



**Western Massachusetts
Electric**
A Northeast Utilities Company

JANUARY 2011

Happy New Year!

The dedicated employees of WMECo want to thank you for your business in 2010! We work hard on your behalf each and every day to keep safe, reliable power flowing to more than 200,000 customers in 59 communities throughout western Massachusetts. Our very best wishes to you for a healthy, happy and bright New Year!



Phantom Load – What is it Costing You?

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, televisions, 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 or
- ▶ Plug electronics into an advanced power strip – it knows when devices aren't being used and will automatically stop the draw of power to them
- ▶ Look for energy-efficient appliances with the ENERGY STAR® label

In addition, WMECo offers energy efficiency programs under the Mass Save umbrella that renters and homeowners can take advantage of. Through home energy assessments and weatherization measures, we can help you achieve long-term gains in energy efficiency.

To learn more, visit www.masssave.com.



Take the Surprise Out of Your Bills with "Budget Billing"

Budget Billing is a free service that helps you manage your expenses by equalizing your monthly bills. Based on past billing records, we'll divide your annual usage into 11 equal payments. On the twelfth month, we'll settle your account, adding in any over or under payments. Accounts are reviewed monthly, and budgeted amounts are adjusted if necessary.

To sign up, visit www.wmeco.com or call **413.781.4300** in the Springfield calling area or **1.877.OK.WMECO (1.877.659.6326)**.



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Heating Your Home Wisely

To save energy in your home and reduce heating costs, follow these simple steps:

- Have your heating system professionally checked once a year and change filters regularly to keep your unit running efficiently
- Make sure heating registers and vents are not blocked by draperies, furniture, rugs or clothing
- For every degree you lower your thermostat during the winter, you can save between 3-5 percent on your heating bill
- Close outside doors as quickly as possible – just a few seconds with the door open lets in a blast of cold air
- Check your home for holes or cracks in the walls, floors and ceilings and seal them immediately
- Use weather-stripping around door frames to keep drafts out
- Check the insulation in your attic, ceilings, walls and floors and add it where you can
- Get a home energy assessment. Learn more by visiting www.masssave.com

Western Mass Saves

Have you joined WesternMassSaves.com to get rewarded for saving energy?

You can review hundreds of ways to reduce your electric use, create an energy savings plan, and track your results each month. You also can earn points for use at places you already shop. Register today to start saving tomorrow!



Go to www.WesternMassSaves.com to sign up for this free program, using your WMECo account number.



Reporting Power Outages

When inclement weather strikes, you can count on us to be there anytime, any day of the year. Our automated response system is an easy way to let us know about a problem. Simply dial **413.781.4300** (in the Springfield area) or **1.877.OK.WMECO (1.877.659.6326)** and follow the instructions to report a power outage or emergency. The information you provide helps us better pinpoint the location of the damage for safer and quicker restoration, so be as specific as possible. Remember, always assume downed power lines are live and stay away – at least 10 feet!