



Common Causes of High Electric Bills

Why is my bill so high?

The most common reasons of high bills along with a few tips to help you reduce your energy use are listed below. Be sure to take advantage of bill assistance programs and City rebates to help you save energy and water. Visit www.cityoflompoc.com/government/departments/utilities/conservation or call the Conservation Division at 805-875-8252 for more information on saving energy.

Do you use any of the following? Use of these items may increase your electric use.

- **Space Heaters**

Using one space heater is like using fifteen 100W light bulbs at the same time. It is more efficient to use a gas furnace. If you have to use electric heating, consider using an appliance timer to turn the heater on for short periods of time when needed.

- **Oxygen or Medical Equipment**

Use of these items may increase your electric use. Please contact the Utility Billing Division to see if you are eligible for a Residential Medical Discount at 805-875-8258.

- **Electric Hot Water Heaters**

If you notice that your hot water heater is taking longer to warm up, it may be failing. You can also use a timer to heat the water only when needed during the day.

- **Hot Tubs and Whirlpool Tubs**

Adding a hot tub to your home will heavily increase your electric use. Cold weather may cause an outdoor hot tub to use more electricity. Make sure that you have a good cover on it. Waterlogged covers do not insulate as well. Reduce the temperature of the hot tub when it is not in use.

- **Grow Lamps**

Using a grow lamp or heat lamp will increase your electric use. Reduce the time and purchase energy efficient products. Look for products with the Energy Star label.

- **RV or Trailer Connections**

Electric use will increase if you connect to your home power supply and use AC/Heat, refrigerator, or cooking equipment inside your RV or Trailer.

- **Fountains**

Pumps installed in fountains and outdoor ponds will increase electric use. Install a timer to have the pump run when you are present. Ensure that you do not have a water leak in the water lines.

- **Pools**

The use of pool pumps and or heaters will increase your electric use. If you have a pool, check for faulty pumps or leaks. Proper maintenance will help decrease energy and water use. Be sure to cover your pool in the winter.

- **Aquariums and Reptile Tanks**

These items often use water pumps, water heaters, and/or heat lamps. This can increase your electric use. Ask your local pet store about more efficient equipment for these items.

Other common causes can be from the following:

Weather and Seasonal Changes

Use of certain appliances varies depending on the time of year. In general, spikes of long cold or hot spells typically increase energy use and bills.

Summer

- Cooling from window and room air conditioners, ceiling fans, oscillating fans, window fans and evaporative coolers in the summer will increase your electric use.

Winter

- The use of space heaters and the increased use of your gas furnace will increase energy use. The furnace uses an electric fan to blow the heat through your ductwork. Using heat tape, small baseboard heating units, hot tubs, heat lamps, and more lighting will also increase overall energy use.

Longer Billing Cycle

Your bill may be higher if there were more days than average in the billing cycle. Refer to the "Days Billed" on your bill for the length of your billing cycle.

Unpaid Balance

Your bill may be higher if there was a balance due from a previous month.

Holidays and School Vacations

- Holidays may prompt decorative lighting, guests, additional cooking, and more time spent at home, all of which may result in higher usage of home appliances. Children at home during school vacations and the return of a college student for college break.
- An illness in the family may change your energy bill, too. If someone stays home during the day when your house is usually unoccupied, the extra use of electricity for lights, TV, showers and cooking will show up as a slight increase on your bill. Some illnesses require the use of medical equipment, which can also increase energy use.

Household Guests

House guests can cause your electricity use to go up. Water use will also increase due to increased toilet and shower use.

Equipment Malfunction

Malfunctioning equipment can use up more energy than necessary. These can be signs that your equipment is not working properly and needs to be repaired.

Have you noticed anything unusual with any of your electrical equipment? Is your heater or cooling equipment running longer than usual? Is your refrigerator compressor running for long periods of time? Does your circuit breaker trip often? Does your electric hot water heater run out of hot water sooner than normal?

Bill Assistance and Rebates

To help reduce your bill, the City offers Electric Rate Assistance to income qualifying customers to help reduce electric bills. Assistance can also be provided by HEAP, The Gas Company, and local agencies.

Rebates are also available to help you replace old inefficient appliances and toilets. You may call the Conservation Division at 805-875-8252 to request for a rebate application to be mailed to you or visit us at www.cityoflompop.com/government/departments/utilities/conservation for rebate applications.