

# Connections

## Avista customers can save \$100 on a smart thermostat

**Take control of your comfort and energy use with a smart thermostat.** Easily adjust your heating to stay warm when you need it and conserve energy when you don't. As an Avista customer, you can enjoy \$100 off qualifying smart thermostat models — plus, free shipping!

Visit [energytrust.org/orders](https://energytrust.org/orders) to get started today.



EnergyTrust  
of Oregon



## Horse therapy helps riders reach their full potential

**You may have heard the saying that the outside of a horse is good for the inside of a human. At Crossing Bridges Therapeutic Riding Center, riders and helpers get a chance to witness that every day.**

**Those who live with physical or cognitive disabilities easily feel "othered" when compared to the activities their non-disabled friends enjoy.** This is where the horses come in: using special tack, and several helpers to walk the horse and steady the rider as needed, horseback riding is possible for almost anybody, and it can also become part of a physical therapy regimen that helps preserve joint range of motion, limit spasticity and sometimes even help language development.

Sitting astride a warm horse that quietly lumbers around an arena moves the rider's body in a gentle, predictable, rhythmic manner. This movement helps the rider stay flexible — like a gentle, warm, massage — and build motor skills and balance.

At Crossing Bridges, which recently received a grant from the Avista Foundation, riders with cognitive challenges such as learning delays or fetal alcohol syndrome, learn better mental processing, hand-eye coordination and how to better tolerate multi-tasking without feeling overstimulated. They focus on building confidence and self-esteem, and do so while making friends with a warm, cuddly horse.

Horses like Riata, Sydney and Faith are picked especially for the program because they are calm and predictable, even when the rider is a little scared or off balance. On their broad backs, riding becomes a safe activity that helps the rider reach their full potential.

Visit [crossingbridgestrc.org](https://crossingbridgestrc.org) to learn how you can support the program or sponsor a horse.





## How cold weather impacts your home energy bill

**As the weather gets colder, you might notice your energy bill going up.** This happens when your heating system works harder to keep your

home warm. When it's cold outside, heat escapes from homes more quickly, so heating systems run more often to maintain comfortable temperatures inside.

### Four ways to lower your energy usage without sacrificing comfort:

- 1. Seal Drafts:** Check for gaps around windows and doors. Use weather stripping or caulk to seal these gaps and keep warm air inside.
- 2. Use a Programmable Thermostat:** Set your thermostat to a lower indoor temperature when you're not home or when you're sleeping. Lowering it by three degrees can reduce your heating costs by 10 percent.
- 3. Insulate Your Home:** Make sure your home is well-insulated. Good insulation keeps the heat inside, so your heater doesn't have to work as hard.
- 4. Let the Sun In:** Open your curtains during the day to let sunlight warm your home naturally. Close them at night to keep the heat in.

By following these tips, you can help reduce your energy usage all winter long. Remember, small changes can make a big difference.

Visit [myavista.com/winterbill](https://myavista.com/winterbill) to find tips and learn more about how cold weather impacts your bill.

## Need help with your energy bill?

**We have long-standing relationships with local community action agencies across our service territory.**

Together, we offer financial assistance programs and energy-saving home upgrade services to help people manage their home energy usage and costs.

Customers can find billing, payment, and home energy-saving programs through their local community agencies.

Thousands of customers also qualify for an ongoing monthly bill discount through our **My Energy Discount** program. It lowers energy costs for two years. Eligibility guidelines were recently updated and include even higher household income levels.

Visit [myavista.com/ORassistance](https://myavista.com/ORassistance) to find your local community action agency and sign up for My Energy Discount.

## Holiday cooking

**The kitchen is the heart of a home — especially during the holidays.** With increased activity and stress, it's important to prioritize gas safety.

**Unattended cooking is the leading cause of fires.** Keep your family and home safe by following these tips:

- **Storage:** Don't store combustible items in the oven (storage containers, etc)
- **Keep it clean:** Make sure range and oven burners are clean and free from oven mitts, towels, etc
- **Don't block:** Never cover appliance controls, air openings, or vents
- **Right tools:** Use the right tools and ensure pot handles are turned inward
- **Follow instructions:** Don't use gas range flames to heat a room or dry clothes
- **Be prepared:** Have a fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it
- **Check alarms:** Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly
- **Stay clear:** Avoid loose clothing, spray cooking oil, and paper towels near an open flame
- **Children and pets:** Be aware of children and pets underfoot while cooking — especially if control knobs are low and accessible to children

Visit [myavista.com/gassafety](https://myavista.com/gassafety) for more safety tips. Have a safe and happy holiday season!



## Connect with us

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