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devices that use power when they are "off". These "standby" loads really add up. Phantom Loads can contribute six percent or more to your electric bill.

Any device that has a digital clock or remote control has a Phantom Load. Televisions, cable boxes, DVDs, VCRs, game systems and stereos can use from 1 to 60 watts when "turned off", but not unplugged. Computers, printers, cable or DSL modems, routers, fax machines and cordless or multi-line phones can use up to 120 watts when "turned off". Any device that uses a plug-in power cube uses some power when it is "off".

There are several things you can do to get control over your Phantom Loads.

You can plug your home entertainment system units into a power strip and switch it off when you are not using it. You can do the same for your computer systems and other devices as well. Many computers have Energy Star settings, which will turn off monitors or other devices after a selected period of inactivity. Buy Energy Star-rated appliances because they have to meet efficiency standards including maximum power use during "standby" times.

At BED we encourage people to take charge of their utility bills through efficiency. It is the best way to reduce your monthly bill.

* BED Customer Service hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

* To make use of BED's residential Energy Services Programs, please call John Lincoln at 865-7362.

* If customers would like to be notified of a scheduled power outage by email, contact Cathy Chamberlain at cchamberlain@burlingtonelectric.com and include your name and address. If there is a scheduled outage in your neighborhood, BED will attempt to notifying you by email ahead of time.



October, 2007

Two Great Ways to Save: Lighting & Phantom Load Control

With lighting, the easiest way to save energy is to turn off lights that are not being used.

Outdoor lighting can be controlled with a timer or photocell so that it is always off during daylight hours.

Use dimmer controls or three-way bulbs so you have only the amount of light you need and do not overlight.

Take advantage of natural light.

Clean the bulbs and fixtures (when they are cool and unplugged). Dust and dirt reduce light output.

Install Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs. They produce up to four times the light per watt compared with incandescent bulbs. CFL bulbs last much longer and run cooler too. There are now CFL bulbs available to work with dimmers. You can either participate in BED's Smartlight Program or buy the bulbs almost anywhere. Feel free to contact BED for ideas.

When they do burn out be sure to dispose of the CFL bulbs properly. Some local stores will accept them for disposal or they can be brought to a local hazardous waste collection site.

Phantom Loads are what our appliances consume when they are turned off, but not unplugged.

Today most homes have more than 20

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Community Connections

'Vermont's Energy Future'

Five workshops to discuss Vermont's Energy Future will happen around the state in October: 10/3 at St. Johnsbury Elementary School, 10/17 at South Burlington High School, 10/18 at Montpelier Elks Club, 10/29 at Dean Technical Center in Springfield, and 10/30 at Rutland Intermediate School. Register to attend at www.publicservice.vermont.gov. The goal of the workshops is to gather informed and thoughtful citizen input for the State and its electric utilities as they make decisions about how and where Vermont will obtain its electric power for the coming decades. All workshops will begin at 5:30 p.m. with light dinner fare and start at 6 p.m.

October is "Donate a Car Month" at Good News Garage

Good News Garage is a non-profit organization that accepts donated cars, trucks and vans, repairs them and provides them to qualified low-income families in need of transportation to get to a job. Car donors receive a tax deduction. To learn more or to donate a car online, visit www.goodnewsgarage.org or call Good News Garage at 864-3667.

Know when a winter parking ban is in effect

As we get ready for winter in Burlington, remember that cars must be removed from the streets during a parking ban. To know when a parking ban is in effect, call 658-SNOW or better yet, send an email

to burlingtonparkingban-subscribe@yahoo.com in order to be placed on the notification list. When a parking ban is in place, you will receive an email.

COTS turns 25!

The Committee on Temporary Shelter, as it launches its 25th year, will hold a year-long series of events designed to educate the public about the issue of homelessness. COTS operates two shelters specifically for families, an emergency shelter and a daytime drop-in center for adults, and three facilities offering transitional and permanent housing for very low-income families and individuals, a growing number of whom are veterans.

Don't idle your cars and trucks

You have probably noticed the red "no idling" signs that have been put up around Burlington, especially in the downtown area. By abiding by the Burlington ordinance that prohibits vehicle idling, you reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, save money, increase the life of your engine and reduce incidents of asthma, all great reasons to avoid idling your engine.

Ride the bus!

With the rising price of gas, it just may be time to check out CCTA's bus schedules at www.cctaride.org. Join many others in Chittenden County and beyond who are leaving their cars at home and discovering the ease of commuting by bus.