



For immediate release: July 30, 2010

Top Five Energy Savings Myths Debunked by Reliant's Energy Expert

HOUSTON – Staying cool and managing electricity use can be a challenge during hot Texas summers. Many Texans are looking for relief by adjusting thermostats and turning on ceiling fans. But is that the right thing to do? How much impact does it have on your electricity bill? The answers may surprise you. Bill Clayton, Reliant Energy vice president of customer care and an expert energy efficiency advisor, debunks common energy efficiency myths.

- **Myth 1:** *Use fans to keep your house cool.*
Fans are for people, not rooms. Ceiling fans create a wind-chill effect that makes you feel cooler. Although ceiling fans cost only about a penny an hour to operate, they should be turned off in unoccupied rooms. You won't get the benefit if you're not in the room.
- **Myth 2:** *Turning the thermostat way down will cool down the house faster.*
Your thermostat isn't an accelerator. It's not going to cool your house faster if you set the thermostat to 60 degrees than if you set it to 70 degrees. It's best to keep it at a constant setting – it will shut off when the desired temperature is reached.
- **Myth 3:** *The larger the air conditioner, the cooler your house will be.*
Bigger is not better when it comes to air conditioning units. If the AC is too big for the home, the unit will short cycle, turning the unit off before it has the opportunity to remove the humidity. Ensure your air conditioner is sized correctly for both comfort and efficiency. It's best to hire an HVAC professional to determine the proper size for your air conditioning equipment.
- **Myth 4:** *Close air vents and doors in the rooms you don't use.*
Although this seems logical, it can affect the efficiency of your cooling system. Shutting off a supply vent does not stop air from entering the duct. It just keeps air from entering the room. Keeping a door closed keeps air from circulating freely in the room and prevents a free flow of air throughout your home.
- **Myth 5:** *Unplugging chargers and small appliances when you're not using them will save you money on your electricity bill.*

When small appliances are not being used, they draw a very small amount of electricity – about one watt per hour versus the 4,000 watts per hour, on average, it takes to run a central air conditioning system. Although it will save energy over time, which can positively impact the environment, it will not lower your electricity bill significantly.

Reliant Energy is committed to providing its customers with the tools and information they need to better control their energy use and reduce their costs during the hot summer months – and all year long. Any electricity consumer, regardless of their provider, can send energy savings questions to energyexperts@reliant.com or visit www.reliant.com/energywise for energy savings tips.

About Reliant Energy:

Reliant Energy provides electricity and energy services to approximately 1.6 million retail customers—including homes, small and large businesses, manufacturing facilities, government entities and institutions across Texas. As part of NRG Energy (NYSE: NRG), Reliant Energy is backed by one of the nation's largest power producers. NRG owns and operates more than 24,000 megawatts of generation capacity, including more than 11,000 megawatts of capacity in Texas. For more information about Reliant Energy products and services, visit www.reliant.com.

###

For more information: Pat Hammond, Reliant Energy, 713-497-7723