

# AUSTIN UTILITIES NOW

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CITY SERVICES



FEB-45382

## Stay warm and save this winter

Winter weather in Central Texas may be unpredictable, but you don't have to expect the unexpected with your winter utility bills. Easy tools and tips can help you take steps to manage your utility bills and know what's coming.

### For your electric bill:

- » **Set your thermostat at 68 degrees or lower in the winter.** Each degree higher uses 3 percent more energy.
- » **Check your energy use regularly to avoid surprises.** Log in at [coautilities.com](http://coautilities.com) and view the Energy Management tool. For an even deeper dive into your usage, visit [austinenenergyapp.com](http://austinenenergyapp.com).
- » **Let the sun shine in.** Open curtains and shades on eastern and southern windows during the day to let in more heat, then close them in the evening.
- » **Add insulation to water heaters and hot water pipes** to save energy and money.
- » **Caulk and weatherstrip** windows and doors.

Find more winter savings tips at [austinenenergy.com/go/winter](http://austinenenergy.com/go/winter).



### For your water bill:

- » **Don't water outside in the winter months.** Turn off automatic irrigation.
- » **Winterize outdoor spigots** when temperatures are expected to dip below freezing to prevent broken pipes.
- » **Wash only full loads** in your dishwasher and washing machine.
- » **Take shorter showers.** Place a timer in the bathroom.
- » **Look for the WaterSense® label** when buying new water-using appliances and fixtures.
- » **Fix leaky faucets.** A slow drip can waste several gallons a day.

You can find more water-saving tips at [austintexas.gov/department/water-saving-tips](http://austintexas.gov/department/water-saving-tips).



## Drainage Charge changes

Some customers may see changes to their drainage charge this month. The Watershed Protection Department updated the impervious cover data used to calculate the charge. For most accounts, the update resulted in no change to the drainage charge or a change of less than \$1 per month. Accounts with large changes received calls last month.

Impervious cover includes roof tops, driveways, parking lots and other surfaces that do not absorb rainwater. The drainage charge pays for programs and projects to help with flooding, erosion and water pollution.

To learn more, visit [austintexas.gov/drainagecharge](http://austintexas.gov/drainagecharge).

## Be ready for inclement weather

In winter, traveling becomes more hazardous due to colder, sometimes freezing conditions and fewer hours of daylight. Evening commutes are darker, making it difficult to see and be seen on Austin streets. Winter weather can cause slick roads, so extra care is required when driving.

Austin Transportation wants you to remember to be extra cautious and patient this time of year. Increase your following distance, use your lights and give yourself extra time to get to where you're going.

Remember the three L's when traveling this winter:

- » **Lights on** — Turn on the headlights of

your vehicle or use lights if you are using a different form of transportation.

- » **Look around** — Take an extra second to look for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists and other drivers during your evening commute. Also, approach intersections, crosswalks and bus stops with caution.
- » **Locate safe crossings** — Use safe crossings like well-lit or marked crosswalks if you are walking or riding a bike or electric kick scooter. Preventing fatalities and serious injuries on our transportation network is Austin Transportation's top priority. To achieve the community's goal of zero traffic



deaths and serious injuries, everyone must work together to promote positive travel behaviors. Learn more about Austin Transportation's Vision Zero program goals at [austintexas.gov/visionzero](http://austintexas.gov/visionzero).

# If you're looking at spring cleaning, don't forget about the outside

It might surprise you to learn that landscaping has an impact on public safety. A driver, cyclist or pedestrian may not see approaching vehicles, wildlife or people when vegetation blocks their view.

To make your neighborhood a safer place, prune trees and trim or remove any vegetation that obstructs sidewalks, streets or alleys. Cut limbs to at least 8 feet above the sidewalk. Private trees

that branch above roads are a hazard for oversized vehicles, so those limbs should be cut to at least 14 feet above the street.

Streets, sidewalks and other public right of ways are for everyone's use. Plants make streets scenic, but to ensure ease of mobility and safety for all residents, it is important to keep right of ways free of obstructions.

Learn how at [austintexas.gov/clearthrow](http://austintexas.gov/clearthrow).



## What could you do with an extra \$300?

A recent study showed that nearly half of everything Austinites were sending to the landfill is compostable. With a green compost cart from Austin Resource Recovery, you can reduce your waste and your utility bill. Use your green compost cart to collect food scraps, yard trimmings and food-soiled paper instead of putting them into your brown trash cart. We take your compost to an industrial facility that turns it into nutrient-rich compost used to improve water retention in soil and fertilize lawns and gardens without chemicals. Customers who switch from the largest trash cart to the smallest trash cart can save more than \$300 a year! For more on how to save money, use your compost cart and the final expansion of the Curbside Composting program, visit [austintexas.gov/composting](http://austintexas.gov/composting).

## Save energy for what matters with rebates, discounts and incentives

Austin Energy wants you to save energy for what matters, and we can help!

Consider energy-saving ideas like LED light bulbs and smart power strips to brighten your life for less. Save money at the store and at home when you buy eligible home energy efficiency products at participating Austin-area stores with instant savings from Austin Energy. Look for the green tag on store shelves and see the full list of available products at [austinenergy.com/go/instantsavings](http://austinenergy.com/go/instantsavings).

Want a smart thermostat for cozier nights at home? Austin Energy



customers can earn up to \$110 in rebates for each eligible smart thermostat you purchase, install and enroll into the Power Partner<sup>SM</sup> program. Get details at [austinenergy.com/go/powerpartner](http://austinenergy.com/go/powerpartner).

Check out [austinenergy.com/go/tips](http://austinenergy.com/go/tips) for more ways to save.

## Have you called Austin home for many years?

You may be eligible for no-cost programs that lift some of the financial stress of owning a house. These programs may help you stay in your home and make it safer to age in place.

To get more information about free home repair, tax relief and other programs,



visit [austintexas.gov/austinismyhome](http://austintexas.gov/austinismyhome), call 3-1-1 or email [HPDCS@austintexas.gov](mailto:HPDCS@austintexas.gov).

Si gusta recibir este folleto en español, llame a los Servicios Públicos de la Ciudad de Austin al 512-972-9523.

Customer Service Phone: 512-494-9400

24-Hour Power Outage Reporting: 512-322-9100 | 24-Hour Emergency Water Service: 512-972-1000

North Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 8716 Research Blvd., Ste. 115

South Austin Utility Customer Service Center (Walk-in Center): 1901 W. William Cannon Drive, Ste. 100

Rosewood-Zaragosa Neighborhood Center (Walk-in Center): 2800 Webberville Road, Ste. 110

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