

Energy Tips and Tools While California Residents Spend More Time at Home

As millions of Californian residents do their part by turning their residences into virtual places of business and hubs for online learning, it is important they think about energy use. Whether using energy to power additional appliances and technology or to light, cool or heat their home, this increase in residential energy use could result in higher costs.

Since California's shelter in place rule went into place last month, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has seen residential electric usage already increase by 15 to 20 percent compared to the same time last year. Two programs currently exist which may help residents who are feeling the energy burden, including:

- **The California Climate Credit:** California residents will see the California Climate Credit applied to their April bills to help offset higher bills due to increased usage and will vary from \$20 to \$60 depending on the utility.
- **Assistance Programs:** The California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) program offers a monthly discount of 20% or more on natural gas bills and 30% or more on electric bills. Qualifications are based on the number of people living in your household and your total annual household income or by your household participation in certain public assistance programs. Learn more about assistance programs from your energy provider.

Energy Upgrade California, the statewide initiative encouraging residents to use energy better, has tips to help Californians think differently about how they use energy at home:



- **Lower the Heat:** On cooler days, set thermostats to 68 degrees Fahrenheit or lower during the daytime.
- **Unplug Devices:** You probably have a lot of devices plugged in while you're at home. Make sure to unplug unused devices or turn off power strips while they're not in use. This includes everything from toasters and coffee makers in the kitchen to computer monitors and printers in workspaces.
- **Dim Your Display:** Whether using a computer monitor for work or entertainment, turn down screen brightness and use eco-mode and other energy-saving features. Lowering the brightness on TVs and other computer monitors may help you use up to 20% less energy.
- **Open the Blinds:** Open blinds and windows on sunny days to light up your space and warm your home naturally. Then, use spotlighting where the sunlight doesn't reach instead of flipping on ceiling lights to save more energy.
- **Fill Up the Dishwasher:** If you have a dishwasher in your home or apartment, make sure to fill it all the way before running it – you'll use less water and energy per dish.

For more information and tips on different ways to use energy better, visit www.energyupgradeca.org. For information on how the CPUC is supporting communities during these challenging times visit www.cpuc.ca.gov/covid.

