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Saving Watts In The Southeast?

Written by Marsha Johnston

Sunday, 24 August 2008




If Duke Energy, which has been one of the country's strongest opponents of energy efficiency, can become an energy efficiency proponent, there is hope for the southeast, which is the country's least efficient economy, says Ivan Urlaub, director of the [North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association \(NCSEA\)](#).

In order to get approval for an 800-megawatt coal plant, Duke had to agree to spend 1 percent of its revenues per year, or approximately \$35 million, on energy efficiency. Thus, its Save-a-Watt proposal was born. [Whether the measure passes or not](#), the Southeast clearly needs help conserving energy. Urlaub said Kentucky and South Carolina use five times as much energy per \$1 million of economic output as does California. "There is vast untapped renewable energy and energy efficiency potential in the Southeast," says Urlaub.

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Southerners waste energy

written by Susan VanderJeugd, August 29, 2008



As a midwestern transplant to North Carolina, I always assumed southerners could take the heat, what with all those beautiful front porches built to catch the breeze in Charleston, SC. But what I find are people that run the AC as soon as the outdoor temp hits 72-75, which is like in April. Thus the AC runs for 6 months. I keep my thermostat at a balmy 82-84 (programmable so nighttime is higher and it usually doesn't even kick on unless its still 100 outside). Granted, my house is newer and has good insulation, but the slightly higher temp feels normal to me. It definitely feels cool enough when you walk inside from 100 degree heat outside. If the daytime temp is below 90, I usually turn it off, and open windows on both sides of the house to catch breezes. My biggest pet peave is the fact that, at work during the summer, I had to wear a sweater because it was so cold inside. Some have space heaters running--absolutely ridiculous. Duke Power wants to build more capacity (more profits) using coal and exercises considerable influence in local politics--I believe our current mayor (now running for governor), a former employee of Duke Energy, still works for them in some mysterious capacity. Duke Power recently developed an ad campaign to convince the general public that they are concerned about the environment (instead of profit?). I am not convinced of their good intentions yet.

My midwestern sense of frugality is totally out of place down here because everyone lives for the AC, even in their parked, idling car! I have never heard a word about conservation from our elected officials or from Duke. In fact, when our community started using less water because of the drought, the city raised the water rates to make up the difference for lost revenue!

The south has abundant sunshine but I fear if I try to install solar panels on my roof, my homeowner's association would haul me into court. What to do?

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