

ENERGY EXPERTS ARE AT YOUR SERVICE

How much insulation does your attic need? Concord Light customers can call toll-free 888-772-4242 to find out. The number is staffed by expert advisors who can answer all your energy questions.

You can call the same number to schedule a free home energy audit. Make an appointment, and a professional energy advisor will perform an in-home analysis of your home's energy use, make recommendations, and help you determine which changes make the most sense for you.

**CONCORD CARES**

Five new programs are approved

The Light Board has approved five new programs aimed at reducing the amount of electric capacity Concord must purchase.

The programs are all part of a new initiative

called Concord CARES—Conservation And Renewable Energy Services.



“The idea behind Concord CARES is that it makes sense to invest in measures that focus on electric capacity reduction and electricity conservation,” said John Odell, Concord Light’s Energy Services/Communications Administrator.

“Holding down Concord’s peak demand for electricity cuts our power supply costs, and also reduces our region’s need for expensive and often environmentally unfriendly peaking power plants,” he said.

The first year of Concord CARES will focus on air conditioning load management, summer pool pumps, weatherization for those with electric heat, small commercial lighting, and rebates for solar photovoltaic (PV) installations. Current programs in development include:

Air conditioning load management

To reduce air conditioning loads during periods of peak electricity use, either thermostats will be automatically raised or compressors cycled. We will first test the controllable thermostat option this summer to see if that option is effective, financially viable, and acceptable to customers.

Summer pool pumps

Pool pumps may be cycled to minimize their operation during on-peak hours by using load management equipment similar to that used in our existing off-peak electric hot water program. We will test existing equipment this summer.

Electric heat weatherization

For homes with electric heat, rebates of up to \$1,000 will be offered on the cost of certain weatherization measures. Plans include rebates of 40% on the cost of ceiling, floor and wall insulation, duct and pipe insulation, HVAC duct sealing, and general air sealing including blower door testing.

Small commercial lighting

This program is aimed at helping small businesses make lighting upgrades that save energy and money. Eligible upgrades must have a payback of five years or less.

Solar photovoltaic (PV) rebates

Those interested in a solar option may qualify for rebates of up to \$1,000 per kilowatt of installed capacity for solar photovoltaic (PV) projects with a payback to the Town of less than 10 years based on our estimated avoided capacity costs.

As programs are implemented, they will be available a first-come basis, subject to budget limits. The total CARES budget, which is based on a percentage of Concord Light’s operating revenue, is estimated at \$90,000 for the first year. For more details, visit concordma.gov/cmllp or call 978-318-3151.

Solve your winter heating worries

If tough times have you worrying about heating costs, it's time to look at electric thermal storage (ETS) heating. You could cut your heating bills in half, or even more!

As an added bonus, ETS customers—both new and existing – are now eligible to apply for up to \$1,000 in rebates from Concord Light on the cost of certain weatherization measures as part of Concord CARES. See newsletter front for details.

ETS heating works by using electricity to heat high-density ceramic bricks during off-peak hours. The stored heat can then be used to warm spaces any time. Because ETS energy is used off-peak, it qualifies for an electric rate that is much lower than fossil fuel heating

costs—sometimes less than half the cost.

ETS can be used with a variety of heating systems, including forced-hot-water, forced-hot-air, and individual room units.

We at Concord Light would be happy to discuss your ETS options, and to advise you on your ETS project. Just call 978-318-3151 or e-mail jodell@concordma.gov.



BILLS HERE REMAIN COMPETITIVE

Rising wholesale power costs mean that Concord customers can expect electric bills to rise some 5-10% per year over the next four years. However, bills here are expected to remain competitive with the state's investor-owned utilities.

Although a seven-year, very favorable power supply contract expires in October 2009, we have taken steps to lessen the impact of its loss on our customers and to place Concord Light in a strong position for the future. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 978-318-3101.

Fall symposium updates solar projects

Concord Light's two solar demonstration projects are producing energy and working well, but the payback period appears to be very lengthy for both the domestic hot water and the photovoltaic (PV) installations.

Those are the preliminary conclusions discussed at a solar symposium held at the Light Plant this fall as project participants shared the ups and downs of their experiences so far with local residents.

The demonstration projects were launched last year when we asked for volunteers to determine the pros and cons of real-life, local solar installations. Two local families were randomly chosen from among volunteers with suitable solar sites. In exchange for participating in the project, Concord Light contributed up to half the cost of each project.

John and Maureen Cownie of 263 Powder Mill Road began tracking the performance of their new solar hot water system last winter. It features a 108-gallon solar storage tank that feeds heated water into a traditional gas-fired tank.

The Cownies' annual savings is now esti-

mated at \$300-400, based on current fuel prices. Their system has an estimated payback period of 15-20 years. Other benefits, such as increased hot water capacity, do not show up in the numbers.

Joel and Sally Hughes installed a 1.2-kilowatt solar PV system at their 38 Bartlett Hill Road home in May. In its first four months of operation, it produced 591 kilowatt-hours of electricity. The estimated payback on their system is now about 35 years.

Both payback estimates use the total cost of each system, without subtracting Concord Light's contribution. They do, however, include federal and state tax incentives.

"We will continue to track the data and report our findings," said John Odell, Concord Light's Energy Services/Communications Administrator. "It may be that the most effective ways to save money and benefit the environment are the simple things like installing insulation and using compact fluorescent lights," he added. "If you don't know where to start, call 1-888-772-4242 for a free home audit."



Concord Municipal Light Plant

Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

1175 Elm St., P.O. Box 1029, Concord, MA 01742
www.concordma.gov/cmlp • Tel (978) 318-3101 • Fax (978) 318-3105

♻️ Printed on recycled paper using vegetable-based inks with low volatile organic compounds.

Copyright © 2008. All rights reserved. This publication cannot be reproduced in whole or in part without permission.