



Conservation Tips to Help Minimize Your Utility Cost during Uncertain Times

Lodging facilities across Shelby County are considered “essential businesses,” yet are facing high volumes of cancellations due to the national spread of COVID-19. For some hotels and motels, that means closing temporarily. MLGW knows your business is facing unprecedented disruption as you struggle to sanitize facilities and meet expenses, while worrying about the health of your team members, payroll and reduced revenues. We encourage you to consider the following no- and low-cost recommendations to ensure that your business isn’t spending money on energy and water waste while your facility is closed.

LIGHTING

- Turn off non-essential lighting indoors and outdoors.
- If your facility has a lighting control system, adjust the operating hours and illuminated areas to your operational changes.
- Turn off your outdoor signage. Post a sign on the door informing guests that you are closed temporarily, along with a website or social media channel to share updates.

HEATING AND COOLING

- Check thermostat settings. MLGW recommends 68°F for heating and 78°F for cooling when spaces are occupied, so select lower heating and higher cooling settings while closed.
- If you have occupancy sensors in your facility, make sure they are functioning as designed and with the new settings.
- Have maintenance staff repair exterior doors that don’t seal well, as tiny gaps cause energy waste.

WATER AND WATER HEATING

- Reduce domestic water heating temperatures below 120°F.
- Evaluate options to reduce energy use for pools and hot tubs, considering the impact on cleaning and chemical needs when you resume operation.
- Count on rainy weather to handle irrigation some days; adjust the irrigation system’s timer as well.

HOUSEKEEPING PROCEDURES

- Encourage housekeepers to turn off all lights and set thermostats to more energy-efficient levels (or off) after cleaning each room.
- Close drapes in rooms to reduce heat loss/heat gain.
- Report leaky faucets, showerheads and toilets to maintenance staff. Remember that sewer charges are based on water use and hot water leaks are extra costly due to the energy involved.

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

- Turn off computers, monitors, printers, copiers, fax machines and related equipment in offices and guest Business Center.

HOTELS & MOTELS: CLOSED

Hotels and motels in the U.S. use an average of 14 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity and 0.49 hundred cubic feet (CCF) of natural gas per square foot annually, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Cooling, lighting and office equipment account for most of the electricity use, while heating and water heating represent the largest uses of natural gas. Hotel and motel energy use will vary depending on the types of amenities available.

Learn more about how to minimize energy use in your facility by visiting: <https://mlgw.bizenergyadvisor.com> from your computer or smartphone.

Use **My Account** at www.mlgw.com to view bills, explore usage, create an Energy Action Plan, report a power outage and request payment extensions. To register, you will need your MLGW bill.

- Unplug TVs in guest rooms and common areas. When you press the “off” button on a remote control, the screen goes black but the device is actually put into “standby” mode, consuming a small amount of electricity. Considering the number of TVs on your property, this is an easy way to save during downtime.
- Unplug audio-visual equipment in meeting spaces.
- Unplug chargers for cellphones, cordless phones, laptops and other portable devices. When plugged in, chargers use electricity even if they are not actively charging.

VENDING AND BREAK ROOMS

- Unplug non-refrigerated vending machines. Check with your supplier about options for refrigerated models.
- Disconnect the ballast for advertising lights on beverage vending machines, as lighting costs money and adds heat to the refrigerated compartment.
- Consider turning off ice dispensers and water coolers.
- Unplug the microwave to turn off the digital clock.
- Consider unplugging the break room refrigerator. Discard any food items and give it a good cleaning as well. Turn on again the day before school resumes operation.
- Turn off the defoggers/heaters that keep condensation off glass doors on reach-in refrigerators.
- If your facility has a commercial kitchen, read MLGW’s conservation tips for the food industry.

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

- Remind your staff how important it is to control utility and other costs, especially now.
- Develop simple energy-management procedures—with checklists—and assign responsibility between shifts and at the end of the day for adjusting thermostats and turning off lights, computers and other equipment. Continue to use the checklists after this crisis has passed.
- Label all panels and switches so occupants know what to turn off when leaving the area.
- Use the Explore Usage tools in My Account at www.mlgw.com and Business Energy Advisor at <https://mlgw.bizenergyadvisor.com> to find more facility-specific ways for your business to save.
- Remind employees they can access My Account at www.mlgw.com to view their bills, explore usage, create an Energy Action Plan, request an extension and handle other MLGW business as needed.

MLGW Disconnections for Non-Payment

MLGW has suspended non-payment disconnections for all customers during this community crisis. Your business will still be billed but, should you be unable to pay your bill in full, MLGW will not disconnect electricity, gas or water services. Customers are encouraged to make payments online through My Account at www.mlgw.com, via mail, or by drop box or drive-through window at MLGW Community Offices. Remember that steps you take today to reduce your utility consumption will help minimize any balance owed once MLGW returns to normal operation. Contact MLGW’s Business Solutions Center at 901-528-4270 or MLGWbsc@mlgw.org (Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30am CST) if you need to discuss options.

US Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans Available

Tennessee small businesses and nonprofit organizations that have suffered economic injury as a result of COVID-19 can apply for Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million per applicant to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have otherwise been met. Interest rates for the loans are 3.75% for small businesses and 2.75% for nonprofit organizations. The loans can be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable or other bills that can’t be paid due to the disaster’s impact. The Economic Injury Disaster Loans are administered and processed through the SBA. Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at www.sba.gov/disaster. Applicants may also call SBA’s Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis.