

BURT COUNTY

PUBLIC POWER

PO Box 209
Tekamah, NE 68061

It's Your Power!



How to Save Money in the Laundry Room

Ah, the joys of having a washer and dryer in your home. There's no waiting for a machine, no coin slots, and no one taking out your wet load if you aren't right there when the cycle ends.

Although it's cheaper per load and much more convenient to do laundry at home, there's a somewhat hidden cost to consider, and that's the energy it takes to run your washer and dryer.

What appliances in your home use the most energy? The hot water heater is the appliance that costs the most to run. Right behind it is the washer and dryer's combined energy use. (Although not considered appliances by many, heating/cooling tops the list, followed by the hot water heater.)

A dryer requires more energy to run than a washer, but there are ways to reduce your washing costs, too (think hot water versus cold). To save money in your laundry room, consider these tips:

- When using your washing machine, select the right amount of water for the load—that is, don't select the "extra large" setting when doing a small load. In fact, consider waiting to do laundry until you have full loads to conserve water.
- Use cold water to save the money you spend heating water. Some laundry detergents are designed to tackle stains in cold water.
- Using warm water instead of hot can cut a load's energy use in half, and using cold water will save even more, according to energy.gov.
- Use dryer balls, which help separate clothes and get more air to them, cutting drying time.
- Utilize lower settings when you use the dryer. Even if your dryer runs longer, you'll use less energy and be less likely to over-dry your clothes.
- Clean the lint out of your dryer between loads and scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.
- Put like items together since lighter-weight clothes take less time to dry. Drying towels and heavier cottons take longer.
- Use moisture sensor option on your dryer if it has one.
- Take a clue from your teenage boy and wear clothes more than once between laundering them (although don't wait until your jeans can stand by themselves).
- When purchasing a dryer, consider an Energy Star version, which uses 20 percent less energy than a conventional model.
- Energy Star-certified washers use about 25 percent less energy and 33 percent less water than regular clothes washers.
- Thoroughly clean your dryer's vents and duct system at least twice a year.

To learn more about how much you are spending to run your washer and dryer each year, refer to energy.gov's appliance energy use calculator.

For more information about safety around electricity, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Burt's Briefs

After hours outage calls. Burt County Public Power District uses NPPD's customer care center in Norfolk for all after hours calls. Please call 1-888-835-1620 to report any outage you may have after normal business hours. Thank you!

When the lights go off.

Check your fuses. Check both the main service panel in the house, and the box below the meter if there is one.

Check neighbors. If you do not have lights, check with your neighbors. If they are on the same line it will help us determine if the problem is on your service or on the line.

Report the outage. To report outages call the Burt County PPD office at 402-374-2631 or 888-835-1620, Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. After hours outages call 888-835-1620. This call will be answered by the customer care center in Norfolk who take our after hours calls.

Give accurate information. When reporting an outage be sure to give an accurate name, phone number and service or account number (which is on your billing statement), location and nature of the problem.

Note: When a crew is dispatched for an outage and the problem is found on the customer's side of the meter, the district may require a service charge.

Report clearance problems. This is the time of year when a clearance problem can become a fatality. If you know of a situation anywhere on our lines where clearance is not adequate, please let us know.

Protecting Water Pipes? Use Heat Tape With Care

Below-zero temperatures can cause pipes to freeze and burst, resulting in a huge mess and expensive repairs. One way to help prevent pipes from bursting is to use heat tape, a product that uses electricity to generate heat.

Although not adhesive, heat ‘tape’ acts as a heating pad for exposed pipes. There are two installation methods. The first and less common method is when the tape is hardwired to a home’s electrical system and has it’s own breakers. In this case, the tape should be installed by a licensed contractor.

The second installation method uses heat tape that plugs directly into a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) outlet. This type of tape typically allows you to control the temperature.

If you are considering installing heat tape, extra care should be taken.

- Due to its potential to overheat and cause a fire, do not use heat tape on pipes behind walls or ceilings. It should only be used for exposed pipes, such as those found in your crawl space or outside your home.
- Select the right kind of tape for your pipes. If you use tape designed for PVC on metal pipes, it will not be as effective; if you use heat tape designed for metal on PVC pipes, it can melt them.
- Always purchase heat tape that is backed by a reputable testing lab, such as UL (Underwriter Laboratories), and do not use tape, cords or plugs that are damaged or worn.
- Unplug the heat tape in the spring.

Once you have the right tape for the job, installing it is straightforward, according to Hunker.com:

1. Clean the pipe. Remove any insulation and brush off any dirt or cobwebs with a stiff brush. This is an important step because any dirt on the pipes could smolder or catch fire.
2. Wrap the tape. Many brands are designed to simply wrap around the pipe, but some need to be attached using electrical tape. Follow the instructions provided on the packing or insert. Avoid crossing/doubling the heat tape over itself when wrapping, as this can produce areas of excessively high heat.
3. Insulate the pipe. Cover the pipe with foam insulation after you have wrapped the heat tape around the pipe. This prevents heat from dissipating and saves energy. If the pipes are outside or in a location that could get damp, use waterproof insulation.
4. Leave enough slack at the end of the tape to reach a GFCI outlet without the need for an extension cord. If the tape is not long enough to cover the entire pipe, follow the manufacturer’s directions. Sometimes the tape ‘strands’ are designed to connect one to another, but make sure that is recommended before doing so. Some come in different lengths.
5. Let the heat tape go to work for you. Once the tape is plugged in, the thermostat monitors the pipe temperature and turns on the heat when needed.

Heat tape is not a must for everyone, but if you have had an issue with exposed pipes freezing in the past, it might be worth considering.

Since heat tape involves plugging in something in an area that could become wet, never step into a flooded or damp area that could have an electrical current running through it. In other words, always use caution with heat tape since it runs on electricity. While installing the specialized covering may help prevent freezing pipes, always follow the instructions provided for installation and use.

For more information about staying safe around electricity, visit SafeElectricity.org.

WHAT IS HEAT TAPE?

 Safe
Electricity.org®



Don't Let Money Get Sucked Out of Your Wallet

Ghouls, goblins, and ghosts might be scary, but they aren't nearly as scary as a high electric bill. There may be electronics in your home sucking power out of your outlets and money out of your wallet, even when they aren't in use. Televisions, computers, DVD players, cables boxes with DVR, cell phone chargers, printers, and game consoles are just a few of the culprits that unknowingly suck energy. Over time, the cost adds up.

Safe Electricity has some tips to help you stop energy vampires in your home:

- When possible, unplug electronics that you are not using.
- Plug electronics into a power strip and turn the power strip off when items are not in use.
- Purchase smart power strips for your computers and televisions. These devices sense when the computer or television is sleeping or off. The smart strip cuts off power to related electronics, such as DVD players, video game consoles, and printers.
- Buy low-standby products. Most Energy Star-endorsed products draw smaller than average amounts of electricity when turned off.
- Avoid electronics with unnecessary features as these might use more energy.

For more energy efficient tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.



ENERGY VAMPIRES

DON'T LET THEM DRAIN YOUR WALLET

Many household appliances are using energy even when not in use, including televisions, computers, DVD players, cable boxes with DVR, cell phone chargers, printers, and game consoles. Depending on how many appliances are used, costs can quickly add up to \$100-200 a year.

Stop energy vampires. Plug electronics into a smart power strip or a power strip you can turn off. Simply unplugging unused kitchen appliances could save you \$10-20 per year.

Learn how to stop energy vampires, visit SafeElectricity.org.

TOP 10 OFFENDERS

1. TVs
2. Home computers
3. Video game consoles
4. Surround sound systems
5. Cell phone & tablet chargers
6. Satellite/Cable boxes
7. DVD players
8. Printers
9. Microwave
10. Coffee maker

Safe Electricity.org

Nebraska Extension News

By Aaron Nygren , Extension Educator

Fall Spraying for Thistles

If you have pastures where thistles are a problem each year, think about spraying this fall to help control them. Fall, specifically October and early November, is a great time to use herbicides to control both biennial thistles, such as musk thistle, as well as perennial thistles, like Canada thistle.

In Nebraska there are a variety of both native and introduced biennial thistles, but we mostly deal with musk, plumeless, Scotch, and bull thistles in the pastures. Fall is a good time for their control because biennials require two growing seasons to complete their life cycle. The first year, they germinate from seed and then grow as a flat rosette of leaves close to the ground. The rosette then overwinters before bolting and flowering the next season, resulting in seed production to start the life cycle over.

When trying to control biennial thistles, destruction of rosettes prior to flowering is an effective means of preventing seed formation and subsequent spread. While this can be done early in the spring, fall is also an excellent time to target these rosettes. Fall spraying is enhanced by the fact that temperatures are often warmer than they would be in the spring, herbicide uptake to the roots is improved as plants try to prepare for winter, and injured weeds are more likely to winter kill.

In addition to biennial thistles, another thistle to look out for is Canada thistle. Canada thistle is a creeping perennial that can be controlled with fall spraying. When identifying Canada thistle, it will have a more upright growth habit as a rosette, compared to biennial thistles.

While fall spraying can give excellent control, it is important to note that fall spraying of thistles is not a silver bullet and effective control may require additional spring applications or other control measures. In addition, in fields where thistles are a problem, it will likely take several years of timely control before the soil seed bank is reduced.

When using fall spraying to control thistles, proper selection of the right herbicide is important. When choosing an herbicide for spraying thistles, the proximity of thistles to waterways and sensitive plants, grazing and haying restrictions, and the type of thistle are all important considerations. Several products are effective for all types of thistles, but some herbicides have higher efficacies depending on the thistle species. For a list of herbicide options to control thistles and expected application costs, the best source is Nebraska Extension's EC130 publication, the Guide for Weed, Disease, and Insect Management in Nebraska.

Take care when purchasing products and always read/follow label directions before use. Most of the herbicides used for control of thistles also kill desirable broadleaf forbs, so you might want to spot spray individual plants or patches rather than broadcast spray the entire pasture.

For more information on controlling thistles, please contact your local Nebraska Extension office or email me at anygren2@unl.edu.

Burt County Public Power District News Tekamah, Nebraska 68061 Phone 374-2631 or 1-888-835-1620 Board of Directors

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Meetings

In accordance with Nebraska Statute, notice is hereby given that the regular meetings of the Board of Directors of the Burt County Public Power District are held on the 1st Thursday of each month, commencing at 9:30 A.M. at the district office located in Tekamah, Nebraska. In the event that a holiday falls on the said 1st Thursday, the meeting date shall be as set by the Board of Directors and published in the Legal Notice.

An agenda for each regular meeting of the board is available for public inspection during business hours at least three (3) days prior to each meeting; provided however, that the Board of Directors shall have the right to modify the said agenda to include items of an emergency nature.

Office Hours
7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Congratulations

...to All 4-H and FFA Members Who
Participated at the Burt County Fair This Year!



Peyton Hansen, Tekamah
Blue Ribbon Market Beef



Madison Enstrom, Craig
Purple Ribbon Market Swine



Jaycin Lechtenberg, Oakland
Purple Ribbon Meat Goat

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