



Connections

May 2020 | Oregon

Help manage your energy costs with an Energy Saver Kit



Spending more time at home doesn't have to result in higher energy bills. With help from our partner Energy Trust of Oregon, you can still save energy and money. Energy Trust continues to offer free Energy Saver Kits filled with products to help you reduce energy costs right away. Energy Saver Kits are delivered right to your door and you can install the products in minutes. Order your kit today at energytrust.org/esaverkits or by calling (866) 691-1766.


EnergyTrust
of Oregon



We're right here. With you.

And we may be able to connect you with local assistance.



As the impact of the Coronavirus continues to unfold, we're here with you, and our hearts go out to all those affected. We understand that there may be instances where customers find themselves facing financial difficulties. We are here to help and encourage customers who may be impacted to call us at (800) 227-9187 to discuss how we might be of assistance. We're focused on continuing to meet the needs of our customers.

Your community is our community. Just like you, we live here, work here, and build memories here. But we also recognize our unique position gives us the chance to contribute in an impactful way. While we can't predict when life will return to normal, we would like to let you know about some of our programs as well as some local agencies that may be able to provide assistance to you and your family to help you get through this time.

Did you know you can call 211 to get information for local service resources specific to your need? This resource provides **free and confidential information and referrals** to get help with your food, housing, employment, health care, counseling, and more. To learn about your local service programs call 2-1-1.

Additionally, Avista partners with local community action agencies to deliver energy assistance to our customers. If you need help paying your bill, you can locate your local agency by visiting: myavista.com/assistance.

Emergency Payment Arrangements available online

Visit us at myavista.com/COVID-19 to learn more about payment arrangements and energy assistance that may be available to you. Our new online Emergency Payment Arrangements tool allows you to choose the plan that works best for you and can include applying an existing deposit, if applicable.

We're here to help.

You can also call us at (800) 227-9187 if you'd like to discuss your options with a Customer Service Representative.



Financial literacy program empowers Oregon women

A successful financial literacy program for low income young women in Southern Oregon will reach more rural counties, thanks to a \$3,500 contribution from the Avista Foundation. 'Financially Fit Women' has educated and empowered over 200 women through credit counseling, debt management planning, financial education and more. The program is offered by Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Southern Oregon (CCCSSO).



"We help these young women rebuild the wreckage of their lives," said licensed credit counselor Lynn Mihalyo. "We often start by running a credit report to identify what is owed and then talk about financial options. We give them some hope that they're able to pull out of their situation."

Financially Fit Women is a free financial education program for low-income women age 30 and under. It connects these young women to free sessions with professional, licensed credit counselors who help them create a plan to manage their debt and get control of their finances. The program recognizes the correlation between financial

health and physical well-being. Poor financial health can have a devastating ripple effect impacting the young woman, her family and workplace.

The program provides credit and budget counseling, debt management planning, credit report reviews, financial education classes, bankruptcy counseling, housing counseling and student loan counseling.

"The empowerment provided by this program is a true barrier-breaker, especially for rural women," explained Bill Ihle, executive director and CEO. "We focus on young women to catch them early. We know they rarely learn financial literacy in school and we want to help build their self-confidence to empower them not just in their personal lives but also professionally. The additional funding from the Avista Foundation means we can expand into more counties to reach more young women," Ihle said, noting that CCCSSO is now using video credit counseling to serve isolated communities.

In 2019, Avista awarded more than \$3.2 million in philanthropic giving across our five-state service territory. Learn more by visiting myavista.com.



Rooted in safety



If planting trees and shrubs is on your spring to-do list, make sure you start your landscaping project by knowing where underground utilities, including natural gas lines, are located. Planting too close to underground lines can cause safety concerns while digging and as the vegetation matures.

It's a good practice not to plant a tree within 10 feet of a natural gas line. Tree roots will spread out at least as wide as the tree's canopy and often much further. As the roots spread and grow deeper, they can entangle or even break natural gas lines or damage protective gas pipeline coatings. Severe storms can also uproot trees which can pull up or break a natural gas line, potentially causing a serious gas leak.

Shrubs, flowers and ground cover are good choices for landscaping near natural gas lines since their root systems are not as extensive as those of trees. When selecting your plantings, consider the size of the root ball, the matured plant's roots and keep in mind the distance to a natural gas line.

Before starting any project that involves digging, always call 811 at least two full business days in advance to have your underground utilities located. **The service is free.** Privately-owned lines can be located for a fee. Otherwise, one strike with a shovel could nick a line, creating a dangerous safety situation. Plus, it's the law. Visit myavista.com/811 to learn more.

Connect With Us

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