

# Florence Energy News



## THERMOSTAT CONTROLS

Obviously, the lower the temperature is set for heating and the higher for cooling, the more energy is saved and energy costs reduced. Controlling the thermostat is one of the easiest and most economical ways to control your energy costs.

## THERMOSTAT ADJUSTMENT

Recommended thermostat settings are 70°F or lower for heating and 78°F or higher for cooling. These settings should provide a comfortable environment within the home. Each degree higher than 70°F can increase heating costs by 1-3%, and each degree below 78°F can increase cooling costs by 3-5% or more.

You should also set your thermostat back (in winter) or up (in summer) whenever you will be out of the house for several hours or longer. **It is a common misconception that it will take more energy to heat the home back up (or cool it back down) than was saved by setting the thermostat back.** By setting the thermostat back for heating or up for cooling when you are not home or overnight, you can save as much as 10% on your annual energy bill.

## THERMOSTAT MAINTENANCE

Thermostats should be checked, cleaned, and calibrated periodically. A good rule of thumb is to have your service contractor

check the thermostat when performing annual maintenance on the system.

## PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTAT

To make control of the thermostat easier, a setback or programmable thermostat is recommended. A programmable thermostat allows you to program the temperature of the house for different times or days and then leave the thermostat alone for the rest of the heating or cooling season. These thermostats allow you to set the temperature down (or up) during the day or overnight, but increase (or decrease) the temperature prior to your arrival or when you awake. This allows you to save energy without waking up to a cold house in the winter or coming home to an overheated house in the summer.

Programmable thermostats come in many varieties. They can allow for either one or two adjustments a day or multiple changes over a week. To decide the best thermostat for your needs, determine what temperature setbacks you want for your home and look for the simplest thermostat that will meet your individual needs.

If you have a heat pump system, you should review the manufacturer's specifications before purchasing a programmable thermostat. An improperly used or mismatched setback thermostat can actually increase heat pump operating costs by increasing reliance on the more expensive back-up heating elements. Most manufacturers now offer programmable thermostats specifically designed for heat pumps. For more information, you may contact (256) 740-6089.

## CITY OF FLORENCE RECYCLING DEPARTMENT



In 2008, the City of Florence recycled 2,429 tons of material. This saved 60,840 trees, 18,327 cubic yards of landfill space, and the energy equivalent to 25,330 barrels of oil. We would like to thank you for contributing to the success of this program.

The City of Florence urges you to:



RECYCLE

Please continue to be good stewards of the environment by recycling. Paper, cardboard, metal, plastic bottles, motor oil, and cooking oil can be dropped off at our recycling center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The City of

Florence Recycling Center is located at 1200 Terrace Street. If you would like more information about recycling, pick up a brochure, or magnet at the recycling center or at the Florence Utilities Customer Service Department.

If you would like to start a recycling program at your business, church, or school, please call **760-6495**. The City of Florence Recycling Center also schedules educational group tours of the facility. If your group cannot come to the recycling center, we will come to you with an educational presentation on recycling. For more information about this, contact **760-6494**.

## SHOALS EARTH DAY FEST 2009

April is Earth Month. Here in Florence and the Shoals area, residents, businesses, and organizations have partnered to create a month full of activities centered around Earth Day. The main event will be held in Wilson Park on April 25th from 11 - 6 pm.

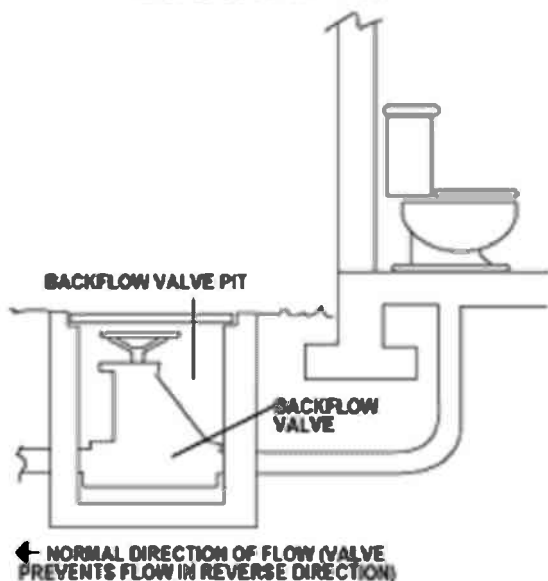
*For more information, contact the Florence-Lauderdale Tourism office at 740-4141.*

## SEWER BACKFLOW VALVE: WHAT IS IT?

Have you occasionally experienced a sewer backup during or following a heavy rain? Is your home or business located in a low area subject to occasional flooding? If the answer is yes to either of these questions, you may need to install a sewer backflow valve on your sewer line.

A sewer backflow valve is a device that can be installed by a plumber on the home-owners' or businesses' private sewer service line at some point between the building and the City's main line. The purpose of the device is to allow sewage to pass through during normal operation, but if the City's main sewer service line backs up during a heavy rain, the device will close, preventing costly damage to your home or business. Here is how it works.

TYPICAL INSTALLATION OF AN EXTERIOR BACKFLOW VALVE



If you have experienced backups before or are concerned that it may be a problem for you in the future, please contact the Gas & Water/Wastewater Department for a no charge evaluation.

You may contact our office at **760-6637**, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. After hours, holidays, and weekends, please call **764-4456**.

NEXT MONTH: *SEWER SERVICE LINE:  
WHAT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY?*

## Energy Saving Tips

1. Caulk and weather-strip around windows and doors to stop air leaks.
2. Seal gaps in floors and walls around pipes and electrical wiring.
3. Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads.
4. Insulate your water heater.
5. Look for the ENERGY STAR® Label when replacing large or small appliances.
6. Clean or replace furnace filters regularly and have the entire system checked annually by a professional.
7. Use power strips for home electronics and turn off power strips when equipment is not in use.

Visit [TVA.com](http://TVA.com) to learn more Energy Saving Tips and take a Home Energy Audit to receive a Free Conservation Kit to help you get started. Request a mail-in version by calling 1-800-663-1835.

# Florence ENERGY

NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM FLORENCE UTILITIES

To keep our utility customers more informed, the Florence Utilities Water/Wastewater Department has put together a series of three articles about sewer lines. The first article, *Sewer Backup Valve: What Is It?* appears in this issue. This article includes helpful information about how a sewer backflow valve works.

In 2008, the City of Florence recycled 2,429 tons of material. This saved 60,840 trees, 18,327 cubic yards of landfill space, and the energy equivalent to 25,330 barrels of oil. We would like to thank you for contributing to the success of our recycling program. Read more about this increasingly popular City of Florence Recycling program inside.

Also, energy-saving tips are included on the back to help you save money on your utility bill throughout the year. Please look over the tips listed inside and start conserving energy today.

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