



Conservation Tips to Help Minimize Your Utility Cost during Uncertain Times

Lodging facilities across Shelby County are considered “essential businesses,” yet are facing mass cancellations due to the national spread of COVID-19. For some hotels and motels, that means closing temporarily, while others operate with greatly limited occupancy. MLGW knows your business is facing unprecedented disruption as you struggle to serve anxious customers, sanitize facilities and meet expenses, while worrying about your team’s health and reduced revenues. We encourage you to consider the following no- and low-cost recommendations to ensure that your business isn’t spending limited revenue on energy and water waste.

LIGHTING

- In spaces where natural lighting is available—like lobbies, indoor pool areas and rooms with skylights—dim lights in proportion to the availability of sunlight.
- Turn off non-essential lighting in available rooms, meeting and dining rooms, vending areas, storerooms and hallways.
- Use desk lamps rather than overhead lighting in office spaces.
- If you are booking rooms in only part of the building, limit lighting as much as possible in areas with available rooms.
- Consider installing compact fluorescent or LED bulbs in high-traffic areas that will remain lit 24/7.

HEATING AND COOLING

- Check thermostat settings. MLGW recommends 68°F for heating and 78°F for cooling. Consider lower heating and higher cooling settings in lobbies, offices, storerooms and other areas during hours of low use. Consider turning off the HVAC in available rooms.
- Filters should be changed periodically—every one to six months, depending on the level of pollutants and dust in the indoor and outdoor air.
- If you have occupancy sensors in your facility, make sure they are functioning as designed and with the new settings.
- Report exterior doors that don’t seal well to maintenance staff. Tiny gaps cause energy waste and contribute to comfort issues.

WATER AND WATER HEATING

- Set laundry hot-water temperatures to 120°F.
- If these areas are open, make sure that pools and hot tubs are covered after hours to diminish heat loss. Covering a heated pool can save 50% to 70% of the pool’s energy use, 30% to 50% of its makeup water, and 35% to 60% of its chemicals. If these areas are closed, consider options to reduce energy use.
- Count on rainy weather to handle irrigation some days; adjust the irrigation system’s timer as well.

HOTELS & MOTELS: OPEN

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.

HOUSEKEEPING PROCEDURES

- Encourage housekeepers to turn off all lights and set thermostats to energy-efficient levels after cleaning each room.
- Close drapes in available rooms to reduce heat loss/gain during heating/cooling season.
- 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 computer monitors during slow periods. Monitors account for about 60% of a desktop computer's annual energy use, so powering down will save.
- Limit hours to Business Centers and turn off computers, monitors, printers, copiers, fax machines and related equipment when the area is closed.
- Manage use of TVs, sound systems and intercom systems in common areas when no one is present.
- Unplug TVs in available rooms. When you press the "off" button on a remote control, the screen goes blank but the device is actually put into "standby" mode, consuming a small amount of electricity.
- 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 SNACK SALES AREAS

- Adjust water cooler and ice machine settings, especially for areas with available rooms.
- Consider disconnecting the ballast for advertising lights on beverage vending machines, as lighting costs money and adds heat to the refrigerated compartment.
- 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.
- 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.