

NYSEG

EnergyLines

*In honor of
Older
Americans
Month,
we salute our
senior
customers.*

May 2005

Services Designed with You in Mind

For more information, or to enroll in any of these free services, visit nyseg.com or call us at **1.800.572.1111**.

Budget Billing > With NYSEG's Budget Billing, you don't have to worry about seasonal ups and downs in your utility bills. Budget Billing lets you spread your utility costs evenly over 12 months. It's a great tool for planning your monthly budget because you'll know what your NYSEG bill is going to be in advance.

Interpreter Service > If you or someone you know has difficulty speaking English and needs to contact us, call us at **1.800.572.1111** and ask to speak with an interpreter.

One Less Worry > One call to us will place your NYSEG bill on hold for 30 days should you or a household member be hospitalized.

Sight-Saver Bill > Your NYSEG bill and our *EnergyLines* newsletter are available in large print at no charge.

Stay out of hot water!

Tap water that's too hot is a leading cause of burns for small children. If you have small children or elderly or disabled persons in your home, you may wish to lower your water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. In addition to providing safety from scalding, reducing the temperature is another way to manage your energy costs. Please refer to the water heater owner's manual for more details.



IT PAYS TO USE ENERGY SAFELY AND WISELY



Use energy wisely this summer

While longer days and warmer weather make us less dependent on energy for light and heat, there are still many opportunities to practice wise energy use.

Getting ready for vacation > Consider these energy saving tips if you make plans to leave town this summer:

- Turn off your air conditioner(s).
- If you'll be gone for several weeks, empty the refrigerator completely and turn it off. Leave the door ajar so that air can circulate.
- Unplug your sensitive electronic appliances (TV, VCR, microwave oven, computer, stereo, etc.) to guard against lightning-related power surges.

Staying cool indoors > If you have storm windows that you remove and replace with screens for the summer, consider which windows you actually open.

Leaving some storm windows in place may save you work in the fall and help keep rooms cooler, especially if you use air conditioning. Another cooling technique is to close blinds and draperies to block direct sunlight.

Enjoy yourself, but be mindful of summer's heat

Summer heat can be a serious health threat. By knowing how to stay cool when the temperature isn't, you can protect yourself from hyperthermia.

Hyperthermia is a medical condition that can occur if the body isn't able to stay cool. Being less active on extremely hot days can lower the risks of hyperthermia, but sometimes that isn't enough.

Older persons and those with chronic health problems are especially at risk of hyperthermia. The good news is that hyperthermia can easily be prevented. To begin with, know the warning signs:

- Dizziness or severe weakness
- Chest pain or rapid heartbeat
- Nausea, diarrhea, cramps or vomiting
- Breathing problems
- Mood changes
- Dry skin without sweating
- Throbbing headaches

To lessen the possibility of hyperthermia:

- Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water.
- Use a fan or air conditioner.
- Wear light colors and loose-fitting clothing.
- Limit your physical activity.
- If you begin to feel overheated, take a break and head for the shade.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Check your medications for any side effects that could increase your risk of hyperthermia.
- Eat more salads and lighter foods.
- If you must use your range and oven, do so during the cooler part of the day.
- Don't overuse salt.
- Avoid alcohol.



If you think you may be heat stressed, call a friend or a relative to ask for help. *If it's serious, call 911.*



Air conditioners: some shopping tips

Air conditioners are great ways to cool and dehumidify your home. If you're shopping for one, get the most for your energy dollar by selecting a unit that's the right size for the area you need to cool. Also, check the *EnergyGuide* label for the energy efficiency ratio (EER) of each model. Higher EER-rated units are more efficient to operate than similarly sized units with lower EER ratings. Also, any time you see the *EnergyStar* label, it's your assurance of a high-efficiency unit.

For help choosing the right air conditioner for your home, ask your appliance dealer or heating and cooling professional.



Tips for using your air conditioner >

Here are some simple maintenance and energy saving tips to keep your cool while keeping your energy costs down.

- Locate window air conditioners where room air can circulate freely.
- Set the thermostat no lower than 78 degrees; close windows and exterior doors.
- Turn off the unit if you're leaving home for any length of time.
- Regularly clean the air filter.
- Seal cracks and leaks around windows and doors with weather-stripping or caulking.
- Keep curtains and furniture away from air intakes and vents.
- Clear weeds and debris away from outside central air conditioner condensing units.
- Avoid cooking, baking and other indoor heat-producing activities on hot days.
- On moderately hot days, use fans instead.
- Turn off lights, TVs, computers and stereos when not needed.

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations to ensure that your air conditioner stays in tip-top shape and runs safely.

Fans > Fans can be an economical way to make your home more comfortable during warm weather. Attic fans, window fans, floor and table fans are all cost-effective.

Window fans give better ventilation than portable fans but attic, or "whole-house" fans are often the best choice. Talk with your appliance dealer or home center specialist to find the fan best suited to your home.

Dehumidifiers > Even though dehumidifiers don't cool the air, they do remove moisture, making you feel more comfortable. In basements, dehumidifiers can protect against mold and mildew build-up. Ask your appliance dealer for help selecting the proper size unit. Here are a few tips for using dehumidifiers:

- Be sure air can circulate freely.
- Regularly empty and clean the catch pan.
- Close windows and exterior doors when in use.
- Clean the cooling coils at least once each season.
- Adjust the dryness setting so the unit only operates when needed.

Sometimes we may need to cut back on power use

Because power use continues to rise in New York State, there may be a rare occasion – particularly in the summer – when the statewide demand for electricity may outpace the available supply. To protect the state’s power delivery system, the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) could require all utilities to take immediate action. As a final step to relieve stress on the system we could be directed to temporarily shut off electricity to selected areas for an hour at a time. As these “controlled interruptions” end in one area, they might then move on to other areas until the high demand for electricity passes.

We don’t anticipate any shortages of electricity this summer, and NYSEG’s power delivery system is in good shape to provide the electricity you need. Even so, it’s always a good idea to be prepared for power interruptions, regardless of their cause.

Having trouble paying your bills? Contact us right away! You may qualify for NYSEG’s Power Partner program. If you are income eligible, you can save on your monthly bills and get weatherization and budget assistance. Learn more at nyseg.com or contact us at 1.800.284.7988.

NYSEG

Reliable. Essential.

www.nyseg.com



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Let our bill payment services add convenience to your life

NYSEG offers convenient ways to pay your bill. You can:

- Mail your payment in the envelope provided with your bill.
- Take your payment to a pay agent – nearly 1,100 supermarkets, banks or other businesses. Some charge a nominal fee for this service. To find the pay agent nearest you, contact us.
- Sign up for electronic funds transfer (EFT). With EFT, we’ll automatically deduct your payment from your checking or savings account – and you’ll receive a bill showing your payment and usage each month.
- Receive and pay your bill online with your existing online payment service – or for free through NYSEG’s partner, CheckFree®.
- Combine electronic funds transfer and online billing. This way you can review your bills online at your convenience.
- Use the drop box conveniently located outside your nearest NYSEG division location.



How to contact us

Customer Relations Center: 1.800.572.1111
(Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.)

Electricity interruptions or emergencies:
1.800.572.1131 (24 hours a day, every day)

Natural gas odors or emergencies:
1.800.572.1121 (24 hours a day, every day)

Hearing- and speech-impaired (TTY): Dial 711 (New York Relay Service)

Automated account information:
1.800.600.2275

Electronic message: Use our “Write to NYSEG” form online at nyseg.com

Payment agreements: 1.888.315.1755