



SAVE ENERGY IN YOUR HOME

A Factsheet on Saving Energy

Planning ahead can save you money and alleviate frustration with high utility bills. Here are some tips to help protect your hard earned dollars:

- Remove window air conditioners for the winter and close the window. If the air conditioner cannot be removed, weatherize it with a properly fitting air conditioning cover.
- Keep all vents (air conditioning, heating and/or exhaust) free from debris and remove any item that blocks the flow of air.
- Replace screens with storm (glass) windows in winter months. If you do not have storm windows, use clear plastic, tightly sealed on the inside of the windows.
- Replace or clean air/heat filters monthly. Dirty filters block air flow.
- Do not block vents with furniture.
- Save 10% on energy costs when you install weatherstripping or caulk leaky doors and windows, and install gaskets behind outlet covers.
- Set your thermostat at one temperature (around 77°) and leave it alone when running the air conditioning. It takes more energy to heat or cool an area than it does to maintain a constant temperature.
- In winter, set your thermostat at about 68°. For every degree you lower your heat, you save up to 5% in heating costs. At night, turn the heat down to 55°, but never turn your thermostat below 50° when the home is unoccupied. Heat pumps should only be set back two degrees to prevent unneeded use of backup strip heating.
- Wear warm clothing in winter.
- Open window coverings in the daytime to let the sun heat your home and close them at sundown to insulate.
- Lock your windows so they will seal better.
- Keep doors and windows closed to keep the central air/heat inside.
- Rearrange your furniture so you are sitting by interior walls. The temperature is more constant on interior walls.
- Close doors to other parts of the house and turn down the thermostat when using the fireplace.
- Remember that fireplaces lose up to 8% of your energy. Keep the damper closed when not in use.
- Turn lights off and shut the doors in unoccupied rooms.
- Use as much natural light as possible.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. They use 75% less energy.
- Turn kitchen and bathroom ventilating fans off after cooking.
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use.
- Vacuum the coils of your refrigerator several times a year and leave enough room behind and on the sides of the unit for air to circulate.
- A second refrigerator can add as much as 10 to 15% to your energy bill.
- Only use your oven's self-cleaning feature when your oven is already hot.
- Over 2/3 of your water heating costs are from showers. Cutting your shower time in half will reduce your costs by up to 33%.
- Lower the temperature of your hot water heater to a comfortable yet economical level. Use the "normal" setting, or 120°, (unless the owner's manual for your dishwasher requires a higher setting), and save up to 11% of the cost of heating your water.
- Drain a bucketful of water from the water heater several times a year to protect against mineral buildup.
- Insulate the first five feet of pipe coming out of the top of your water heater. Pipe insulation is available from your hardware store.
- Only run full loads of dishes or clothes in your appliances.
- Use cold water to wash, and reduce the washer's energy use by 75%.
- Use only cold water in the garbage disposal.
- Keep the lint trap in the dryer clean and use the moisture-sensing automatic drying setting on your dryer.