

Powerlines

FortisBC's electricity customer newsletter

Fall 2018



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Winterize your home & save¹

Your energy use increases in winter over summer by

50% 

Why? Because on colder, darker winter days we:

- leave lights on longer
- use space heaters

Here are four easy ways to winterize your home & help save money.

Destroy drafts. You pay for heat that slips through gaps and cracks. Check around doors and windows and use draftproofing items like gasket material or door sweeps you can find at your local hardware store.

Wrap your windows. If you see water droplets or frost around windows, it's a sign you're losing valuable heat. Consider window film. It's affordable and easy to install.

Tune up. Just like your car, your heating system needs a regular tune up. Regularly clean or replace your furnace or heat pump filter and have them serviced by a licensed contractor to ensure they're working safely and efficiently.

Unplug. With the sun setting earlier, your lights are on longer. You can offset this cost by unplugging electronics before you leave home. Try putting your electronics on smart power strips, which automatically shut down power to products that go into standby mode.

We're here to help

We know any increase in bills can make it more difficult to manage household finances—so we're here to help. Call us at **1-866-436-7847** to ask about your bill or payment plan options or to request free conservation programs and kits (available for income-qualified customers). Find more energy-saving tips at fortisbc.com/winterbills.

Winterizing your home will help you save energy and money without sacrificing comfort.

That's energy at work.

¹Based on 2,200 kWh of electricity use over a two-month period. Customers with low consumption may see an increase less than 3.5 per cent while bills with high consumption may see an increase of more than 3.5 per cent.



Researcher Peter Jordan poses with a snow tube at Lost Ledge climate station in the Kootenays.

Special equipment helps researchers discover secrets in the snowpack

The North Kootenay Lake Water Monitoring Program volunteers will use a snow tube purchased with support from FortisBC's Community Investment Program to collect core samples from snowpacks in the North Kootenay watershed that will be analyzed by hydrologists.

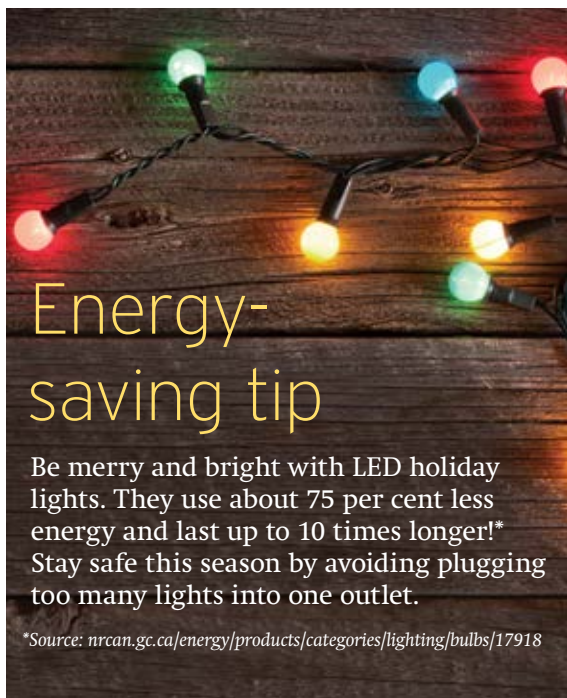
Five-six times between January and mid-spring, volunteers on skis pack the snow tubes into high-elevation sites on the east and west side of North Kootenay Lake. The measurements only take a few hours to complete, but accessing the sites involves a two-day commitment.

Changes in the snowpack and the resulting spring melt affect both water supply and quality downstream, used in the Kootenays for residential use, agriculture and electricity generation. The information gathered from sampling the core of the snowpack in the Kootenay region, in addition to basic climate data such as temperature and precipitation, can help researchers predict stream flow volume, freshet timing, low-flow duration and flood potential. The data will assist government and private organizations plan and implement adaptive strategies in response to a changing climate.

Easy access to your account

With Account Online, you have your account available 24/7. Sign up at **fortisbc.com/accountonline**.

You can also sign up for paperless billing at **fortisbc.com/paperfree**.



Energy-saving tip

Be merry and bright with LED holiday lights. They use about 75 per cent less energy and last up to 10 times longer!* Stay safe this season by avoiding plugging too many lights into one outlet.

*Source: nrcan.gc.ca/energy/products/categories/lighting/bulbs/17918

Be ready and safe during storms

Storms and strong winds can bring down power lines.

Stay safe with these tips:

- Even if a downed line doesn't look live, it could still carry power and be deadly.
- Stay at least 10 metres (33 feet, about the length of a school bus) away from a downed line.

- Call FortisBC at **1-866-436-7847** (24 hours) or **911** immediately to report the hazard.

View our current outage map and learn more about staying safe during power outages at **fortisbc.com/stormsafety**.



Help prevent energy theft



It's illegal and unsafe to tamper with electrical equipment, and the cost of stolen electricity affects rates all customers pay. If you notice suspicious activity, leave an anonymous tip:

1. Call FortisBC Revenue Protection at **1-866-550-5444**.
2. Go online at **fortisbc.com/energytheft**.
3. Call BC Crime Stoppers at **1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**.

For all other customer service inquiries, please call FortisBC at **1-866-436-7847**.

We're at your fingertips

Have you tried our new app?

Our new FortisBC mobile app makes it easier for you to manage your account—anytime, anywhere! You'll be able to do a lot of things 24/7 including: viewing your bill, checking for planned or unplanned power outages, or saving money and energy with high-efficiency rebates.

Free to download, visit the App Store for Apple iOS or Google Play for Android devices. Or visit us at **fortisbc.com/appforme**.





Harness the power and savings of a heat pump

If you heat your home and/or hot water with electricity, you may be spending more on keeping your home warm and water hot than you need to. Consider a heat pump. The technology has come a long way and air source heat pumps are more efficient, reliable and quieter than ever.

Even in cold temperatures there is still ambient warmth in the outside air. An air source heat pump harnesses that warmth and simply moves it to where it's needed—inside your home. Heat pump water heaters are similar in that they harness the warmth from the air around them to provide your home's hot water.

Learn more about the benefits of heat pumps for space and water heating at fortisbc.com/heatpumpsavings.

Heat pump benefits

Saves energy, saves money: air source heat pumps can save you about \$1,400 annually on space heating costs¹ and heat pump water heaters can save about \$370 annually on water heating costs.²

Ease of use: heat pumps are easy for contractors to install and only require yearly maintenance.

Warm in winter, cool in summer: air source heat pumps can provide air conditioning as well as heating.

¹Source: FortisBC energy calculator assuming a 2,000 square foot home, with an existing electric furnace at least 15 years old or baseboard heaters at least 15 years old and an air source heat pump with an HSPF of 10.

²Source: FortisBC energy calculator, a household of four people replacing a large electric storage tank water heater with a large high-efficiency heat pump water heater.



Sign up for *Energy Moment*

Sign up for our free enewsletter for updates on rebates, programs, energy-saving tips, contests and more. See fortisbc.com/energymoment.


Contact us

For more information, call **1-866-436-7847** or email us at electricity.customerservice@fortisbc.com.

Connect with us



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Energy at work