

# Florence Energy News

## TIME & MONEY SAVING METHODS OF BILL PAYMENTS

Save your ga\$ . . .  
Buy a \$stamp!!

(Stamps cost le\$\$ than the ga\$  
you use to drive to town!)

A variety of payment methods are offered by Florence Utilities. To help customers save time when paying their utility bills and to *avoid waiting* in teller lines, we are encouraging customers to pay by mail, pay online at [www.florenceutilities.com](http://www.florenceutilities.com), pay by enrolling in our bank draft program, or pay by using the after-hours depository which is available at the side entrance to the Municipal Building on Short Court Street.

*Note: When using the after-hours depository, do not pay with cash. You may pay by check or money order and be sure to include your utility bill stub. Any payment received before 8:00 a.m. will be treated as paid on the previous day.*

For more information about Florence Utilities payment methods, you may contact our Customer Service Department at (256) 760-6512 or go online to [www.florenceutilities.com](http://www.florenceutilities.com).

## BUDGET BILLING PROGRAM

If you would like to pay the same amount for your utility bill each month, then the Budget Billing Program is for you! Your monthly payment is based on the average of your bills for the last 12 months (plus 5% to help pay for any increase in usage or rates).

The amount you pay remains the same from June until April. The balancing month is May, at which time you pay the amount it takes to zero your account. Also in May, your account is re-averaged, based on your last 12 months' billing, and you start a new cycle in June.

To qualify, you must have had service on our system for the last 12 months, and you must have a zero balance at the time the application is processed. Please note that your first year on the program may not cover a full 12 months depending on when you enter the program.

Either Florence Utilities or the customer may cancel the budget billing agreement at any time. If you cancel the agreement, you must wait a year if you want to re-enroll in the program. Any amount owed must be paid in full at the termination of the agreement.

Your monthly bill will have all the same information that you receive now. The amount due will still be shown on the bill. In addition, there will be an added line showing the "previous balance" of you account. If you have a heat pump loan, a Project Help donation, a mobile service loop payment, or any other miscellaneous payment, these amounts will be added to the monthly budget billing amount.

Also, your monthly budget billing amount must be paid each month, regardless of any credit you may have on your account.

For more information, call 718-3210.

## PROJECT HELP

You can help provide *warmth and light* for the elderly, disabled or those on a low fixed income by participating in *Project Help*.

For the year 2008, our customers contributed \$44,596.50 to *Project Help*. These funds, along with contributions from various churches of \$32,693.07 and FEMA grant funds of \$12,336, helped 1,583 customers in need with their utility bills.

If you'd like to contribute to *Project Help*, simply sign the authorization form below, indicate the amount you would like to give and return your completed form with your utility payment to Florence Utilities.

This amount will be included on your monthly utility bill for *Project Help* until you ask that it be removed.

If you feel you could benefit from this program, please visit the Help Center at 621 S. Court Street, Florence, AL.

### Project Help

P. O. Box 877 • Florence, Alabama 35631

Your Gift of Warmth and Light is Tax Deductible.

You are authorized to add a minimum of \$1.00 or \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my Florence Utilities bill each month until I notify you to discontinue this authorization.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(As it appears on the account—Please Print)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

- The City of Florence Utilities serves only as the collection service for this fund.
- Every dollar given to Project Help will go through the Help Center.
- Project Help contributions are not used to pay Help Center workers or any other expenses.

# Florence ENERGY

NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM FLORENCE UTILITIES

This is the last monthly edition of Florence Energy with news you can use. Beginning this year, Florence Energy will be published each quarter.

How can you save money when paying your bill? Several tips are included in this issue.

*Project Help* is a community project to provide funds to those who need help paying their bills. If you would like to contribute, just complete the form inside and return it with your utility payment.

Meter readers record data for 5,000 or more meters each day. They need your help to be able to do this safely and quickly. Guidelines are listed on the back.

[www.florenceutilities.com](http://www.florenceutilities.com)

## Help Your Meter Reader Work Safely

On an average day, your Florence Utilities Meter Readers record data for *5,000 or more meters*. This is a slow process with dangers from pets and pests alike. Accurate billing depends upon access to your meter.

To better serve you, we recommend the following guidelines:

- ◆ Ensure that the area around your meter is clean and free of debris or obstacles by trimming shrubs and plants and removing brush.
- ◆ If you have a dog, please make sure it is restrained so Florence Utilities personnel can efficiently obtain an accurate meter reading.
- ◆ Unlock any gates that might prohibit access to your meter(s) or make a key available to your meter reader on your monthly read day.

On Meter Reading Day Your Help is Needed:

- ◆ Please secure your dog on meter reading day. *Please do not restrain your dog in the area of the meter.*
- ◆ Review your bill to estimate when the following month's meter read date will occur. Your meters are typically read around the same time each month. Allow for a 4-day window for your meter to be read.

NOTE: *Florence City Ordinance Right of Access Sec. 27-33.* The city's identified employees shall have access to the Customer's premises at all reasonable times for the purpose of reading meters, testing, repairing, removing or exchanging any or all equipment belonging to the city.

*Sec. 27-211.* Each customer, by having or leaving his or her premises connected to the system and accepting service therefrom, shall consent and agree to such access and such removal.

## Winter Energy Saving Tips

1. Use ceiling fans in the winter to distribute heat around a room.
2. Close off unused rooms to conserve heat within your house.
3. Keep vents and chimneys clean and in good working order.
4. Prevent heat loss with storm windows and doors.
5. Clean or replace furnace filters regularly and have the entire system checked annually by a professional.
7. On sunny days, open draperies and blinds to let the sun's warmth into your home.
6. Insulate your water heater.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLORENCE UTILITIES

WILL BE CLOSED ON

THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS

JANUARY 1      NEW YEAR'S DAY

JANUARY 18     MARTIN LUTHER  
KING DAY