



Shaping a Housing Plan with Vision

The News Connection

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Greetings from Eddie Girdler, Executive Director

On behalf of the entire staff and Board of Commissioners, we would like to thank all of you for being part of the affordable housing program for the City of Somerset and Pulaski County. Every one of you, whether living alone or with your family, has been very considerate as we try to meet the changing rules and regulations given to us by Washington. We are now serving nearly 500 families per month because of your cooperation and help to better serve our community. HUD has asked us to promote energy conservation as part of our effort to serve families. This Newsletter has some great tips on ways to spend less on utilities. As we approach the great fall holiday season, we wish you and your family the best of Holidays and may God's blessing be upon every family and person.

STEPS

SUCCESSFUL TUTORING EMPOWERING PARENTS AND STUDENTS

STEPS, a partnership between the Housing Authority of Somerset, Somerset Independent Schools and Lake Cumberland Church of the Nazarene is entering its third year. From its beginning in 2003 with 16 students to its current 22 students STEPS continues to grow. The program which is available for selected first, second and third grade students is a concentrated reading program that involves parents in various ways. They agree to attend monthly workshops, volunteer during the year, read to their student daily and make sure the child attends school and STEPS regularly. The statistics prove that our objective to provide a strong start for these students is successful; comparing 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 first graders in the STEPS program increased their reading skills by 13 points - while the general population decreased by 1 point, comparing 2003-2004 to 2005-2006 first graders in the STEPS program increased their reading skills by 10 points - while the general population decreased by 3 points. We are proud of all our STEPS participants!



Congratulations to Brandy Keith who received her GED in May, 2006. Brandy participates in the Somerset Housing Authority Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS). The program promotes economic self-sufficiency among participating families. Eligible families are connected with the appropriate support services and resources in the community to move the family toward economic independence. Financial incentives are available to the families when they successfully complete the Family Self-Sufficiency program. More information regarding the FSS program may be obtained by calling the HAS office at 679-1332.

SAVE ENERGY * SAVE MONEY * SAVE ENERGY

It is a certainty that American families will be paying much more than last winter to heat their homes in the coming months. Everyone must learn to conserve and be more energy efficient.

The first step to conserve energy is finding out which parts of a home use the most energy. The pie chart shows a typical household's energy use. It is evident that heating accounts for the biggest chunk of a typical utility bill.

Unfortunately, a large amount of energy is wasted. Holes or cracks around walls, ceilings, windows, doors, light and plumbing fixtures, switches, and electrical outlets that can leak air into a home should be reported to the landlord or HAS.

WINDOWS

Windows can be one of the most attractive features in a home. They provide views, daylighting, ventilation, and solar heating in the winter. Unfortunately, they can also account for 10% to 25% of a heating bill.

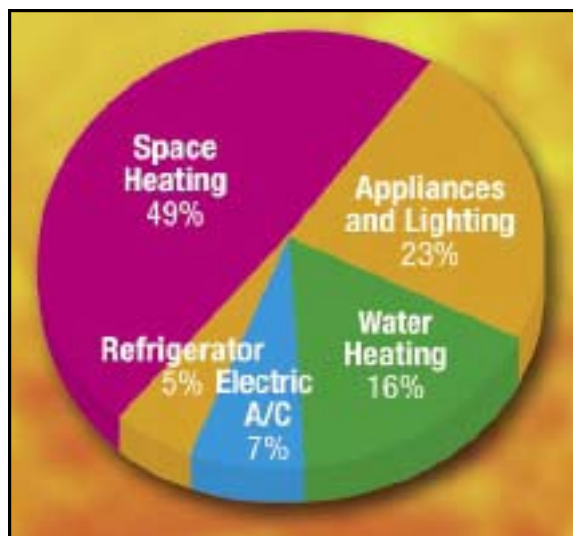
Approximately one-third of a home's total heat loss usually happens through windows and doors. An added barrier between a home and the great outdoors can be created by putting up insulated drapes. Even more savings are created by shades or insulated drapes with tracks that keep cold air from coming in around the edges.

Sunlight shining through a window can heat up the part of the room it hits nicely — cats figured this out long ago. The curtains and shades on south, west and east-facing windows should be open during the day to get as many rays as possible to heat the house or apartment. They should be closed when the sun goes down to keep heat inside.

THERMOSTATS

One of the best ways to save on heating and cooling bills is to aim for a mild climate inside the year 'round. No one needs to heat his/her home to tropical temperatures in the winter. In cold times, the temperature should be set to 68 degrees during the day when family members are at home, and 55 degrees at night and during days when no one is home. For every degree a thermostat is turned down, 2% can be taken off the energy bill. So, if the thermostat is lowered 5 degrees at night and 10 degrees during the day when everyone is out and about, consumers can cut as much as 20% of their heating cost.

Also, furniture and drapes should be arranged so they do not block air flow from heat registers.



WATER HEATING

Water heating is the third largest energy expense in a home. It typically accounts for about 16% of a utility bill. There are three ways to cut water heating bills: use less hot water, turn down the thermostat on a water heater, insulate a water heater.

A family of four, each showering for 5 minutes a day, uses 700 gallons of water a week; this is enough for a three-year supply of drinking water for one person. Even though that seems like a tremendous amount of water, baths use much more. An individual uses 15-25 gallons of hot water for a bath, but less than 10 gallons during a 5-minute shower.

Another way to save on water heating is with clothes washing. Using warm or cold water, rather than hot water, can cut a load's energy use in half.

WATERSHED ARTS ALLIANCE

Thursday, November 2
Lexington Philharmonic Woodwind Quartet
7pm at Riverstone Gallery

Thursday, November 14
Book Discussion 6:30 pm
'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night'

Friday, November 17
Taste of Art
John Polk & Friends
11:30-12:30 at Riverstone, Free: Lunch \$5.00

Thursday, November 30
Art Exhibit by Mikol

For more information call 679-0507



Maintenance Foot-notes: Please disconnect your water hoses.



HELPFUL HINTS ON SAVING ENERGY & MONEY

- For those who have clothes dryers in their homes, most people can cut back on the use of it. Dryers are a big energy drain, and they can also suck heated air out of a home very quickly in winter.
- Washing and drying full loads of clothes will be an energy saver.
- Clothes should not be over-dried. The cool-down cycle should be used to allow clothes to finish drying with the residual heat in a dryer.
- Dryer vents should be inspected periodically.
- The lint filter in a dryer should be cleaned after every load to improve air circulation.
- Using a microwave oven or pressure cooker instead of an oven, whenever possible, can save up to 50% in energy costs for cooking.
- In natural gas appliances, blue flames should be visible; yellow flames indicate the gas is burning inefficiently and an adjustment may be needed.
- Range-top burners and reflectors should be kept clean; they will reflect heat better and it will save energy.
- When boiling water, a covered pot/kettle is faster and uses less energy.
- The size of a pan should be matched to the heating element on the stove.
- When cooking with electricity, stovetop burners should be turned off several minutes before the allotted cooking time. The same principle applies to oven cooking.
- Small electric pans or toaster ovens should be used for small meals rather than a large stove or oven. A toaster oven uses a third to half as much energy as a full-sized oven.
- Refrigerators and freezers should not be kept too cold. Recommended temperatures are 37 degrees to 40 degrees for the fresh food compartment of the refrigerator and 5 degrees for the freezer section.
- Manual-defrost refrigerators should be defrosted regularly. Frost should not build up more than one-quarter inch.
- At least once a year, refrigerators should be moved out from the wall and the condenser coils vacuumed. Refrigerators will use less energy with clean coils.
- Refrigerator door seals should be airtight.
- Liquids should be covered and foods should be wrapped when stored in the refrigerator.
- Computers and monitors should be turned off when not in use. Home electronics, such as TVs and DVD players should be plugged into power strips and turned off when not in use.



LIGHTING

Making improvements in lighting is one of the fastest ways to cut an energy bill. An average household dedicates 5% to 10% of its energy budget to lighting.

Lights in a room not being used should be turned off. Also, three-way lamps should be considered. They make it easier to keep lighting levels low when brighter light is not necessary.

The use of compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) in all portable table and floor lamps is an additional way to save on energy costs. These bulbs are four times more energy efficient than regular bulbs.

COMPUTER NEWS COMPUTER CLASS

We are in the process of planning another computer class. Please contact the HAS office if you are interested in attending. Space will be limited for this class and placement will be on a first come first serve basis.

NEW 'AGE POLICY' FOR COMPUTERS

The Computer Lab at the Housing Authority office on Hail Knob Road now offers children age 10 and over access to the computers without an adult present. The computers will be available to unaccompanied children age 10 and over during the normal school year.



Maintenance Foot-notes: Please change your air filters regularly.





What is the Customer Service and Satisfaction Survey?

The Customer Service and Satisfaction Survey is a survey that is sent to a random sample of Public Housing residents at each Public Housing Agency (PHA) on a yearly basis. The purpose of the survey is to find out how satisfied residents are with the living conditions at their property. This survey is part HUD's increased commitment to monitoring PHAs' performance. HUD's Public and Indian Housing, Real Estate Assessment Center (PIH-REAC) assesses your PHA's performance through the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS). PHAS evaluates a PHA's physical condition, financial health, management operations, and resident services. PHAS will measure overall resident satisfaction with living conditions using the Customer Service and Satisfaction Survey. Your household may be randomly selected to participate in this survey.

How is this survey different from other surveys?

Because resident satisfaction with their living conditions is important to HUD, the survey was developed so that the resident experience will be included in HUD's yearly evaluation of your PHA. This survey was developed with the help of resident leaders, PHAs, and industry representatives.

Who will receive this survey?

All Public Housing residents throughout the nation will be included in the survey process. However, not all residents will receive a survey. Residents will be chosen randomly using a computer program. The survey will take place yearly, so if you do not receive a survey this year, you may in the future.

How will survey results be used?

HUD will use the overall results of the survey to help determine how well your property management is doing in five areas (Maintenance and Repair, Services, Communication, Safety, and Housing Development Appearance). The Customer Service and Satisfaction Survey equals 10 out of 100 points your housing agency may receive under the PHAS. Answers that residents provide make up a possible 5 points, while marketing the survey and follow-up actions taken by PHA management could equal an additional 5 points.

Will resident survey answers be confidential and anonymous?

HUD is committed to ensuring that resident survey answers **will be kept confidential** and anonymous. Your PHA will not know who participates in the survey. Only overall scores will be shared with your PHA. **If you receive a Customer Service and Satisfaction Survey, please take the time to fill it out. Your feedback really does matter!**



HOMEOWNERSHIP TRAINING

Another Homeownership training class was completed in July. There were 11 participants that completed the series of classes. This cost-free class is an important part of our Homeownership Program and is suggested for anyone that may someday be interested in becoming a homeowner.

Partners for this series of classes included;

Monticello Banking Company, USDA Rural Development, Somerset Community & Technical College—Community & Workforce Development, Kentucky Mortgage Company, Lowe's of Somerset & Somerset Home Ownership Commission

Food Boxes Are Available Again From Angel Food Ministries

www.angelfoodministries.com

2006 Distribution Saturdays:

November 18th and December 16th

**Orders can be placed by contacting Highpoint Church at the following:
606-679-8419 or 859-792-6206.**