

# Connections

## Energy-efficiency program for income-eligible households

**Is the home you live in older, drafty or difficult to heat or cool?** You may need to add insulation to your attic, floor or walls, seal leaky windows and doors, or have your heating equipment and ductwork checked to ensure proper operation and air flow.

We partner with local community agencies to assist income-qualified customers who heat with natural gas by offering a free home weatherization energy-efficiency program. If you currently receive assistance to pay your Avista bill or help with other household needs, you may be eligible to participate.

Our program provides homeowners and renters with a no-cost home energy-efficiency inspection and free home improvements such as insulation, duct sealing and more.

To find a partner agency near you, visit [myavista.com/ORLIEE](http://myavista.com/ORLIEE) or call us at (800) 227-9187.



## Helping Residents of Ashland be all they can be

**A former motel has found a new purpose as a hub for homeless and social services that help residents of Jackson County, Oregon, through what's often the most difficult times of their lives.**

Options for Helping Residents of Ashland (OHRA) recently received some grant funding from the Avista Foundation, which will help the organization strengthen its three main commitments: to move people from crisis to stability, find housing for the homeless and help military veterans find the services they need.

"We are here to help people who live at or below poverty level in Jackson County, and no matter which program you look at we help people move from a place of crisis in their lives to a place of stability," said Cass Sinclair, executive director of OHRA.

At OHRA's facility, homeless can use computers and have their mail delivered. They can also connect with a navigator – a caseworker who can help gain access to resources they may not know they are eligible for.

"Our main focus is to help people sign up for services they already qualify for," Sinclair said. "Sometimes they just don't know, or they got lost in the process of applying."

Twice a week, OHRA operates a shower and laundry trailer out in the community, and one of the navigators is there, too. Until OHRA acquired the former Motel 8, it operated a winter shelter five months out of the year in different locations.

"This is a game changer. Now we have 52 individual rooms and capacity for 72 people," Sinclair said. People can stay for up to six months at the shelter, which partners with Le Clinica for health care and mental health appointments.

"Anyone can just walk in," Sinclair said. "You don't have to be enrolled in a program. We have a completely open resource center with shelter and wrap around services."

Visit [helpingashland.org](http://helpingashland.org) to learn about the many programs offered by OHRA and read some of the client success stories.

*At Avista, we recognize our unique position gives us the chance to contribute in an impactful way and make a real difference in people's lives. Since 2002, the Avista Foundation has made grants totaling over \$13 million to organizations that support vulnerable and limited income populations, education, and economic and cultural vitality. For more information on grant applications and geographical areas covered, please visit [avistafoundation.com](http://avistafoundation.com).*

# Know what's below

**Before you break ground with a shovel, auger or other equipment, call 811 at least two business days before you dig—it's the law.** A utility representative will come mark the approximate location of your buried utility lines. The service is free for Avista residential customers. Privately-owned lines can be located for a fee.

## Call 811 before you dig checklist

Never disturb the ground until you complete these steps:

- Use white paint to mark the zone where you plan to dig.
- Call 811 and wait for the utility representative to mark the facilities owned by Avista.
- Maintain and respect these locate marks.
- If your located ticket expires, you must call in for a new locate.
- Hand dig within the 24-inch tolerance zone to expose the marked utility.

If you damage, hit or nick a natural gas line, immediately notify Avista customer service at (800) 227-9187. If you damage a pipeline and natural gas is escaping, **DO NOT FOLD OVER THE PIPE** to seal the leak. Static charge can ignite the gas. Walk upwind a safe distance away, then call 911 and Avista.

Visit [myavista.com/811](https://myavista.com/811) for additional information.

ELECTRIC: RED
GAS-OIL: YELLOW
COMMUNICATION: ORANGE
WATER: BLUE
SEWER: GREEN
TEMPORARY SURVEY: PINK
IRRIGATION: PURPLE
PROPOSED EXCAVATION: WHITE

## Ground mark identification

**Ground markings are in different colors to indicate the locations and types of utility facilities buried below.**

Valid periods for locate marks are: WA – 45 days; ID – 21 days. If anyone digs after the listed times, they are digging with an invalid ticket.



## Beat the heat

**Summer is right around the corner and before you know it, the sun will be beating down on your house.** Now is the perfect time to plan how you'll keep your home cool and comfortable over the next few months. Early preparation will help you manage your energy use and avoid surprises on your bill.

There are lots of ways to keep the sun's heat out of your house. Simple adjustments and low- or no-cost do-it-yourself projects can make a noticeable difference. Getting started is easy. Here are some quick tips to save energy:

- Use box fans before turning on your air conditioner. Fans use about 1% of the energy that AC's do.
- Switch your ceiling fan's spin direction to counterclockwise. This will push air downward, so you can feel it.

- Turn ventilation fans off when you don't need them (bathroom, kitchen, etc.). They pull the cool air from inside your home and push it straight outside.
- Set your thermostat at 78°. Each degree above that can save 3% on your cooling bill.
- Close your blinds and drapes during the day. Insulated drapes or shades can block up to 65% of the sun's heat from passing through your windows.
- Use your microwave instead of the oven. It uses up to 20% less energy than the oven and won't heat up the house while you're cooking.
- Barbeque outside. Summer barbeques are fun and don't heat up the inside of your house.
- Hang laundry outside to dry. Avoiding the dryer will save energy and keep your house cooler.

- Landscape with shade trees or vines. Reduce the amount of heat entering your home on south-facing sides. Remember to call 811 before you dig.

- Check your insulation levels. Proper attic, wall and crawlspace insulation will keep hot air out and cool air in.

Want more energy saving tips to help beat the heat this summer? We've got you covered with lots of DIY videos and ideas by visiting [myavista.com/askanexpert](https://myavista.com/askanexpert).

Got a larger project to save on natural gas? Learn more at [myavista.com/orrebrates](https://myavista.com/orrebrates).

Staying cool and comfortable this summer doesn't have to cost a lot or be difficult. Planning ahead will ensure you're prepared and make managing your energy use easier.

## Connect with us

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