

Shine Some Light on Crime...

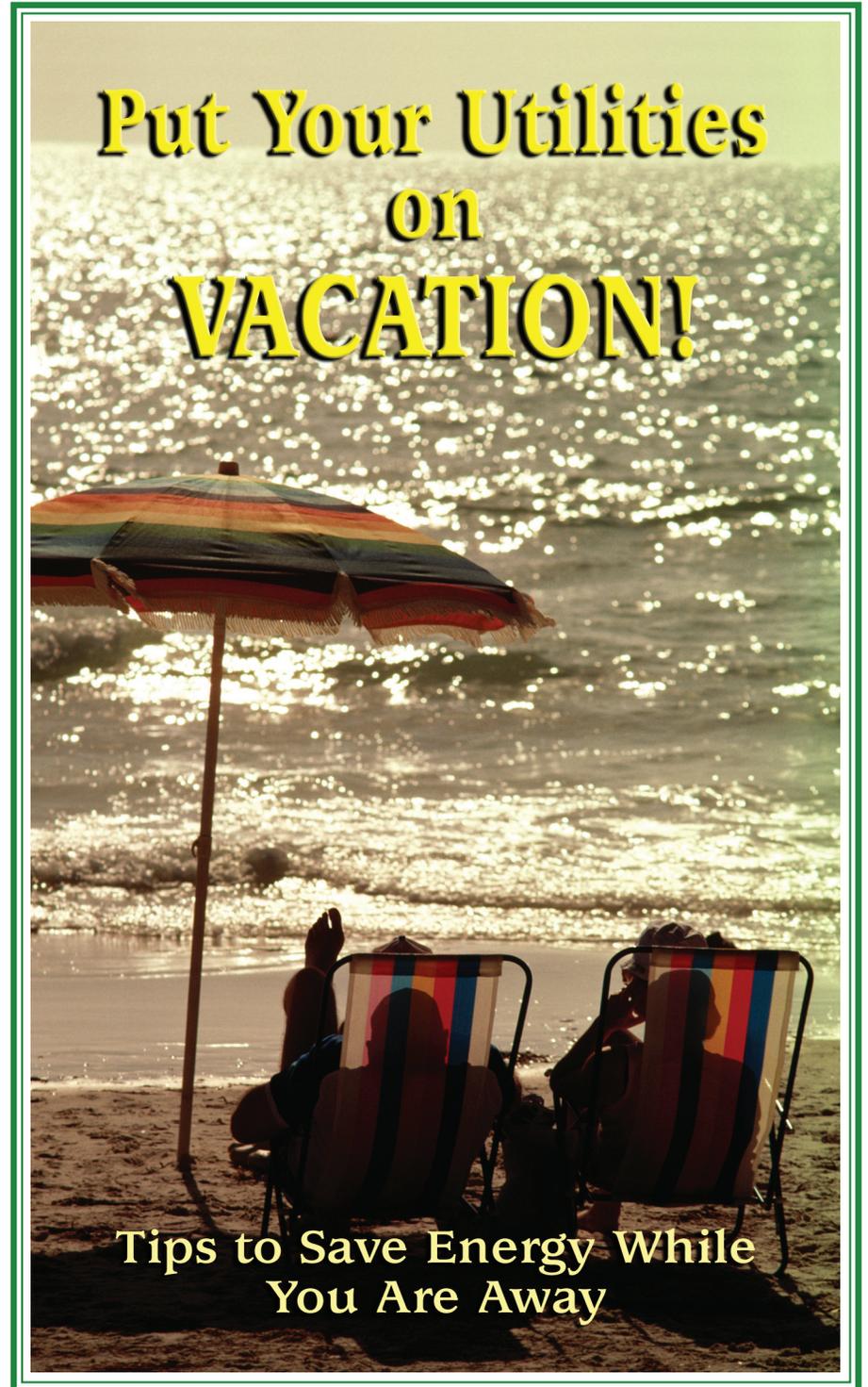
Use a timer to operate lights instead of burning constantly during your absence. Install on lamps in various rooms and set to operate at different times for a real "at home" look.

There are several other measures you can take to deter crime while you are away. Stop mail and newspaper delivery, or have a friend collect daily. Ask someone to mow the lawn and haul garbage cans to the curb. Have a neighbor pick up flyers and other items delivered to your door.

Saving Energy Pays...

By taking a few minutes to make adjustments around your house, you can have your vacation and save energy dollars, too!

You can also save year-round by taking advantage of MLGW's free home energy survey. Visit www.mlgw.com and click on the Home e-Valuation link; once the survey is complete, you'll receive customized recommendations for your home that are sure to save you energy and money!





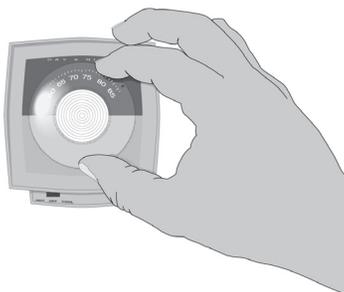
The suitcases are packed, reservations have been made and tickets are tucked in your pocket. You take one last look around the house, then firmly close the door. Vacation time at last...

Wait! You have forgotten one very important detail. Utility usage does not stop when you leave the house. In fact, unless you made some adjustments before departing, your usage could be nearly as high as when you are home.

Vacations cost enough, so don't waste your money on things you won't enjoy, like wasted energy. Before you close the door, take 15 minutes to flip a few switches, turn a few knobs and fix a few leaks.

Touch That Dial...

Start with the thermostat to maximize savings. Nearly 60 percent of your home's annual energy bill is used for heating and cooling the house. Since you won't be home, why keep the house at your regular comfort level?



During the winter, set the thermostat at its lowest setting, or turn off the furnace completely. Factors to consider in making the adjustment are the presence of pets and plants. Don't forget the possibility of a freeze warning during your absence. If very cold weather is expected, leave the thermostat above the lowest setting.



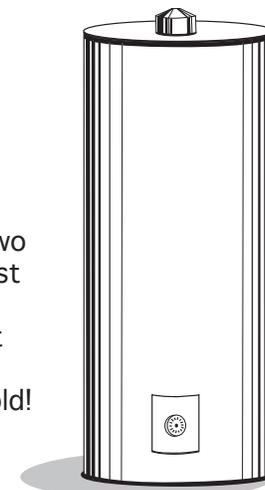
During the summer, keep the thermostat above 85°, or turn off the air conditioner completely. Factors to consider are the presence of pets, plants and heat-sensitive decorations (such as candles and oil paintings).

Programmable thermostats are helpful to ensure that your home stays at the selected temperature while you are swimming in the surf or skiing

down the slopes. Many units can be programmed to return to your preferred temperature shortly before you return.

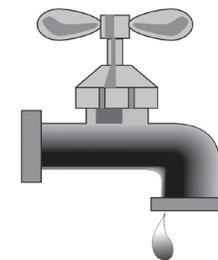
Getting into Hot Water...

Your water heater maintains water at a constant temperature 24 hours per day, whether or not you are home to take a hot bath. Fortunately, you can turn the water heater into an energy saver by adjusting the thermostat to its "vacation" or lowest setting. Since electric water heaters have two thermostats – an upper and lower – you must adjust both. (Electric water heaters can be turned off at the circuit breaker also.) Don't forget to reset the thermostat when you return, or your first shower will leave you cold!



Plumbing Popsicles...

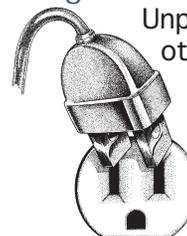
Frozen water pipes can be a real disaster. To help prevent problems, check weather forecasts before you leave and adjust your furnace thermostat accordingly. Wrap exposed pipes in the attic or garage. Install faucet covers for exterior spouts. Open cabinet doors under sinks. Leave indoor faucets running at a very slow drip. Have someone check inside your house while you are gone.



Money Down the Drain...

While a slow drip is a smart way to help prevent frozen pipes, it is a real water waster. In fact, a constant water drip the size of a pinhead can waste more than 1,500 gallons of water each week! Why not save money on your vacation and repair leaky faucets, toilets and showerheads before you depart? Check to be certain that all sink and shower drains are open, too.

Plug into Savings...



Unplugging television sets, computers, stereos and other electronic equipment will not save much money, but will protect appliances from potential electric surges.