



MORTON

UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

Feb. 17, 2021

Thermostats to be lowered at Morton schools

Thermostats will be turned down for the remainder of the week in all Morton schools, in keeping with village government's request to reduce usage until the current cold snap ends.



Temperatures inside Morton classrooms will be in the mid-60s, said Superintendent Jeff Hill. Students and staff are asked to dress accordingly, he said.

The request from the Village of Morton is precipitated by an unprecedented spike in the cost of natural gas -- with local utility bills expected to at least quintuple, according to recent media reports -- due to

the polar vortex that has afflicted much of the country. Specifically, power outages in Texas and Oklahoma have crippled natural gas processing plants in those states. The gas they produce then makes its way through pipelines to the Midwest.

Morton has been particularly hard hit because the community operates its own natural gas utility. Most other communities in this part of central Illinois are served by Ameren.

Nonetheless, just about everyone has been affected. Earlier this week, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker issued a disaster proclamation for all 102 counties in the state, while urging individual conservation measures to ease stress on the nation's energy grid.

"We're just trying to do our part," said Hill.

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