The cooler months are a great time of year to check your home for leaks, drafts, perform maintenance on fixtures, and make a few upgrades. Here are a few tips to reduce your utility usage, save some money, and prolong the life of your appliances.

**CHECK YOUR TOILET FOR LEAKS.** Over time, it’s common for flappers to lose their tight seal in toilet tanks, causing them to leak. Try putting a few drops of food coloring into the tank at the back of your toilet and wait 10 minutes. If the color shows up in the bowl, you have a leak that may be fixed by replacing a worn toilet flapper. You can also swing by our Customer Service Center to pick up a free leaky toilet test.

**FLUSH OUT YOUR HOT WATER HEATER.** Over time, it’s natural for mineral deposits to accumulate at the base of a hot water heater. This buildup of sediment makes it difficult for heat to transfer to your water, reducing your water heater’s energy efficiency. Enough buildup can also cause cracks in the tank resulting in leaks. Regularly flushing out your hot water heater to remove sediment buildup will improve water heating efficiency, prolong the life of the appliance, prevent leaks, and save you money.

**INSULATE YOUR PIPES.** Colder seasons can make pipes a bit chillier in your home. Protect them by insulating your water heater and water pipes to save energy while cutting down the amount of water that goes down the drain while waiting for hot water to flow.

**ELIMINATE DRAFTS.** Regardless the time of year, keep your indoor temperature comfortable by sealing off drafts in doors and windows. Consider applying weatherstripping to windows, installing door sweeps, or reapplying caulking to pipes.

**INSTALL RETROFITS.** Upgrading showerheads, sink aerators, and lightbulbs to efficient models are an easy, affordable way to reduce water and electric usage at home. Look for the WaterSense or EnergyStar label when purchasing these items. These labels indicate that the device is more efficient than the standard.

In 2016, the City of Fountain discovered that its ground water contained amounts of Per- and Poly-fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS, “forever chemicals”), that exceeded EPA health advisory limits. Here in Fountain, approximately 70% of our potable water supply is surface water while the remaining 30% is ground water. This meant that the City had to rely solely on surface water to meet it demand needs until additional groundwater treatment was introduced.

The presence of these PFAs were attributed to fire fighter foam used at airfields north of Fountain. As partners, Fountain and the Air Force have worked together to address this issue. This facility was funded by the US Air Force under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). The goal of this effort was to remove PFAS from the groundwater beneath Fountain to fully restore the City’s water supply portfolio and continue to provide safe drinking water to our citizens.

This new facility gives us the long-term ability to operate 4 existing municipal wells located in the downtown heart of the city. These previously individually operating wells are now all consolidated inside the treatment facility and filtered to remove any solids or impurities. That water is then pushed through a cutting-edge Ion-Exchange treatment system to break the chemical bond between the water and remove the PFAS chemicals. Thanks to this facility, Fountain is able to fully utilize all of its supply sources and continue to ensure safe, clean drinking water to residents.
Budget Bill
Everyone Loves to Budget

The City of Fountain offers a Budget Bill Plan to residential account holders, which allows you to pay a set monthly amount, based on your prior annual usage. To calculate your monthly payment, we will average your prior year’s billing, add 5% (for changes in use, weather variations, or changes in rates), and the number you are left with is what you will pay for the next 11 months. In the 12th month, or the “true-up” month (always April), your account will be reconciled to compare actual usage against what you have paid over the year, and you will be responsible for any difference between what was PAID, and what was USED. Ideally, this will be very close to a wash!

Pros of Budget Billing:
• Easily budget 11 months’ worth of utility bills.
• No steep increase during the summer and winter.
• You could see a credit or refund in your true-up month if you’ve consumed less than you have paid for.

To be eligible, you must:
• Have at least 12 months billing history with the City of Fountain Utilities.
• Have an account in good standing, with no termination notices and/or disconnection of services within the prior 12 month period
• Be set up for automatic ACH payments **This may be set up at the time of enrollment**

You can sign up with us at any time by calling Customer Service at 719-322-2010 or emailing customerservice@fountaincolorado.org!

Customer Self-Generation Bill

Thinking about getting solar panels or some other form of electric generation at your home? Per the City’s customer-owned self-generation rate, a self-generation customer’s bill includes three (3) meter readings rather than the two (2) meter readings on standard residential bills. The self-generation bill includes the following readings:

• the total energy generated by your generation system (production);
• the energy that you purchased from the City; and
• the energy that you sold to the City.

Per the City of Fountain electric rate schedule, “The residential customer shall pay the Delivery Charge component set forth in the then current Residential Service tariff for all kWh consumed regardless of the source of generation.” The City uses the Delivery Charge to recover the cost of operating and maintaining the wires and electrical equipment that are necessary to provide electric service to your home. It is standard practice throughout the electric industry to allocate those costs based on each customer’s total consumption.

To help you understand the billing, we have included an example of the calculation.

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- Customer Charge: $0.00
- Energy Charge: $6.56
- Energy Charge/Wh: $0.00
- Delivery Charge: $1.43
- Total Customer Energy Production: 492 kWh
- Energy Sold to CoF: 322 kWh
- Energy purchased from CoF: 245 kWh
- Delivery Charge: 145 kWh

City of Fountain (CoF)

Low Water Yards

City of Fountain Utilities and Resource Central are hosting more than 20 FREE Waterwise Yard Seminars this spring and summer! These virtual webinars will connect you with local sustainability professionals who’ll share their tips for an easy transition to low-water landscapes. Ask questions, get advice, and create your low-water dream yard this spring!

Register now at ResourceCentral.org/Seminars

DOXO is a third party payment processor that is not affiliated with the City of Fountain. The City of Fountain recommends that you do not use this processor because they charge higher fees and they have long turn-around times to get the money to the City of Fountain.

We recommend paying by mail, our website fountaincolorado.org, sign up for ACH or PAP, or by paying over the phone at 719-322-2010 option 1.

If you do use a third party vendor that is affiliated with the city, please allow a 72 hour turnaround time.

UtiliNews To Be Retired

This issue of the UtiliNews will be the last one. We are retiring the “UtiliNews” and introducing “The Fountain 1859”, the City’s new bi-annual newsletter focusing on announcements from all services of the City of Fountain.

If you would like to sign up to receive the Fountain 1859, please scan the QR code or click the link below to complete this form. You can also email us at customerservice@fountainutilities.org or call 719-322-2010 opt 8, to let us know if you prefer a hard copy mailed to you. We will also have hard copies available at our City Hall building (116 S. Main Street) and Customer Service Center (101 N. Main Street).

Click here for form.

There’s a Rebate for That

City of Fountain offers rebates for fixtures and appliances that promote energy and water efficiency. Rebate funds are limited, available on a first come, first served basis. For program eligibility details and to apply, visit fountainutilities.org