

Mansfield *Live wire*

A newsletter for
customers of the
Mansfield Municipal
Electric Department

February 2005

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Live Wire format will change in March

Live Wire is changing. After much consideration, the Mansfield Municipal Electric Department (MMED) has decided to change the format of the *Live Wire* newsletter in two ways:

- 1.) *Live Wire* will now be mailed to your home on a **quarterly** basis. Currently you receive *Live Wire* in your monthly electric bill.
- 2.) *Live Wire* will be **directly mailed** to your home instead of coming as a bill stuffer in your electric bill.



GARY BABIN,
MMED DIRECTOR

The reasons for this change are that MMED believes that publishing on a quarterly basis will allow for better content. The quarterly publication will be seasonal in nature and will still provide all the helpful seasonal tips you have come to rely on for saving energy. In addition, the calendar of events will continue to be published as a handy reference for Mansfield events.

The direct mailing is intended to put *Live Wire* in front of people, instead of hoping they will look at the publication when they pull their electric bill out of the envelope it now comes in.

The new format will start in March with the publication of MMED's spring *Live Wire*.

We would be interested in **any** reader feedback you might have on these changes. You can visit our offices at 125 High St., call us at 508-261-7361 or email your comments to land@mansfieldelectric.com.

Save with our appliance rebates

In the market for a washing machine, refrigerator or dishwasher? Mansfield Electric is offering rebates of \$25 to \$100 on these and other selected Energy Star-rated appliances. For complete program details before you buy, or to request a rebate application, please call Laurie Anderson at 508-261-7361. You can also find more details and a rebate form you can print out at www.mansfieldelectric.com.

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Mansfield Town Hall Connection

FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Important warnings about unvented gas appliances

Vent-free gas products include gas fireplaces and fireplace inserts, gas logs, gas stoves and room heaters. These appliances are called “vent-free” because they don’t require a chimney or wall vent. They have recently been approved for use in Massachusetts, and if you are considering one, this information can help teach you what to look for and what needs to be done to properly permit one of these units.



The Board of Fire Prevention Regulations, pursuant to M.G.L. c.148 s.25A, has promulgated regulations to allow the sale and use of permanently fixed, unvented LP or natural gas-fired heaters. These regulations are in the Fire Code at 527 CMR 30.00 and only appliances listed in accordance with the Massachusetts Fuel Code (248 CMR) are approved for sale and use in Massachusetts.

The Board of Plumbers and Gasfitters has approved certain models for sale. Only these approved unvented gas heaters may be sold. For a list of the approved heaters, there is a link from the Department of Fire Services home page at www.mass.gov/dfs or go directly to http://license.reg.state.ma.us/public/pb_pre_form.asp. If you have any questions, contact the local plumbing inspector or the State Plumbing Board at 617-717-3074.

Regulation has safety requirements

The revised fire prevention regulation, 527 CMR 30.00, took effect April 1, 2004 and may be viewed online by going to the Department of Fire Services home page at www.mass.gov/dfs.

The regulation requires purchasers of vent-free gas products to install and maintain at least one carbon monoxide detector and working smoke detectors throughout the home. Unvented heaters cannot be installed in the bedroom and bathroom. They must be installed in rooms and buildings that have an operable, permanently installed primary source of heat.

Sellers of the unvented heaters must provide each purchaser with a copy of the regulation. The head of the local or state gas inspector shall issue a permit for the installation of these units.

Unvented portable heaters still illegal

The sale or use of portable unvented gas fired heaters inside buildings used for human habitation is still prohibited.

Illegal heater sales

Recently, the Department of Fire Services’ compliance officers have observed noncompliant unvented gas heaters being sold at both Home Depot and Lowe’s stores. Both have been served with cease and desist notices at their corporate headquarters.

Permit for installation required

The head of the local fire department and the local or state gas inspector shall issue a permit for installation of vent-free gas units.



Requirements:

- 1.) Consumers must present a copy of the installation/operating instructions to both the fire department and gas inspector when applying for a permit.
- 2.) Only products approved by the Plumbers and Gasfitters Board may be sold or installed in Massachusetts.
- 3.) The appliance shall be equipped with an oxygen depletion safety shutoff system (ODS).
- 4.) The heater shall be properly sized for the room and shall not exceed 40,000 BTU per room or space.
- 5.) Purchasers must install and maintain *at least* one carbon monoxide (CO) detector in any room or space where a heater has been installed.
- 6.) Any building in which an unvented heater is installed shall be protected by working and maintained detectors in accordance with 780 CMR. or MGL c.148 s.26E.
- 7.) Rooms and buildings served by approved vent-free gas units must also contain an operable, permanently installed primary source of heat.
- 8.) Sellers of vent-free gas products will provide each purchaser with a copy of 527 CMR 30.00 upon sale of the unit.

Installation requirements

- Appliances shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions by a qualified technician.
- Appliances must be permanently affixed or mounted. **Portable unvented propane or natural gas-fired space heaters are prohibited.**
- Fuel supply to each appliance shall be permanent piping in accordance with 248 CMR. LPG appliances shall be subject to storage requirements outlined in 527 CMR 6.00.
- Proper clearances to combustibles shall be maintained.
- Vent-free gas products may not be installed in bathrooms or bedrooms.

After installation, and before operation:

- Each permit grantor must inspect and approve the installation for compliance with Massachusetts state regulations 527 CMR and 248 CMR.
- The manufacturer's instructions shall be left with the appliance and be made available for any public official.
- Any malfunction of an unvented space heater shall be reported by the owner to the head of the local fire department.

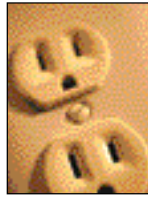
BOARD OF HEALTH

The public health nurse is available the second Wednesday of every month from 3-4 p.m. in the second floor conference room at Town Hall. She is also available at the Council on Aging from 1-2 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. Call Chris Delano, R.N., at 508-222-0118, ext. 2144.

The Board of Health meets the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at Town Hall, third floor.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

You can call the Department of Public Works at 508-261-7335 for 24-hour information on Town Hall hours, trash pickup, and possible emergency bulletins.



energy tips

ENERGY-SAVING
RESOLUTIONS
FOR 2005

By now, many people have forgotten all about their New Year's resolutions, but you might consider just one more. Make 2005 the year to trim your energy costs.

Taking just a few simple steps can provide significant savings, and they don't always involve a large investment of time or money. Get started with these ideas:

- Let the sun help heat your home in cold weather. One part of your home may get direct sunlight in the morning, another in the afternoon. Pull up the shades or open the draperies or blinds on the sunny side to let in those warm rays. Upholstered furniture, like a big armchair or sofa, will soak up the heat very nicely when placed in a sunny spot.
- If your home is dry, buy a room humidifier or have a contractor add a humidifier to your heating system. More moisture will make you feel warmer, and that will save money on your heating bill.
- Turn off lights and appliances when not in use.
- Replace standard incandescent light bulbs with energy-saving compact fluorescent bulbs. Today, these bulbs come in a variety of sizes and styles to match almost any fixture, and are readily available at home and hardware stores.
- Make sure your home is well insulated, and use caulk and weatherstripping to stop drafts around windows and doors.
- Turn down the heat in unoccupied rooms. Just make sure the unused space gets enough heat to prevent plaster from cracking or water from freezing and bursting pipes or radiators.

USE FIREPLACES WITH CARE

To save energy, use your conventional fireplace only in mild weather. When the outside temperature is very cold, more heated air is used to keep the fire burning than is replaced by the warmth your fireplace gives off. If you use your fireplace often, consider adding a heat reclaiming blower to circulate the heat from the fire into the room.

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Mansfield Municipal Electric Department

*125 High St., Unit 4
Mansfield, MA 02048*

Phone 508-261-7361

Fax 508-261-7391

DIRECTORY

Customer Service & Billing.....508-261-7361
Emergency.....508-261-7395
Off-hours Emergency.....508-261-7300

PAYMENT BOXES:

Town Hall parking lot, Six Park Row, Mansfield
Front of Billing Office, 125 High St., Unit 2, Mansfield

PAYMENT LOCATION:

Town Hall, Treasurer's Office: Six Park Row, Mansfield
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday 8 a.m. to noon

PAYMENTS, NEW SERVICE & CUSTOMER INQUIRIES:

125 High St., Unit 4, Mansfield
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday 8 a.m. to noon