

Lights & Heat

Renters usually pay for their utilities. This includes electricity, gas, water, trash, telephone, cable TV and Internet. In some rentals, the landlord will pay for water and trash. Sometimes the landlord will pay for gas and electricity. The renter always pays for telephone, cable TV and Internet.



Utilities can be expensive. In fact, some utilities, like cable TV, can be a luxury. It is important to find out how much the utilities will cost at different times of the year. For example, if the rental is heated with gas, ask how much the gas bill is during the winter months. If the rental has air conditioning, ask about the cost of electricity in the summer months. Also ask about fees for late payments.

To activate utilities, the renter must pay a deposit and start-up fee. If the renter has no credit history, the deposit might be as high as \$150 to \$600. In addition, there may be other start-up fees as high as \$150 to \$275. It is important to plan for these costs before signing a rental agreement.

Renters can save money by keeping their utilities bills low. Ways to save on utilities are:

- ✓ Keep all lights turned off in unused areas.
- ✓ Take quick showers, no longer than 5-7 minutes.
- ✓ Keep the water heater on medium heat. Request an insulated blanket if it does not have one.
- ✓ Turn off the heat or air conditioning when you are not home and at night.
- ✓ Set the heater at 68° in the winter and wear warm clothes if you are cold. Set the air conditioner at 82° in the summer and use fans to keep cool.



How to Set Up Utilities

Follow the steps to set up and maintain your utilities

1 Start Here ...

Get name & numbers for utilities from -

- Landlord
- Local real estate office
- Internet
- Phone book

2 Second step ...

If needed, look up the phone numbers for -

- Electric:
- Gas:
- Trash:
- Water:
- Cable TV:
- Internet Access:



3 Third step ...

Call each utility and be ready to give your -

- Name:
- Address:
- Phone #:
- Social Sec. #:
- Drivers Lic. #:
- Bank Acct. #:
- Employer name & address:
- Income:
- Landlord name:

4 End Here ...

- Pay your deposit.
- Pay all bills on time and you may get your deposit back after the first year.
- Always report any problems promptly.