

16 Ways to Save Energy

With the rise of energy cost, here are some easy to do tips to help lower your energy bill.

1. Check with your utility company for rebates whenever you install energy-saving equipment.
2. Add more energy-efficient insulation to your attic, preferably with a resistance rating of R-21 to R-30
3. Turn down your home thermostat two degrees and save 24-kilowatt hours a month. It might not sound like much, but it adds up.
4. Buy a programmable thermostat, especially if your home is vacant most of the day. Set it to turn on a half hour before anyone arrives home.
5. Adjust your thermostat to a comfortable temperature and wait. Turning your thermostat up or down dramatically wastes energy and increases you're heating costs.
6. Lower your hot water thermostat 10 degrees, but no less than 120 degrees. You'll still get all the hot water you need and save 25-kilowatt hours a month.
7. Fix leaky faucets. One drip a second is 20- kilowatts a month.
8. Invest in weather-stripping kits if you have drafty doors, and windows.
9. Trade your standard incandescent bulbs for compact fluorescent bulbs. They are more energy-efficient, last for years instead of months, consume little power and generate little heat.
10. Turn off your computer when not in use, or use the energy-saving "sleep" mode.
11. Seal energy leaks. Caulk over cracks and small holes around windows and exterior walls. Look carefully around plumbing pipes, telephone wires, dryer vents, sink and bathroom drains and under counter tops.
12. Participate in your power company's special energy-saving program. Some programs shut down electric appliances for short bursts of time during peak hours. You hardly notice the difference at the time, but you will notice a difference when you get your bill.
13. Buy major appliances that sport the "Energy Star" sticker. That shows the appliance meets or exceeds standards set by the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.
14. Consider a front-loading washing machine. They use 50 percent less energy and one-third less water. Plus, they remove far more water in the rinse cycle, and that translates into big savings in dryer time.
15. When building a home or replacing a roof, select a roof based more on energy efficiency than how it looks. Light-colored roofs, such a white, galvanized metal or cement tile, do the best job of reflecting the sun, and cool quickly at night.
16. Landscaping with the right mix of trees and shrubs can lower your energy bills by blocking winter winds or the summer sun.

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