

News Release

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Focus on Conservation During Public Power Week

(Tallahassee, FL) With the onset of Public Power Week, the Florida Municipal Electric Association (FMEA) and its members – Florida’s 34 public power utilities – join more than 2,000 public power utilities from across the nation to explain the importance of public power contributions to local citizens. Public Power Week, now in its 22nd year, began October 5, and the Utilities Commission, City of New Smyrna Beach joins Florida’s municipal utilities in reminding citizens of the importance of energy conservation.

“Over the last couple of years, rising fuel costs and concerns over environmental impacts have placed more importance than ever on energy efficiency, as consumers demand electricity that is both cost-effective and friendly to the environment,” said Barry Moline, FMEA’s executive director. “Public Power Week is a celebration of the municipal electric providers who are dedicated to helping meet those demands by providing affordable, reliable and environmentally responsible electricity.”

While municipal utilities take this week to celebrate the strength of the state’s public power utilities, they are also focused on promoting green energy initiatives that include not just renewable sources of energy, but also energy efficiency and conservation. “Our member utilities are deeply concerned about customers’ costs,” said Moline. “While our state leaders are looking at controlling greenhouse emissions, we want to let customers know that implementing efficiency and conservation measures at their homes and businesses will go a long way in helping the state to achieve its goals and will also lower energy costs.”

Operating differently than their for-profit counterparts who must satisfy the economic demands of global investors, public power utilities are measured by the service they provide local consumers.

Public power has played an important role in Florida’s electric industry for more than 115 years. Beginning with the onset of World War II in the 1940s, an environment of fuel rationing made it critical for these separate utilities to band together to share energy resources in efforts to better ensure reliability and cost effectiveness.

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This need spurred the formation of the Florida Municipal Utilities Association, which became the Florida Municipal Electric Association in 1988. Today, FMEA represents the interests of 34 public power communities across the state, including UCNSB. FMEA members collectively provide the state's third largest source of electricity.

Tips for Saving Energy

- In the summer, adjust thermostat settings for air conditioning to 78 F degrees or higher, if health permits; keep temperature readings constant until notified that the energy shortage has passed.
- In the summer, when you're not going to be home for an extended period, raise the thermostat setting to 82 F degrees or higher. Close curtains and blinds to help insulate homes and buildings against cooling loss.
- In the winter, lower your thermostat setting for heating to 68 F, and wear a sweater to keep your body comfortable. When you're away from home, lower the thermostat to 65 F to conserve energy.
- Avoid using room air conditioners; turn them off when you leave the room or home.
- Reduce use of all non-essential electric appliances. Run your dishwasher and wash and dry your laundry later in the evening.
- Turn off all non-essential lighting and electric appliances, such as pool pumps.
- Turn off lights when you leave a room or when they aren't needed.
- Shower later in the evening or early in the morning.
- Leave refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- If someone in your home is dependent on electric powered, life-sustaining medical equipment, check back-up facilities and notify your local utility.
- In the summer, cook outdoors, use a microwave oven or small appliances like a toaster oven or electric skillet to avoid heating up the kitchen and adding moisture to the air. Microwaves use less than half the power of a conventional oven and cook food in about one-fourth the time.

For more information about energy- and money-saving rebates from the Utilities Commission, New Smyrna Beach's public power utility, please contact Ellen Fisher or visit www.ucnsb.org.

About Public Power Week: Electricity is often taken for granted. Public Power: An American Tradition that Works is the continuing theme of the 22nd annual celebration of more than 2,000 public power communities nationwide. Please join FMEA in celebrating Public Power Week, October 5-11.

About FMEA: The Florida Municipal Electric Association (FMEA) represents the unified interests of 34 public power communities across the state, which provide electricity to more than 3 million of Florida's residential and business consumers.

About the Utilities Commission, City of New Smyrna Beach: Funded solely by utilities revenues, UCNSB provides, electric, water, wastewater, reuse water and internet service to approximately 26,000 customers in the greater New Smyrna Beach area.

