



## Toss that old clunker

**Let us recycle your old refrigerator or freezer—You will save energy and help the environment**

We will pick up and recycle your old refrigerator or freezer at NO COST to you!\*

Groton Electric has partnered with JACO Environmental Inc. to offer an appliance removal and recycling program to Groton residents.

Did you know your old refrigerator may be costing an additional \$200 per year on your electric bill. That's a GREAT reason to let us recycle your old refrigerator.

JACO Environmental is totally committed to protecting the environment through the art of responsible appliance recycling. JACO will remove your old refrigerator or freezer at no cost to you and will recycle at least 90% of each unit.



The Department of Energy statistics show that 12-14% of homes have two or more refrigerators and or freezers and over 50% of the second refrigerators are more than 10 years old and use 2 to 3 times more electricity as newer models. Most consumers don't realize that the money that they save by buying refrigerated or frozen goods in volume can be wasted on the cost of storage.

To schedule a pick-up call **1-877-545-4113** or contact our office for more information.

*\*No age restrictions. Refrigerators and freezers must be in working condition and must be a minimum of 10 cubic feet in size, utilizing inside measurements. Customers must own the unit(s) being recycled. Limit two units per residential address.*

## Home heating—the times they are a' changing

**If you use an electric thermal storage heater and take advantage of our time-of-use rate, then electric heat could now be a viable option as a primary heat source.**

Customers often ask us what the most efficient home heating method is. While in recent years we strongly discouraged using electricity as a primary heat source, there are new factors that may make it a reasonable choice today. Here are some facts aimed at helping you make the right decision for your home:

Electricity may now be a viable heating option as a primary heat source if you use our time-of-use rate with an electric thermal storage (ETS) heating system. ETS works by using electricity during off-peak hours to heat high-density ceramic bricks. The stored heat can then be used to warm spaces any time. Because ETS energy is purchased off-peak, it qualifies for our time-of-use rate of \$0.089 per kilowatt-hour with the early pay discount.

The list below compares the fuel price points at which operating costs will break even, after converting to BTUs and assuming furnaces have an 80% efficiency rating.

- Electricity..... \$.089/kWh
- Natural Gas..... \$2.20/therm
- Fuel Oil #2 ..... \$3.05/gallon
- Propane..... \$2.01/gallon

Of course, you need to keep in mind the capital cost of any new system as well as energy market volatility. Fuel prices cannot be guaranteed, but here is what we know now:

Electricity—for the next year it appears Groton Electric will be able to maintain our rates without an increase.

Natural gas—in the fall of 2009, natural gas was available to residential customers in the \$1.55/therm area and the outlook was for prices to remain in that region for the short-term.

Fuel Oil #2—the best price we could find on December 11 was \$2.34/gallon. In the last six months the price varied between \$1.92 and \$2.55/gallon. Future prices are expected to be volatile.

Propane—in the fall of 2009, propane was available to residential customers for approximately \$2.85/gallon and the outlook for one year was relatively stable. Prices can be significantly lower when volume gets up over 1,200 gallons/year.

To summarize, natural gas has the lowest operating cost followed by fuel oil, electricity, and finally propane. Electricity is now cheaper than propane and only a little more expensive than oil when used under our time-of-use rate with an ETS heater. For those looking only at cost, coal is by far the least expensive fuel and cordwood would have to be \$360/cord to compete with the fuels list above.

## Transformer #2 back in service

The transformer that was damaged in the spring 2009 fire at the substation is re-energized and back in service.



*Left: This is what was left of the breaker after the March 7, 2009 fire at our substation.*



*Right: Transformer 2 as it was energized at 3:53 pm on Friday, November 20.*

### Thank you Mr. Charles Emil Ruckstuhl

We would like to thank and give credit to Mr. Charles Emil Ruckstuhl of Groton for the excerpt from his book that we used in our centennial newsletter. We apologize for the omission. We appreciate and thank Mr. Ruckstuhl for the hard work that went into the historic research he conducted for his book—*Forgotten Tales of Groton* (2001).

### Bill changes don't affect bottom line

We've made some minor changes in the way costs are allocated on bills so that each bill component more accurately matches our current expenses. These changes will not affect your bill's total amount.

Specifically, we have raised the transmission and distribution portions of the bill to reflect rising costs to Groton Electric. At the same time, we have lowered the generation portion of the bill due to lower natural gas prices. Once again, the changes will not affect your bill's bottom line.

## Be prepared for winter storms

***Now is the time to prepare for unexpected power outages and other emergencies that can happen during winter storms.***

Even with the best engineering and construction, no electric system is immune from the power of Mother Nature, especially during severe winter storms. And electricity is just one of the services that can be lost during an emergency.

That's why experts recommend that you consider what your family would need to survive at least 72 hours without any outside help, and make plans to meet those needs. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Ensure that each member of your household has a warm coat, gloves and mittens, hat, and water-resistant boots.
- Make sure your home has flashlights or other non-electric light sources, a battery-operated radio, and extra batteries.
- Keep a well-stocked first-aid kit on hand, along with at least one week of essential prescription medications.
- Assemble at least a three-day supply of nonperishable food and bottled water. Remember to include a non-electric can opener.
- Have extra blankets and sleeping bags on hand.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy (A-B-C type).
- If your household includes babies or pets, don't forget things like baby formula, diapers, and pet food.
- Assemble a 72-hour supplies kit that can fit in the trunk of a car if you need to evacuate quickly.
- Make an emergency communications plan and a plan for getting back together if family members are separated—a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school.

More information on disaster planning is available online at [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).