

Questions ?

Our **Third Party Notification** program is set up to help customers stay on top of their bills. This service is particularly useful for customers who have reading, language or memory difficulties, who are seriously ill or who frequently travel. At the customer's direction, a third party – a relative, friend or neighbor – will receive notice if your electric service is going to be disconnected due to non-payment and can remind you that your bill is due. For more information, visit our Web site at www.wmeco.com or call **1.800.286.2000**.

IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT YOUR BILL, PLEASE CALL 1-800-286-2000 (781-4300 within the Springfield calling area). OR, WRITE TO:
ROBERT G. JOHNSTON,
CUSTOMER SERVICES,
NORTHEAST UTILITIES,
P.O. BOX 270,
HARTFORD, CT 06141-0270.

Pay your WMECO bill online, anytime—free at wmeco.com. Or use our easy direct debit system! Call to enroll today!



**Western Massachusetts
Electric**

The Northeast Utilities System

**Delivering the Energy
of Western Massachusetts**



ALTHOUGH SUPPLY RATES FOR BASIC SERVICE CUSTOMERS ARE DECREASING IN JULY, THE INCREASE IN TEMPERATURE DURING THE

ConsumerNews

W M E C O

SUMMER MONTHS CAN ALSO MEAN HIGHER ENERGY CONSUMPTION – RESULTING IN HIGHER BILLS. THAT'S BECAUSE MANY APPLIANCES USED TO KEEP US COOL AND COMFORTABLE ALSO USE MORE ELECTRICITY. CHECK INSIDE FOR SOME REASONS WHY YOU COULD SEE A HIGHER-THAN-NORMAL BILL.

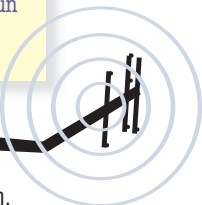
Reasons for a higher-than-normal bill:

- ✗ Fans and air conditioners
- ✗ Refrigerators and freezers running longer in warmer weather
- ✗ Sump pumps and dehumidifiers running more often on humid days
- ✗ Pumps and filter systems on swimming pools

The good news is by changing a few old habits you could save energy and money. Here are some ways to save in the summer:

- ✓ Hang clothes to dry instead of running the clothes dryer
- ✓ Stay cool by using fans instead of an air conditioner
- ✓ If you do use an air conditioner, clean the filter regularly and make sure it's sized properly for the room it is in
- ✓ Plant trees on the south and west sides of your home to provide shade
- ✓ On hot summer days, close your blinds, shades and drapes to block out the sun and heat during the day

SAFETY FIRST



Summer storms can bring heavy wind and rain, and sometimes result in power outages. After a storm, be on the look out for downed power lines. If you see a downed line, consider it live and stay away. Maintain a distance of at least 10 feet from downed wires and anything they are in contact with. Do not touch anything that is on or near a power line, such as trees or tree limbs, cars, ladders, fences or even puddles of water. A power line that touches the ground can shock or kill you even if you do not touch it.

ConsumerNews WMECO

“Phantom” Electric Load— What does it Cost?

Have you ever stopped to consider that many electronic devices in your home are using electricity – even when you're not using them? Laptop computers, answering machines, cell phone chargers, and even electric toothbrushes and shavers are drawing electricity all the time unless they're unplugged or shut off with a power strip. All those plugged-in, instant-on devices can add up on your electric bill. It's sometimes referred to as “phantom load.”

Some tips to reduce phantom load at your house:

- *Unplug what you're not using*
- *Install power strips and turn them off when devices that are plugged in are not in use*
- *Look for energy efficient appliances with the ENERGY STAR® label*



CommunityConnections

In May, WMECO held three “Utility Days” in Franklin, Hampden and Berkshire Counties where customers who were having difficulty paying their bills could get connected with payment assistance programs, energy efficiency information, and more. WMECO Customer Service representatives were on hand and helped 200 customers. We will be holding additional “Utility Days” this fall.