

Orleans  
with news from the Cape Codder

## It's easy being green, says Cape Light Compact

By Rich Eldred, *The Cape Codder*  
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(photos by Elizabeth Kuechenmeister, OCF)

ORLEANS - Vampires have never been more popular in books, movies, television, and you can be sure, all around your home.

Our modern marvel high tech devices – televisions, stoves, radios, DVD players and all sorts of plebian machines – never shut off. They suck electricity from your walls day and night.

Short circuit those vampires, Kevin Galligan of Cape Light Compact advised during Tuesday night's Orleans Citizens Forum on "How to Cut Your Electricity Bill."



**Kevin Galligan**

The Compact conducts energy audits of homes and recommends or prioritizes energy-saving solutions based on its findings. The Compact provides rebates of up to 75 percent on installations and appliances, free energy efficient compact fluorescent lights, commercial and industrial retrofits and various incentives to save on power. The audit takes from one to two hours.

One frequent recommendation is a weather responsive heating system that produces heat according to the ambient weather. The Compact will give a \$100 rebate on it and you can save 5 percent to 10 percent off the bill each month.

There is also a micro combined heat and power system (MicroCHP) that uses excess heat from power production to home heat, hot water production, etc. They can help you install a smart home energy monitoring system that will let your computer know how much energy is being devoured at any time.

"The main driver of energy pricing is fossil fuel costs, natural gas and oil," said Galligan, pointing out how electricity prices track the cost of oil and natural gas. "By lowering our energy use we are lowering our dependence on fossil fuel generation and also helping the environment."

The Compact is offering electricity at 9.89 cents per kilowatt hour through 2011 as a long-term deal, less than the current October market rates around 12.49 cents.

Chris Powicki of the Cape and Islands Renewable Energy Collaborative said he would like to see the Cape chop fossil fuel use in half by 2020 and get all their electricity from renewable sources.

"We have a huge energy footprint relative to other regions," Powicki noted. "Our greenhouse gas emissions (on Cape) exceed large countries in sub-Saharan Africa that have millions of people."

He would like to see plug-in electric hybrid cars.



**Chris Powicki**

“We could use green (wind) energy to power the vehicles then we’d have zero emission vehicles,” Powicki said. “We need to have behavioral change. Personal behavior is a great starting point for energy change. Plug in, turn off, turn down. Power strips reduce vampire loads. Every house could use some air sealing installation. And one of the key things they can do is call Cape Light Compact.”

One person who did is Ken Rowell of the renewable/wind energy committee. The Compact installed energy monitoring equipment in his home and translated the usage to his laptop.

“So I could monitor it at any time during the day,” he noted.

He installed energy efficient argon gas-filled windows.

“That made a huge difference. We did an energy audit with the CLC and also replaced the storm doors, converted the

light bulbs to CFLs and now we’re making more of an effort to turn off the lights,” Rowell said. “And as we replace appliances we use only Energy Star equipment. We unplugged our cell phone chargers and installed a programmable thermostat.”

His kilowatt usage dropped 198 hours in September and is on track to fall 130 in October, and that’s on top of adding a well pump for irrigation.

“The smart energy monitor really helped us see the fruits of our efforts,” Rowell said.

So far he’s saved \$130 in three months.

Ed Maas owns the Orleans Inn, a century-old, not very heat efficient building, at least not until recently. It had an old coal-fired furnace, converted to oil. He consulted the Compact. The furnace was replaced by high efficiency gas heat. Lights and thermostats and fryolators were replaced.

“We’re a successful business now largely due to them,” Maas said. “You have no idea how excited I am when that bill comes in now, to see what the kilowatt hours are – how’d I do? I look back over 13 years and we’ve saved over a million dollars in utility costs. Now we have something to pass on to the children.”

**Energy audit**

Cape Light Compact  
800-797-6699

**Save on electric rates**

Reduced rate through July 2011, through Cape Light Compact  
Conedison Solutions, 800-381-9192; have your electric bill account number on hand

**Energy-saving tips**

- \*Set hot water heater to 120 degrees and insulate the pipes
- \*Use a microwave instead of an oven
- \*Use a smaller pan to cook
- \*Vacuum the condenser coils of the refrigerator

—*Cape Light Compact*, [www.capelightcompact.org](http://www.capelightcompact.org)

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