



Ripley Power and Light will be closed...

- Friday, April 18, Good Friday
- Monday, May 26, Memorial Day



Pay your bill online and more
... at ripleypower.com

Office Hours & Locations

*We are open 47 hours each week
to serve you better!*

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

You can pay your utility bill at ...

- 150 S. Main St. in Ripley
- 409 S. Church St. in Halls

If you have not been receiving your bills, call our office immediately so we can verify your mailing address.



731-635-2323 ■ 731-836-7595
www.ripleypower.com



A drive-through window

Though outside work has been slowed some because of bad weather, work continues on adding a drive-through window at the Ripley Power and Light Company's main office. The drive-through will be able to accommodate two vehicles at a time. Construction, which also includes work inside, should be finished later this spring.

**You could be saving a lot of money.
Find out how with a Home Energy Evaluation.**

Get a free home Energy Evaluation online at EnergyRight.com and you'll receive a free energy-saving kit worth more than \$40. Then start hanging on to your money. EnergyRight.com

energyright solutions

Ripley

POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

Spring 2014

Ice hangs on trees and power lines on a road near Ripley.

Yes, it was cold out there!

This winter reinforces need for customers to understand and practice energy efficiency

When it's cold and windy, the cold has a way of creeping into our homes, through cracks around our doors and windows, poorly insulated attics and walls, even our heating ductwork and other energy-inefficient areas.

This past winter was colder than normal, and we felt it. Many of us reacted to the prospect of higher energy bills by looking for ways to conserve and bundling up with an extra layer of clothing or blanket. Others were victims of poorly insulated homes and unaware of the right ways to try to reduce their energy use.

High electric bills are still arriving at customers' homes. "Many people don't understand why their bill is so high," said Mike Demeris, Energy Services Specialist at Ripley Power and Light Co. "They don't understand how the cold and wind affects their bills. They don't understand what to do to keep their energy use down."

Actions taken by some customers only increased their energy use, said Lucy Harrison, Ripley Power and Light Office Manager. Her staff has fielded many questions from customers about their bills and their energy use, she said. As they explained what to do, they realized that many customers just didn't know the best ways to conserve.

Feeling a chill in their homes, some customers kept raising their thermostats trying to stay warm and kept them high even

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The cold, hard facts

December 2013 in Lauderdale County was six percent colder than normal with at least 24 nights below freezing.

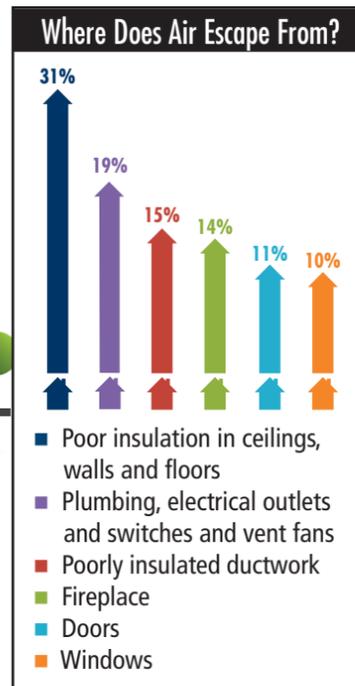
January 2014 was worse. The month was 18 percent colder than normal with seven nights recording temperatures below 9 degrees and 13 more nights with temperatures below 25 degrees. In fact, every night that month had temperatures below 41 degrees.

The wind made it even colder, said Mike Demeris, Ripley Power and Light's Energy Services Specialist. "A key factor is the wind. The wind is bringing cold into the house. It is penetrating the envelope of the house, making it colder inside." He talked to customers who told him they would raise their thermostats and they were still cold. Your heating unit has to work harder the colder it gets, he explained.

"The higher you set your thermostat, the higher the difference between the temperature in your home and the temperature outside, and the faster your heat flows from inside to outside. And cold air finds ways to creep into your home through cracks, single-pane windows, vents under the house, thresholds and other places."



Let us count the ways heat can escape our homes



This winter reinforces need for customers to understand ...

Continued from previous page ...

when they left their homes or went to sleep. Others would turn off the heat completely when they left the house and turn the thermostat over 70 when they got back, making their heating units work even harder. Some customers depended too much on “chill chasers,” small electric heaters, which use extra energy.

One elderly customer, living in a small home, heated her house by turning on three burners on her electric stove. She thought she had a leak in her gas-heating unit and was afraid to turn it on. That month, her kitchen was more than toasty and her electric bill was \$500.

“People don’t understand,” Harrison said. “We found that we must keep educating our customers about how to conserve energy use.”

In her own, all-electric home, she kept her thermostat in the mid to low 60s and bundled up. She covered up places where she felt cold coming in the house. She even put a piece of paper towel in her door’s keyhole after feeling cold coming through. She hung a comforter over her patio sliding glass doors because she didn’t have curtains there.

“It’s not the lights,” she said. “It’s not the TV increasing your electric bill. It’s your heating system and water heater. Set your thermostat at 68 degrees and lower if you can. If you’re cold, put on a sweatshirt. Keep your water heater at 120 degrees.”



Turning up your thermostat higher and higher sends more heat (and money) out the window and other areas of your home.

What you can do now!

It’s too late to lower your winter’s electric usage, but it’s not too late to start conserving energy now.

- This month, in March, try setting your thermostat two degrees lower than you normally do. Then leave it there. Lower it some more if you are going to be gone for more than three hours or if you are going to bed.

- Don’t keep changing your thermostat. And don’t completely turn off your heating unit.
- Change your heating unit’s filter. Then do it again in 30 days if you are still using the unit. Do the same this summer when you turn on your air conditioner.

Think ahead ...

While high energy bills and cold weather are still on your mind, start planning now to be more energy efficient.

- If you don’t have a heat pump or if your heat pump is more than 10 years old, get a new one. A heat pump is the best way to heat and cool your home in our climate. With the thermostat set at a recommended 68 in the winter and 78 in the summer, your heat pump will circulate warm air evenly throughout every room and keep you pleasantly cool in the summer.

A gas heating system can fluctuate the temperature in your home and thus use more energy in the process, Demeris said. It warms the house. Then it turns off when it reaches the correct temperature. The house begins to cool. The gas unit turns on

Top 10 Low Cost Steps You Can Do Before Next Winter

- 1 Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors to stop air leaks. Seal any gaps in floors and walls around pipes and electrical wiring.
- 2 Change filters monthly; use your monthly utility bill as your reminder.
- 3 Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents.
- 4 Repair air leaks and seal and insulate heating system ductwork.
- 5 Add insulation to your attic, crawl space and any accessible exterior walls. Add pipe insulation to the first five feet of water pipe coming from your water heater. Install light switch and electrical outlet seals on exterior walls.
- 6 Install an ENERGY STAR® programmable thermostat appropriate for your type of heating system.
- 7 Look for the ENERGY STAR® label when replacing appliances.
- 8 Wrap your water heater with insulation or install an insulating blanket.
- 9 Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads and repair leaky faucets.
- 10 Use power strips for home electronics and turn off power strips when equipment is not in use. TVs and DVD players, for example, still use power when the switch is off.

Source: TVA

again to catch up to the correct temperature.

Meanwhile, a heat pump is consistently heating your home and not using as much energy, he said. “The greatest thing you have is a steady temperature, and that’s comfort.”

Know how much electricity you use daily

Customers who prepay for their electricity can opt to have an in-home monitor that records their daily use and tells them how much money is in their electric account so they know when to buy more. They also can receive a text message or email each morning about the previous day’s usage.

For \$5 a month, any customer can receive that daily text or email, Harrison said. “Spending that \$5 is a lot better than being surprised at the end of month. I saw it cost me \$15 to heat my house one day. I knew I couldn’t afford that for 30 days, so I turned the thermostat down. With a daughter still in college, my husband and I try to keep it down as low as we can stand it. We do what we have to do.”

We’re here to help

“We don’t want our customers to have high electric bills,” said Mike Allmand, President and CEO of Ripley Power and Light.

“We want you to know the best way to conserve energy. We offer rebates when you buy an electric heat pump or an electric water heater. We offer financing with payments spread out on your monthly utility bills so your purchases are more affordable.

“None of us can control the weather, but we can control our thermostats and how we use energy.”

The utility’s website at ripleypower.com has a lot of information on ways to conserve and programs offered that will help customers save money.

How much energy does your home lose?

Ripley Power and Light and Tennessee Valley Authority offer two ways for you to do an energy assessment of your home.

- Do it online at no cost at energyright.com.
- Have an in-home energy evaluation. Call 866-441-1430 to schedule your inspection.

Take the online energy evaluation

Wonder where your money is going? Find out with a home energy evaluation at energyright.com.

When you complete the do-it-yourself energy evaluation, TVA will send you a customized energy report to help you understand where your home is wasting energy – and how you can fix those expensive leaks. It addresses areas such as heating and cooling, lighting, water heating and electrical appliances. The tips are personalized based on your answers about your home and energy use.

Besides the energy report, TVA will send you a free energy conservation kit, worth more than \$40. The kit includes: two compact fluorescent light bulbs, outlet and light switch gas-kets, filter whistle, two faucet aerators, hot water temperature gauge, home thermometer and a “How to Save” brochure.

In-Home Energy Evaluation Program

With the In-Home Energy Evaluation Program, you can reduce your power usage and receive a cash rebate and financing assistance for installing home energy improvements. The recommended improvements you make are eligible for a rebate of 50 percent of the installation cost, with a maximum rebate of \$500, and convenient financing from Ripley Power and Light. You also will be reimbursed the \$50 evaluation cost if you make at least that much in improvements within 90 days by an approved contractor.

Call 866-441-1430 to schedule an in-home evaluation.