

Maintaining Your HVAC System

Energy efficiency is a major priority for homeowners as energy prices rise year after year. One of the best methods to help improve the energy efficiency of your home is to conduct regular maintenance on your heating and cooling system. Like most homeowners, you want to enjoy the benefits of your HVAC system without breaking your budget. Regular maintenance should help identify potential problems so you may keep your system running efficiently.

- **Identify AC Problems Early** – Air conditioning systems will start to degrade over time. As small issues arise, your AC unit will have to work harder to cool your home, resulting in lower energy efficiency. Annual HVAC maintenance can help improve the efficiency of your AC system by locating and fixing small problems before they become costly issues.
- **Replace AC Parts Regularly** – There are a number of moving parts within your AC system that should be changed regularly. The air filter and fan belt are two of the big ones. A clogged air filter will reduce the flow of air through the system, causing wear and tear on the unit while reducing the overall efficiency of the system. Annual maintenance of your AC unit will help identify parts needing repair or replacement so your system continues running efficiently during the warm weather season.

Regular maintenance of your HVAC helps keep the system running efficiently and your energy usage low!

Courtesy of the Grand Haven Board of Light & Power and calvaryheatingandcooling.com.



Created in 1896, the Board of Light & Power is one of more than 2,000 community-owned electric utilities serving homes and businesses across the United States. We are locally-controlled by a five-member Board of Directors elected by Grand Haven residents with approximately 13,500 customers in the greater Grand Haven area.

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PLUGGED IN

News and Information from your Community-Owned Electric Utility,
Grand Haven Board of Light & Power

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Photo Credit: Grand Haven Visitor's Bureau

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**GRAND HAVEN
BOARD OF LIGHT & POWER**

www.ghblp.org

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

How to Beat the Heat Without Breaking the Bank

Did you know that the average home spends about \$1,900 a year on energy costs? You can lower your energy bills and help the environment at the same time! Here's how:

Be a speedy chef

On hot days, avoid using the oven; cook on the stove, use a microwave oven, or grill outside.

Push a button to wash your dishes

Surprise! Your dishwasher uses less water than washing dishes by hand. Then let dishes air-dry to save even more!

Fill up the fridge

Having lots of food in your fridge keeps it from warming up too fast when the door is open. More food means your fridge doesn't have to work as hard to stay cool.

Replace air conditioner filters

Dirty filters restrict airflow and can cause the system to run longer, increasing energy use. Replace filters monthly for maximum benefit. (Save: 1-2 percent)

Plugging leaks

Seal cracks and openings to prevent warm air from leaking into your home.

Turn up your AC thermostat

If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4°F with no reduction in comfort. Turn off ceiling fans when you leave the room. Remember that fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a wind chill effect.

Eliminate wasted energy

Turn off appliances, lights and equipment when not in use (Save: up to 2%)

With these simple steps, you can reduce your energy consumption during the hot days of summer and enjoy a worry free summer of savings. These tips are brought to you by your Grand Haven Board of Light & Power. Sources: energy.gov and consumerenergycenter.org.



Photo Credit: Blog.Saveenergy.com

Water Meter Grounding Wire

The City of Grand Haven is in the process of installing composite water meters throughout their system. As the City continues to replace water meters, property owners are being asked to please contact a licensed electrician to install a new grounding wire.

Electrical code requires a grounding wire around the meter in accordance with the 2011 National Electrical Code (NEC): **Paragraph 250.53 (D) (1) which states: "Continuity of the grounding path or the bonding connection to the interior piping shall not rely on water meters or filtering devices and similar equipment."**

If you have any questions or require additional information, you may contact William Hunter, Director of Public Works at (616) 847-3493 or the BLP's Customer Service Office at 616-846-6250.

SAFETY MATTERS

National Electrical Safety Month

Did you know? The month of May is National Electrical Safety Month! Electricity plays a vital role in everyday life, providing the energy needed to light homes and businesses, prepare meals, or for your home improvement projects. However, electricity is a very powerful force and if proper safety measures are not taken, it can be extremely dangerous or even deadly. Please remember these important outdoor safety tips this summer:

- Always treat a downed power line as if it were live. If power lines are on the ground, stay far away and warn others to do the same!
- Keep all ladders, scaffolding, and tools at least 10 feet away from any overhead power line.
- Use clean, dry wood or fiberglass ladders when working near power lines—and keep at least 10 feet away!
- Dig safely! Call 8-1-1 MISS DIG before beginning any project that requires digging to have all underground utility wires marked.
- Never attempt to trim trees or shrubs that are growing near power lines. If you see a potential problem with power lines becoming tangled in tree limbs, please call our customer service center at 846-6250 or e-mail us at blpservice@ghblp.org and a service worker will investigate and schedule any necessary trimming.
- Always wear rubber-soled shoes or boots when using electric powered lawn tools, and never use them in wet conditions.
- Only fly kites in wide open areas to avoid coming into contact with power lines.
- Never allow children to climb trees that are touching electric lines.

These electrical safety tips are brought to you by your electric utility, the Grand Haven Board of Light & Power and mariononline.com. Keep these tips in mind to stay safe around your home this summer!