

ENERGY TIPS

Energy efficiency starts at home. And at work. And on the road.



When you use energy more efficiently, you do a lot of things. You reduce the demand on the region's electrical grid. You're more comfortable. You could pay less for electricity, natural gas and gas for your car. You can even help reduce pollution and save the environment. This page has tips and advice to get you started.

WINDOWS/EXTERIOR

- 1] During hot months keep window coverings closed. In winter, let the sun in.
- 2] In some areas homeowners may qualify for tax breaks for adding insulation or installing energy efficient windows and doors. Check with your utility company or state energy office.
- 3] Storm windows can reduce the heat lost by single-paned windows by 20-50 percent during the winter. Temporarily, you can always install plastic sheeting on the outside.
- 4] Seal and weatherstrip your windows and doors to ensure that you're not wasting energy on heat or air conditioning that escapes through leaks to the outdoors.
- 5] Trees that lose their leaves in the fall give protection from the summer sun and let light in during the winter.
- 6] Your central air conditioning unit should be in the shade. On the north side of your house plant evergreen trees to stop the wind in the winter.

BEDROOM

- 1] In summer use fans whenever possible instead of AC or raise the thermostat temperature a few degrees and use fans to make up the difference. Fans cost less to use than AC.
- 2] Replace your 5 most used light bulbs with ENERGY Star compact fluorescent bulbs (CLPs) to save \$60 each year in energy costs. These light bulbs use two-thirds less energy and last up to ten times longer. {Save about \$2.50 per year per bulb.}
- 3] Use dimmers, timers, and motion sensors on indoor and outdoor lighting. Of course, you should be sure to turn lights off when not in use.
- 4] Only heat or cool rooms you're using. Close vents and doors of unused rooms.
- 5] In winter, turn the thermostat down or off at night and use an electric blanket to keep warm. They use about as much energy as a lightbulb and you can save up to 10% on your heating bills.

KITCHEN

- 1] When cooking, keep the lids on pots which reduces cooking time and energy use. Better yet use a microwave oven instead.
- 2] Do only full loads in the dishwasher (don't overload). Air dry the dishes.
- 3] Cooking with a microwave oven costs less than one quarter of what it costs to use your stove or conventional oven.
- 4] Make sure your refrigerator is the right size for your needs to avoid wasting energy by cooling nothing. Check your refrigerator seal and replace if necessary.
- 5] Energy Star appliances are often available for the same cost as less efficient models and will pay for themselves in energy and cost savings.

BASEMENT

- 1] If you have fluorescent lighting fixtures with three or four bulbs you may have enough light with only two. Keep the fixtures and bulbs clean and replace any yellowed or hazy lenses and diffusers.
- 2] Insulate hot water tanks and pipes. If they feel warm to the touch then energy is being wasted. You can install insulation blankets on water heaters for as low as \$20. Save up to \$80 a year.
- 3] Hot water heaters are often preset to 140° but 120° is satisfactory for most uses. A 10° reduction in hot water temperature can reduce energy consumption by up to 5 percent.
- 4] Replace furnace and air conditioner filters once a month during the heating/cooling season.
- 5] Do only full loads in the washing machine. Use cold water for laundry and save up to \$63 a year. Detergents formulated for cold water get clothes just as clean.
- 6] Use the moisture sensor setting on your clothes dryer and cut energy use by 15%.

BATHROOM

- 1] Take five-minute showers instead of baths. [Save up to \$50 a year]
- 2] Install low-flow showerheads and sink aerators to reduce hot water use. [Save about 21 cents per shower x 365] [plus savings on every sink in the house]

DEN

- 1] Turning off computers, DVDs, printers etc. from the power strip can save \$70 or more a year. Many of these appliances still use energy even when they're in "sleep" or "standby" mode.

LIVING ROOM

- 1] Install a programmable thermostat. They let you save by setting different temperatures for occupied and unoccupied periods of each day.
- 2] Use foam gaskets behind light switch and outlet plates to avoid air leakage.

CAR

- 1] Use the grade of motor oil recommended by your car's manufacturer for best gas mileage.
- 2] Keep tires properly inflated and aligned to improve your gas mileage by around 3.3%.
- 3] Slow down! Speeding cuts fuel economy 7 to 23 percent.
- 4] Keep all windows closed while driving on the highway for a fuel efficient airfoil and increase your MPG rating by up to 5%.
- 5] Purchase a fuel efficient or hybrid car.