



CITY OF OCALA ELECTRIC UTILITY

CURRENT MATTERS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

UPDATING METERS GENERATES SAVINGS AND IMPROVES SERVICE FOR OCALA

As the City of Ocala Electric Utility (OEU) provides residents of Ocala with resources on how to make their homes more energy efficient to combat rising energy and fuel costs, we need to apply the same measures to our own operations. That's why we're looking at our own facilities and systems to find better, more efficient ways to do business and provide services to our customers.

One way to improve efficiency is through a utility metering initiative that will upgrade the City's over 75,000 residential and commercial electric and water meters. Implementing this technology solution, called an Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system, will allow us to improve accuracy and lower the operational costs of reading meters.

Over the next 14 months, the City will be working with Johnson Controls to integrate more robust and precise equipment. This upgrade provides needed customer service enhancements, infrastructure improvements, technological advancements and a heightened level of operating efficiency that will convert the City's utility meter reading process to a 100 percent automated meter reading system. Employees will no longer have to walk house-to-house entering customers' yards to read meters. We can simply download information from collection points strategically placed throughout our system. This means we are able to redeploy our meter-reading labor force to more critical needs.

Overall, the new automated reading system will improve communications, increase efficiency and generate substantial savings for the City of Ocala. OEU will also have the ability to identify water leaks at residences or businesses more quickly, improving response time and associated costs. In addition, we'll save on water and electric meter maintenance!

The best news is: through a financing vehicle called a performance contract, we are able to make these system

improvements that are self-funding via cost savings. Under such a contract, the cost of upgrades is paid for over a specified number of years by the energy, water and operational cost savings the project generates.



Customers will be notified by door hangers when their meter is scheduled to be changed out. If we have clear access to your electric and/or water meter, you do not need to be home. In instances where the electric meter is located inside a back porch or utility room, customers will need to be home for the installer to gain access. The installer will carry identification as a representative of the City of Ocala. There will be a short interruption in service during the conversion, so you may need to reset sensitive electronic equipment.

The City of Ocala looks forward to implementing AMR technology to improve operational efficiency and enhancing service to our customers. Look for more updates on this innovative project in upcoming newsletters.

Energy Saving Rebate Incentives

Is your home or business in shape for energy savings? Let OEU help you improve the energy efficiency of your home or business with rebates on energy saving upgrades. For more information, go to www.ocalaelectric.com.





GIVING BACK IN THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

With the high cost of fuel, the prices on many everyday products and services are increasing, and almost everyone's budget is strained. But for some of our neighbors, the budget situation is far more serious. They could be someone who has lost their job, a family that has incurred large medical bills, or a working single parent struggling to support a family. They all need a helping hand.

Be one of the "Neighbors Who Care"!

City of Ocala Electric Utility (OEU) continues to sponsor "Neighbors Who Care," an energy assistance program. It's a great way to help those experiencing tough economic times pay their utility bills.

Give Back

OEU invites you to make a one-time donation or to pledge a monthly amount that will be added to your utility bill. The amount you give is up to you. OEU will match your donation at a 10% level and forward the funds quarterly to United Way, which sends them to a local service agency for distribution. The agency screens potential recipients and administers the program. None of the money is used for administrative costs.

How to Give

If you want to offer a helping hand to a deserving neighbor, fill out the Neighbors Who Care insert coming in your November utility invoice or call OEU Customer Service Office at 352-629-8411.

If you choose to make a one time contribution, just add your donation to your bill payment. For example, if your bill is \$100 and you wish to contribute \$5 to the "Neighbors Who Care" program, write your check for \$105. If you prefer to make a monthly donation, the amount you pledge will be added to your monthly bill.

Your contribution will go a long way toward bringing a little cheer into the lives of others. Thank you for caring!



HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

The holiday season starts with the busiest shopping day of the year, the day after Thanksgiving. Soon, you'll have lots of packages, paper and lights around the house. So remember these few safety tips, and keep your holiday season joyful.



1. Keep holiday greenery, trees, gift boxes and wrapping paper away from heat sources.
2. When leaving home, practice fire prevention by turning off and/or unplugging holiday lights, portable heaters and small appliances.
3. Do not use extension cords that are cut or damaged.
4. Use extension cords sized to accommodate the appropriate wattage for their use.
5. Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors. Extension cords used outdoors are clearly marked "Suitable for Use with Outdoor Appliances."
6. Never cover any part of an extension cord with rugs or furniture. If the cord is covered, heat cannot escape, which can result in fire.
7. Avoid putting more than two strings of lights together and plugging them into a single outlet.
8. Make sure there's a bulb in each socket. If a bulb is burned out, leave it in until you have a replacement. Immediately replace any broken bulbs that have exposed filaments.
9. Match plugs with outlets. Never force a three-pronged plug into a two-hole outlet or extension cord.
10. Don't overload your electric circuits. Check fuses or circuit breaker panel to see what your home can handle, and stay well within the limits.

Your feedback is powerful.

This newsletter serves to inform and empower our customers and the community with the latest programs and services offered by Ocala Electric Utility. If there are any issues or topics you would like to see covered — or if you have any feedback — please contact us.

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E-mail us by logging on to the website and clicking on "Contact Us".

