period of time, by using this temperature range, the air conditioning will not have to work so long when you do return home. For every degree below 78, cooling costs can increase by three to four percent.

Fans can help offset thermostat settings and a ceiling fan will make an individual feel four degrees cooler. You should turn fans off when you leave the room.

Closing curtains during the day on windows receiving direct sunlight can help. Solar screens are also a good investment as they significantly reduce heat gain, especially on east and west facing windows.

Turning off all unnecessary lights is another option. Any kind of light gives off heat, which makes air conditioning run longer. Switching to LED bulbs can reduce the heat coming from the lights.

Unplugging any devices when not in use, such as televisions, computers and cell phone chargers, can help eliminate "phantom loads" which account for about five to 10 percent of overall home energy use.

Use a microwave or grill, when possible, to limit the amount of heat generated within the home. Another good alternative is to set the water heater temperature to 120 degrees, thus reducing energy usage. Low-flow shower heads and aerators for faucets are easy water savers that lower energy usage.

Information on NPPD's energy efficiency incentives program and guidelines are available at [www.nppd.com/save-energy/for-your-home](http://www.nppd.com/save-energy/for-your-home).

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