

101 Ways to Conserve Energy in Your Home



Small Appliances

1. Cook with small appliances: A toaster oven, electric skillet, popcorn popper and slow cooker for specialized jobs, rather than the range. Small appliances use less energy.

2. Use the microwave instead. The advantage of microwave ovens is shorter cooking times and shorter cooking times save energy.

3. Clean or replace air filters. Replace filters on exhaust hoods, humidifiers, vacuums, etc. Clogged filters impair performance & cause units to run longer.

4. Run cold water for disposal. Cold water saves energy and solidifies grease so that it will move through the food/waste disposal and pipes easier.

Refrigerators & Freezers

5. Purchase an Energy Star model. Energy Star refrigerators and freezers can save you hundreds of dollars on your electric bill over the average 17-year life of the appliance.

6. Select the right size. Determine your household's needs and then make a purchase. A unit that is too small will be overcrowded, one that is too large will waste energy.

7. Don't set the temperature any colder than necessary. Set the refrigerator temperature between 36° and 42° and set the freezer temperature between - 5° and 6° F.

8. Clean the dust off condenser coils, evaporator pan, fins, and motor once or twice a year with a vacuum cleaner or long-handled brush.

9. Defrost a manual-defrost unit regularly. Frost makes your unit work harder and wastes energy. Don't allow more than one-quarter inch of frost to build up.

10. A second refrigerator wastes energy. You can spend up to \$120 in electricity a year using a 2nd refrigerator.

11. Stay away from direct heat. Place refrigerator/-freezer away from direct sunlight and other heat sources such as ovens or ranges. Heat will cause the refrigerator to use more energy.

12. Don't place your refrigerator or freezer in an unheated space. If the temperature drops below 60°, the compressor may stop running, spoiling stored food.

13. Refrigerator and freezer doors should seal tightly. Try sliding a dollar bill through the closed door - if you can move the bill, the seal is not tight enough.

Dishwashers

14. Always wait until you have a full load before running your dishwasher. Load according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

15. Use the shortest cycle that will properly clean.

16. Skip rinsing the dishes. Rinsing dishes before loading them into the dishwasher wastes energy. If you must rinse, use cold water.

17. Clean the filter. If your dishwasher has a filter screen, clean it regularly.

Ranges & Oven

18. Start cooking on a higher heat setting until the liquid boils and then lower the temperature and simmer the food until fully cooked.

19. Resist the urge to open the oven door while baking. The temperature will drop 25° and additional energy is used to bring the oven temperature back to the cooking temp.

20. Turn off the cook top or the oven a few minutes before the food has completed cooking and retained heat will finish the job.

21. Select the correct pan size. Your pan size should match the surface heating unit.

22. Put a lid on it. Cook food & boil water in a covered container whenever possible.

23. Check the seal on your oven door to make sure it is tight. Even a small gap is enough to allow some of the heat to escape.

24. Test the temperature of your oven to be sure that the temperature setting matches the actual temp in the oven.

Washers & Dryers

25. Purchase and use a washer that allows you to control the load's water level. You can save energy by using less hot water for small loads.

26. Run full loads. Don't waste energy by running partial loads in both your washer and dryer.

27. Wash in warm or cold water. Use a hot water wash only when the greatest cleaning is needed.

28. Rinse in cold water. The temperature of rinse water has no effect on cleaning.

29. Place washer close to the water heater. The water loses heat as it flows through the pipes.

30. Don't over-dry your clothes. Over drying laundry uses more energy than is needed and it is hard on fabrics.

31. Clean the lint filter.

Water Heaters & Water Usage

32. Purchase an energy-efficient model. It may cost more money initially, but in the long run it will cost less.

33. Purchase the correct size water heater. If your



water heater is too large, you will waste energy; if it is too small, you will likely run out of hot water.

34. Install your water heater near the kitchen. The kitchen is the place where you use the hottest water. Placing the water heater close to the kitchen saves energy.

35. Insulate water pipes. Use half-inch foam or pipe tape for insulation wherever pipes are exposed. On cold water pipes, insulate four to five feet nearest to the water heater.

36. Set temperature to 120° F. If you have an electric water heater, you'll have to remove the cover plate of the thermostat to adjust the temperature. For safety reasons, turn off the water heater at the circuit breaker fuse before changing the temperature.

37. Repair dripping faucets promptly. If the faucet leaks hot water, you're wasting the water and the energy used to heat it. (One drop a second can waste up to 48 gallons a week!)

38. Install a heat loop or in-line trap. These mechanisms are inexpensive to install and keep hot water in the insulated tank rather than in the piping system.

39. Drain a bucket of water from the bottom of the water heater once or twice a year to reduce build-up of minerals. Before draining water from an electric water heater, turn off the water heater at the circuit breaker/fuse.

40. Use low-flow showerheads in all showers in your house, as well as faucet aerators on all faucets, to save energy.

41. Install a water softener to prevent deposits from coating the elements, if you have hard water. This will save both energy and money, and prolongs the life of your water heater.

Humidifiers & Dehumidifiers

42. Purchase an Energy Star dehumidifier. They use 10

to 20 percent less energy than a conventional model and offer the same features as conventional models.

43. Use a humidifier in the colder months. You'll be able to turn your thermostat down to a lower temperature, save energy and still feel comfortable.

44. Use a dehumidifier in the warm, humid months to remove moisture from the air.

45. Place dehumidifier in the area with the highest humidity.

46. If your unit is running in temperatures less than 70°, check it occasionally to see if frost is building up on the coils. If so, turn the unit off until the frost melts.

47. Dust or vacuum the dehumidifier at least once a year.

Lighting

48. Use Energy Star compact fluorescent lightbulbs. They last longer and use up to 75% less energy than standard light bulbs.

49. Open curtains and shades during the day instead of using lighting. Consider skylights and solar tubes.

50. Plan within a room to provide general background lighting and task lighting. A good lighting plan can reduce lighting costs and still provide all the light you need.

51. Use a single, high-watt bulb. Using one high-watt bulb instead of several low-watt bulbs saves energy.

52. Control outdoor lighting. Control your fixtures with a photo cell or timer.

53. Turn off lights when not in use, even for short periods of time.

54. Use timers to turn lights on and off to help regulate use.

55. Avoid long-life incandescent light bulbs because they are the least efficient of the incandescent bulbs.

56. Consider LED lighting. The initial cost is more, but the lights use 10 times less energy and last 50 times longer than incandescent lights. They use one-third the energy and last 5 times longer than compact fluorescent lights.

57. Position lights properly. To do this, position your light source closer to the area you want lit.

58. Adjust light level. Higher light settings use more energy, so save energy by using dimmer controls, high/low switches or three-way bulbs.

Air Conditioners

59. Purchase an energy-efficient central air conditioner by looking at the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating. The higher the rating, the more efficient the unit.

60. Choose the right size equipment. Oversized equipment costs more money. A qualified heating contractor can determine the size of the equipment needed for you.

61. Change the indoor and outdoor compressor coils when replacing an older central air conditioner.

62. Don't position heat-producing devices such as lamps and TVs close to your thermostat. Heat from these devices could cause the thermostat to read a tempera-

ture higher than the true room temperature.

63. Have your central air conditioner tuned up by a qualified heating contractor every other year. This helps the unit operate more efficiently and may prevent failures.

64. Keep leaves, grass and other debris away from the outside condenser.

65. Save 10 percent or more on your summer cooling costs by setting the thermostat to 76° when at home and higher when you go away.

66. Closing blinds, shades and drapes on the sunny side of your home during the day will help keep the house cooler.

67. Close unused rooms to keep cooled air in areas where it is most needed.

68. Delay chores that produce heat and moisture until the cooler parts of the day. Dishwashing, laundering and cooking on hot, humid days make your room more uncomfortable and require your a/c to work harder.

69. Cook using your microwave oven rather than your standard oven or range.

70. Don't leave electronics on if you don't need them – they produce heat.

71. Keep furniture and drapes away from air vents. This allows the cool air to move out into the rooms and keeps your air conditioner from running more than necessary.

72. Reduce heat build-up in your attic by installing proper vents.

73. Locate the unit out of direct sunlight and avoid the south and west sides of the house. Placing the air conditioner in direct sunlight causes it to work harder to cool your home.

Room Air Conditioners

74. Purchase an Energy Star model. They cost at least 10 percent less to operate than conventional models.

75. Use a plug-in timer to turn off your air conditioner when you leave home.

76. Use a room air conditioner with fan speed control. This allows faster cooling when needed and quieter, more efficient operation at other times.

77. Install your room air conditioner in the window or area of the wall that is nearest to the middle of the space.

78. Once a room air conditioner is in place, seal the space around it with rope caulk or some other sealant to prevent outside air leaks.

79. When you first turn on your room air conditioner, set the thermostat at normal or medium. Setting it any colder won't cool the room any faster.

80. Locate your room air conditioner on the shady side of your home. It will operate more efficiently in a cooler location.

81. Make sure the fresh-air vent is closed when the room air conditioner is operating so you aren't cooling outside air. Open the vent when the outside air is cooler to let in fresh air.

82. Take your room air conditioner out of the window

when the cooling season is over. Cover the outside of the unit with a weatherproof cover and fill any cracks around the unit with removable caulk if you leave it in place.

Heating

83. Select an energy-efficient furnace model by looking for an AFUE (annual fuel utilization efficiency) rating of 90% or greater.

84. Clean your furnace filters monthly or replace if necessary. A clean unit runs more efficiently.

85. Consider switching to a natural gas heating system. Natural gas is less expensive than other heating fuels.

86. Insulate your attic to an R-value of 38 for a gas-heated home and 50 for an electrically heated home and your walls to an R-value of 19.

87. Weather-strip or caulk areas of noticeable leaks around windows and doors.

88. In the winter, set your thermostat at 60° when you are sleeping or gone and 68° when you are at home. This can save 10 percent or more on your heating bills.

89. If you are going to be away for an extended period of time, turn your thermostat down to save energy.

90. Let the sun in. The sun's energy can have a noticeable effect on the temperature in your home, especially from windows facing south and west.

91. A portable space heater can heat a single room without using your furnace to heat the whole house.

92. Many older natural fireplaces are inefficient and draw more heat out of the house than they produce. Close the flue to eliminate drafts.

93. If you use your fireplace often, consider using fireplace inserts, doors or covers to help reduce the heat loss in your home when using the fireplace.

94. If you are building a home, replacing heating equipment or remodeling, talk to your heating contractor about the options available to ensure proper air flow.

95. Purchase Energy Star windows.

Fans

96. Use fans with your air conditioner.

97. In hot weather, set the ceiling fan direction to blow air down.

98. Use a whole-house fan. These fans are mounted in the attic and ventilate your entire home. Be sure to open some windows before turning on a whole-house fan.

99. Keep your fan in good working order. Check the manufacturer's recommendations for care and maintenance as this helps control the operating costs.

Office

100. Look for Energy Star office equipment, such as computers, printers and fax machines. They use less energy than standard office equipment.

101. Don't let the computer run all day. Only power on the computer, monitor, printer and fax machine when you need them.