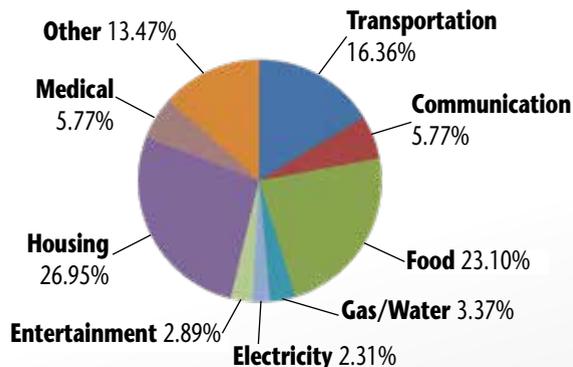


Online tools aid efficiency choices

If getting a better handle on your household finances is one of your goals, OPPD has online tools that can help. You can find these tools at oppd.com/UsageTools.

MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES

Enter the approximate amount you spend each month in categories such as transportation, communication (cell phone), food, electricity, gas/water, entertainment, housing and medical. Once you click the Submit button, your expenses are placed into a pie chart that shows the percentage of each category. At right is an example.



ELECTRIC USAGE CALCULATOR

This tool lets you evaluate the energy usage of your appliances. Once you've established your expenses, use the calculator to identify the biggest contributors to your energy costs. All energy costs in this tool are based on OPPD's current average kWh cost.

It should be noted, however, that some assumptions have been made for each appliance regarding frequency of use and how much electricity the appliance uses, based on national data.

APRIL BOARD MEETINGS

Committee: Tuesday, April 10, 8:30 a.m., Energy Plaza, 444 S. 16th St., Omaha. **Regular board meeting:** Thursday, April 12, 4 p.m., same location. Hearing-impaired may call 402-636-3208, 72 hours prior to request an interpreter. Both meetings will be livestreamed online at oppd.com

Outlets

OUR MISSION

Provide affordable, reliable and environmentally sensitive energy services to our customers.



Ensure planting success by choosing these tree types

There may still be snow on the ground, but that doesn't mean you can't start planning your spring landscaping projects. OPPD forester Mike Norris recommends the following tree types. These species and more can be seen at the OPPD Arboretum, 108th and Blondo streets.

RED OAK

This medium to large shade tree with a spreading canopy is known for its hardiness and adaptability, as well as its brilliant fall foliage.

Size: 60-70 feet at maturity, with a spread of around 45 feet.

Growth rate: This is a relatively fast-growing tree, gaining more than 24 inches per year.

Location: Full sun is ideal

GINGKO

This tree is known for its uniquely shaped leaves that turn a bright yellow in fall. It also has high tolerance for urban soils and pollution.

Size: 25-50 feet at maturity, spread of up to 35 feet

Growth rate: Medium, adding 13-24 inches per year.

Location: Full sun and partial shade are best, with a minimum of four hours of direct sunlight.



CONCOLOR (WHITE) FIR

This hardy evergreen thrives in an urban setting, has good foliage color, good needle retention and a pleasing shape and aroma.

Size: 30-50 feet at maturity, with a spread of about 20 feet.

Growth rate: Slow to medium, with gains of less than 12 inches to 24 inches per year.

Location: Full sun and partial shade, with a minimum of four hours of direct sunlight daily.

5 energy-saving tips for renters

If you rent a house or apartment, these five suggestions can help you conserve energy and lower your costs, without breaking the bank – or forfeiting your security deposit.

1. Replace bulbs in light fixtures with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). This reduces energy use by 75 percent.
2. Take advantage of the sun's warmth in winter by keeping drapes open. Close window shades and drapes to keep out the heat of the summer sun.
3. Unplug any battery chargers, such as those for cellphones, or power adapters when not being used. Use a power strip to turn off equipment such as TVs, DVR, computer, etc.
4. Keep air registers clear of furniture or décor. This helps air circulate efficiently.
5. If you can, install a programmable thermostat to adjust the home or apartment's temperature when you are away by setting energy-saving temperatures. When on vacation, use the "hold" button to keep the energy-saving temperature constant while you are gone.

Earth Day Omaha – April 21, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Elmwood Park – showcases charitable, scientific and educational efforts advocating for sustainable environmental practices and lifestyles. Omaha's largest ecological showcase and celebration, it is free and open to the public. For more information, visit earthdayomaha.org.

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