

December 2019 | Washington • Idaho

## And a partridge in a pear tree



**Those 11 pipers piping, ten lords-a-leaping, nine ladies dancing, and eight maids-a-milking sure do use a lot of energy over the holidays.**

Not to mention your cousin, who loves hot showers; your thermostat-boosting sister, and the extra loads of laundry your family is tossing in the wash. It can all impact your energy usage this holiday season. Having extra family and friends visiting during the holidays makes for special times — and a higher-than-normal energy bill. Learn how to manage your winter bill at [myavista.com/winterbill](http://myavista.com/winterbill) and keep cozy this winter.



## All aboard!

**Powered by steam, diesel or electricity, the Inland Northwest Rail Museum is home to almost 30 engines and rail cars, not to mention model trains, an enormous collection of railroad memorabilia, and rides on its own small train line.** Whether for a tot who loves Thomas the Tank Engine or a local history buff interested in how rail shaped the Northwest, the museum has something for everyone.

"In 1869, 150 years ago, the Transcontinental Railroad was completed," says Inland Empire Railway Society President Dale Swant. "People are attracted to trains because of their history. This country was settled because of trains."

When you visit it's hard to believe the Inland Empire Railway Society and its impressive rail collection, were almost homeless. After more than 30 years at the Spokane Interstate Fairgrounds, the Society was forced in 2002 to look for a new home, finally settling on its present location near Reardan, Wash., about 25 miles west of Spokane. The current facility opened in 2016 with plans to expand in the future.

Swant said the location was chosen for a number of reasons, including the ability to move all the railcars and engines there and the fact that almost 5,000 cars a day pass by the museum.

"We were only open 10 days a year at the Fairgrounds. We're open 140 days a year now," he said.

Visitors are treated to a number of rail cars and engines, including some that have been restored to their original condition and are open for walkthroughs. Another major highlight is the last remaining Spokane streetcar.

At one time, Spokane was crisscrossed with a network of electric streetcars built and powered by Washington Water Power Company (now Avista). The streetcars linked the city center to new developments and recreation attractions. But when trolley service was discontinued in 1936, most of the streetcars were destroyed.

The Inland Northwest Rail Museum is open Fri.–Sun., 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Apr. 1–Dec. 17, at Highway 2 and State Route 231, 25 miles west of Spokane. Learn more at [inlandnwrailmuseum.com](http://inlandnwrailmuseum.com).



# Hey, it's cold outside

**With frigid temperatures breaking records across the region this season, you may have noticed a sudden increase on your energy bill.**

When our home heating system begins firing up more often, it consumes more energy. This can present a challenge when we're trying to maintain comfort in our homes while also keeping an eye on how much we spend.



To maintain comfort and help manage your energy bill, seal cold air drafts to stop the heat inside your home from escaping. Air drafts are one of the most common culprits behind increased energy use and something any home can fall victim to. During mild weather, temperatures outside mirror our thermostat settings inside, so air drafts don't pose much of a problem. However, in the winter, air outside is much colder than the air we're comfortable with inside. Seal unwanted air transfer with items like window plastic, rope caulk and weather stripping.

For homes that heat with baseboard, wall or space heaters, conserve energy by practicing zone heating. Operate these heaters in occupied areas only and shut doors to unused rooms to help reduce energy use.

Because water heating is the second largest energy consumer in our homes, lower water heater settings to 120 degrees and fix leaky faucets. Over the course of a year, just one drop per second from a leaky faucet can waste 2,500 gallons of hot water.

Visit [myavista.com/winterbill](http://myavista.com/winterbill) for more ideas on how to increase the comfort inside your home while also reducing your energy use.

## Electric and natural gas rates have changed

**We recently told you about the annual rate adjustments we are required to file each year to true up the actual cost of natural gas or electricity purchased to serve our customers with what is currently in your energy rates.** With approval from our utility commissions, these rate increases are now included in your current bills. Based on average usage, here is what the change looks like:

In Washington

- Electric: an increase of \$0.57 or 0.7% per month
- Natural gas: an increase of \$7.06 or 14.8% per month

In Idaho

- Electric: an increase of \$2.55 or 3.1% per month
- Natural gas: an increase of \$3.36 or 7.1% per month

We want to make it easy to understand your energy pricing. Learn more about your energy prices at [myavista.com/rates](http://myavista.com/rates).



## Please don't attach anything to utility poles



**While it may be tempting to attach signs, basketball hoops, fences or other items to utility poles, doing so creates a safety hazard for the utility workers who regularly access them to do their jobs.**

Nails and other fasteners not only shorten the life of a wood pole but can cause the utility workers climbing equipment to fail when they come into contact. These unauthorized attachments might also cause injuries during an accidental fall, or worse, prevent a worker from safely being rescued if they become incapacitated.

We encourage you to find a better location for your signs, backboards or other items as unauthorized attachments are against the law in Washington and Idaho.

Thank you for helping us maintain our equipment and keep a safe environment for our utility workers.

## Connect With Us

Mailing Address: 1411 E. Mission, PO Box 3727, Spokane, WA 99220-3727

Toll-Free: (800) 227-9187 | Web Site: [myavista.com](http://myavista.com)

Email: [ask@myavista.com](mailto:ask@myavista.com)

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