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► Bill Patti named executive director of Kenan Center

► Buffalo's Best Kielbasa contest winners announced

► Reddy Bike-share expands reach into Falls following record-breaking season

► Information meeting gets word out on proposed NISE expansion at former Summit Park Mall

► This week: 'Napoleon Dynamite Live!' A conversation with Jon Heder, Efen Ramirez & Jon Gries at UB



► Jack Beatty Memorial Hospice Cruise and Clambake returns for 21st year

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# Opinions

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## AVANGRID announces 'steep discounts,' energy savings to utility customers with new Earth Day offer

NYSEG, RG&E, UI, SCG and CNG customers who enroll in the companies' demand response programs can receive a new Google smart thermostat at little to no cost

AVANGRID Press Release

Just in time for Earth Day, AVANGRID Inc., a leading sustainable energy company and member of the Iberdrola Group, announced today a new opportunity for customers to increase their energy efficiency. Customers of its subsidiaries United Illuminating (UI), Connecticut Natural Gas (CNG), Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG), New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) and Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E) who enroll in the companies' demand response programs will receive a new Google smart thermostat at little to no-cost.

"This is an amazing opportunity ahead of the summer months for

our customers to take greater control over their energy usage," said Pedro Azagra, AVANGRID CEO. "We want to empower our customers to understand their energy use and what adjustments can be made that best fit their family and lifestyle. Smart, programmable thermostats assist with this by automatically varying temperatures settings throughout the day, helping our customers save energy."

The AVANGRID companies are offering this Earth Day promotion in partnership with Google. UI, SCG and CNG customers who enroll in the company's Smart Savers Rewards program will receive a Google Nest Thermostat for only \$5. Both NYSEG and RG&E

customers who enroll in the companies' Smart Savings Rewards programs will receive a Google Nest Thermostat for no-cost.

The companies' demand response programs offer incentives to residential and small business customers to reduce electricity use during times of peak summer electricity demand. Participants allow UI, SCG, CNG, NYSEG and RG&E to make brief, limited temperature adjustments via their smart thermostats from May 1 to Sept. 30, excluding holidays, on days when electricity demand is at its highest. Participation is voluntary, and customers can opt out of temperature adjustments at any point by changing their air

conditioning temperature. Customers who participate in temperature adjustments will receive a bill credit at the end of the season.

"I encourage our customers to take advantage of this promotion and our free demand response programs," said Scott Baker, vice president of customer service at AVANGRID. "Not only will this help our customers reduce their energy use, but it doesn't require any extra work. It's great way to better manage home energy usage while still enjoying comfortable living and more comfortable energy bills."

## With increased fire danger, DEC issues reminder: Annual residential brush burning prohibition in effect through May 14

Says spring burn ban reduces wildfire risks, protects lives and property

Submitted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation reminds New Yorkers about the annual statewide ban prohibiting residential brush burning that lasts from March 16 through May 14. With warmer temperatures and lower humidity, the risk of fire increased across the state this week. The fire danger map for the 2023 fire season on DEC's website is updated with the latest fire conditions.

DEC enforces the annual brush burning ban to prevent wildfires and protect communities during heightened conditions for wildfires. Open burning of debris is the single-largest cause of spring wildfires in New York state. When temperatures warm and the past fall's debris and leaves dry out, wildfires can start and spread easily, further fueled by winds and a lack of green vegetation. Each year, DEC forest rangers extinguish dozens of wildfires that burn hundreds of acres. In addition, local fire departments – many of which are staffed by volunteers – all too often have to leave their



jobs and families to respond to wildfires caused by illegal debris fires.

New York first enacted strict restrictions on open burning in 2009 to help prevent wildfires and reduce air pollution. The regulations allow residential brush fires in towns with fewer than 20,000 residents during most of the year, but prohibit such burning in spring when most wildfires occur.

Backyard fire pits and campfires less than 3 feet in height and 4 feet in length, width, or diameter are allowed, as are small cooking fires. Only charcoal or dry, clean, untreated, or unpainted wood can be burned. People should never leave these fires unattended and must extinguish them. Burning garbage or leaves is prohibited year-round in New York state.

For more information about fire

safety and prevention, go to DEC's "FIREWISE New York" webpage.

Some towns, primarily in and around the Adirondack and Catskill parks, are designated "fire towns." Open burning is prohibited year-round in these municipalities unless an individual or group has a permit from DEC. To find out whether a municipality is a designated fire town or to obtain a permit, contact the appropriate DEC regional office. A list of regional offices is available on DEC's website.

Forest rangers, DEC environmental conservation police officers (ECOs), and local authorities enforce the burn ban. Violators of the state's open burning regulation are subject to criminal and civil enforcement actions, with a minimum fine of \$500 for a first offense. For search and rescue, reporting a wildfire or illegal activity on state lands and easements, call 1-833-NYS-RANGERS (1-833-697-7264). To report environmental law violations, call 1-844-DEC-ECOs (1-844-332-3267).

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