Easy-to-Kee New Year’s Resolutions?

It seems presumptuous to suggest a few New Year’s resolutions for you. But we thought, ‘if customers haven’t made any resolutions, maybe we could help?’ We’re here to serve you, and we have a few ways you can help us help you. Here goes:

When You Can, Conserve Electricity Between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Central Lincoln’s customers use the most electricity weekday mornings, from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. You can help us balance that usage ‘peak’ by shifting your optional electricity use to other times, for running loads of laundry or the dishwasher, as examples.

Why is that helpful?

Utilities pay ‘demand’ charges to wholesale electricity providers to pay for capacity. Our wholesale electricity provider is the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). The BPA must have enough electricity generation from dams and other clean energy sources ready to meet the highest needs (the peak) for all of the utilities it serves all of the time. Those highest needs are called peak loads.

Being always ready to serve peak loads is expensive, so the BPA recovers some of those costs by billing its utilities for “demand charges.” Reducing our demand charges gives us and our customers an incentive to reduce peak consumption during the hours of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. Avoiding demand changes by leveling our load helps us keep our rates among the lowest in Oregon. So, if you can, push some of your electricity use outside of the 6 a.m.-9 a.m. window, and help us keep rates low.

Prepaid: Pay As You Go

If you’re tired of not knowing how much your monthly electric bill amount will be until you get a bill, we suggest using Prepaid. Prepaid customers don’t pay deposits on their accounts, don’t receive paper bills, don’t pay late fees, disconnect fees, or reconnect fees. It’s a lot like buying gas—you buy a certain amount, and when your ‘tank’ gets low, you put more in. You can sign up for Prepaid with one of our customer service representatives (CSRs) at 877-265-3211 and press “4,” (or stop by the nearest Central Lincoln office), pay any balance currently due, choose your notification settings to alert you when your credit balance is below $10, and put $5 or more into your Prepaid account. Prepaid customers can check their usage, or how much they have remaining in their account, by using the SmartHub app on their phones or online. We think Prepaid is an easier way to pay your Central Lincoln bill.
And Speaking of Going Paperless…

About 5,300 of our customers receive their bill by email, or no longer receive paper bills in the mail. But in our Customer Satisfaction Survey last year, 24% of you said you wanted to switch to paperless billing, which would be more than 9,000 customers, so if you are making New Year’s resolutions, paperless billing might be an easy one to do. To sign up, go into your free SmartHub account from our website, www.clpud.org, or by using the SmartHub app (available from the App Store or GooglePlay), or by calling and talking with a CSR, who can walk you through the process.

Mercedes is Asking You….Please DO NOT Staple Your Check to the Payment Coupon!

Many of you pay with a personal check by mail, or by dropping payments off at one of our handy drop boxes or by stopping by the nearest Central Lincoln office. We feed the checks and payment coupons into a highly-accurate machine for processing. The problem is, a large number of customers staple their checks to their payment coupons. That means we have to very carefully pull the staple out of the coupon and the check without damaging either. If the check is damaged, we can’t accept it, and we have to ask for a new check. Also, the staples are sharp, and have attacked our CSRs. (Ok; we’re kidding! Mostly.)

Sign Up for Round Up for Project Care

Most people like to help others when they can, and Round Up for Project Care is one of the easiest ways to help people in need pay for heat. Round Up rounds customers’ monthly bills to the nearest dollar, and as a result, the average Round Up monthly donation is about 51 cents. Even if the Round Up monthly amount turned out to be 99 cents, the most any customer would end up donating a year is $11.88. Right now less than 1,000 of our customers donate using Round Up (which raises about $450 a month for Project Care), but if half of our customers Rounded Up, more than $10,000 A MONTH would be raised to help families and seniors in need. All Project Care funds are routed to local nonprofits to distribute, and donations to Project Care are tax-deductible.

Sign up for Round Up by checking that box in Smart Hub (under Billing & Payments), by writing “Sign me up for Round Up” on your payment coupon, or send us a “Sign me up for Round Up” email to info@clpud.org with your account number or service address, or call us at 877-265-3211 and press “4” and a CSR can sign you up.

Sign Up for Smart Hub or Download the App

We’ve mentioned SmartHub several times in this issue. It’s free, and offers an easy way to pay your bill, manage your account, view your billing and usage history, sign up for Round Up, or sign up for paperless billing. To open your SmartHub account, you’ll need your account number, which can be found at the top of your payment coupon.

Speaking of That Payment Coupon…

Mercedes tells us there is confusion as to which part of the bill is the payment coupon, and some customer send in a fragment, or the top, or the middle. The payment coupon is the bottom third of the bill, below the Send (down arrow) in the left-hand side.

Pay By Phone: 1-844-239-0076
Outage Line: 1-866-484-3783
Energy Efficiency Programs: 1-888-883-9879

Call us at 541-265-3211 or toll free at 1-877-265-3211
Your call will be answered by the first customer service representative available in Florence, Newport or Reedsport.

Office Hours: Mondays-Fridays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Florence: 966 Highway 101
Newport: 2129 N. Coast Highway
Reedsport: 440 Fir Avenue (Reedsport is closed 12-1 p.m.)

Website: clpud.org
Email: info@clpud.org
Outage info, energy-saving tips, and latest news: www.twitter.com/CLPUD
Like us on Facebook at Central Lincoln PUD

Our mission is to ensure our communities have access to reliable and affordable energy products and services.