

Be Energy Smart

Consumers can take simple and inexpensive measures to lower their cooling bills. Here are a few, and more can be found on the U.S. Department of Energy's website at www.doe.gov. Also, visit the ORS website at www.regulatorystaff.sc.gov.

- If possible, set the thermostat to a higher temperature and dress for warmer indoor temperatures. Avoid high temperatures in homes with infants or with ill or elderly persons.
- Don't set your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner. It will not cool your home any faster.
- Make sure the air-conditioning unit is the proper size. A unit that is too big will perform less efficiently.
- Clean or replace filters and condenser coils often on air conditioning units.
- Use an interior fan with your window air conditioner to help spread cooled air more effectively.
- Do not place lamps or TV sets near the air-conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from nearby appliances.
- Avoid blocking cooling registers with furniture, draperies, or carpet.
- Seal leaks around doors, windows, and other openings, such as pipes or ducts, with caulking or weather-stripping.
- Keep window coverings closed during the day to block excess sunlight.
- Install whole-house fans that pull cool air through the house.
- Turn off lights and appliances when not in use.

About the ORS

The ORS represents the public interest of South Carolina in utility regulation with regard to rates, charges, service standards, facilities, and practices of the major utility industries— electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water/wastewater, and transportation — before the Public Service Commission (PSC), the court system, the SC General Assembly, and federal regulatory bodies.

In fulfilling this mission, the ORS strives to balance the concerns of the using and consuming public, the financial integrity of public utilities, and economic development in South Carolina.

The ORS Can Help

If you have spoken with your power company and feel you still need help, the Consumer Services Division of the Office of Regulatory Staff can help by contacting the utility on your behalf for a response to ensure that the utility has followed all applicable regulations and by directing you to social services agencies that may have available funds to assist with energy costs.

Phone: 803-737-5230 (Columbia, SC)
1-800-922-1531 (toll-free in SC)
803-737-5175 TTY (Columbia, SC)
1-800-334-2217 TTY (toll-free in SC)
Fax: 803-737-4750

Web: www.regulatorystaff.sc.gov

Hours: 8:30am— 5:00pm
Monday— Friday
Messages can be left on 24-hour
Consumer Services hotline
(closed state holidays)

Summer Cooling Costs

**Consumer Information
Presented by the ORS**



Be Energy Safe

While raising the temperature in your home can save money, temperatures that are too high can be dangerous to your health.

- Fans will not prevent heat-related illness once indoor temperatures reach the high 90s.
- If your home does not have air conditioning, cool down at a public place for a few hours or take a cool shower.
- Contact your local health department to see if there are heat-relief shelters in your area.

Summer can also mean extreme weather, such as hurricanes. It is important to be prepared for possible power outages.

- Have an emergency plan.
- Have a disaster supply kit that includes water, non-perishable food, and emergency supplies. Supplies should be enough for at least three days.
- Use battery-powered flashlights and lanterns instead of candles, gas lanterns, or torches (which can cause a fire).

Practice these safety measures year-round:

- Don't overload an outlet with too many appliances.
- Keep electric appliances away from water sources.
- Replace damaged electric cords.
- Make sure that electric plugs fit securely into outlets.

Assistance Agencies

Consumers may find they need help meeting their energy needs. Some utilities support programs in local energy offices throughout the state to help consumers. The agencies listed below can help you apply for assistance.

Aiken/Barnwell Counties Community Action Commission, Inc.
Aiken, Barnwell, & Lexington counties
803-648-6836

Beaufort/Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc.
Beaufort & Jasper counties
843-470-4508

Carolina Community Actions, Inc.
Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Union, & York counties
803-329-5195

Charleston Co. Human Services Commission
Charleston county
843-723-9285

Chesterfield-Marlboro Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
Chesterfield & Marlboro counties
843-320-9760

Darlington County Community Action Agency
Darlington county
843-332-1135

GLEAMNS Human Resources Commission, Inc.
Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, & Saluda counties
864-223-8434

Lowcountry Community Action Agency, Inc.
Colleton & Hampton counties
843-549-5576

O-C-A-B Community Action Agency, Inc.
Orangeburg, Calhoun, Allendale, & Bamberg counties
803-536-1027

Pee Dee Community Action Agency
Dillon, Florence, & Marion counties
843-678-3400

Piedmont Community Actions, Inc.
Cherokee & Spartanburg counties
864-327-4546

Sunbelt Human Advancement Resources, Inc. (SHARE)
Anderson, Greenville, Oconee, & Pickens counties
864-269-0700

Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
Horry, Georgetown, & Williamsburg counties
843-234-4100

Wateree Community Actions, Inc.
Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Richland, & Sumter counties
803-775-4354

American Red Cross - Central South Carolina
803-540-1200

Call 2-1-1 any time 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to connect to vital services in your community. This service is free and multi-lingual. 2-1-1 is for finding community health and human services resources.