

Do-it-yourself energy savings tips

Here is a list of things you can do to help cut back on energy used in your home. As a word of caution, it is recommended that you have your mechanical systems (furnace, water heater, dryers, stoves) inspected by a professional prior to attempting to seal up your home.

For health and safety reasons make sure you have a working carbon monoxide detector and smoke alarm.

The following can be done by almost any home owner:

- Dial down thermostat every night and during the days you will be out of the house.
- Change furnace filter every month during the heating season. Vacuum the filters that are reusable.(Some can be cleaned with soap and water)
- Make sure return air registers for your furnace are not blocked by furniture or throw rugs.
- Cover windows at night with drapes. If you don't have existing window coverings, hang blankets or sheets over your windows.
- Cover windows with plastic (on the warm side) if available.
- Caulk moldings around windows wherever you feel cold air.
- Make sure the sash locks are snug and if you feel cold air, apply foam tape to area or reset/replace sash lock for a tighter seal.
- Make sure door weather-strips are sealing, and if they aren't, install foam tape until you can replace it.
- Install compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) the next time you replace bulbs.
- Turn off lights that are not being used.
- Wash full loads of clothes in cold water.
- During the warmer months hang clothes outside to dry
- Air dry dishes instead of using dishwasher.
- Dial down hot water heater to 120 degrees.
- Take shorter showers and install restrictor in shower head.
- Install foam inserts on all electrical outlets and switches.

- Check for obvious holes in walls, especially the basement, and fill with foam.
- Look under kitchen sink and bathroom vanities and fill around plumbing lines. Especially if your home is on a crawl space.
- Install foam tape to the molding that your attic trap door sits on.
- Do not use portable space heaters. They use a lot of electricity. Put on a heavy sweater instead.
- Vacuum dust and debris from under the refrigerator.
- Check refrigerator for correct temperatures. Regular compartment between 38 to 42 degrees and freezer compartment between 0 to 5 degrees.
- Regularly clean your clothes dryer vent hose. Blocked vents cause electric dryers to use excessive electricity and in gas dryers can cause a fire.
- Unplug appliances that are not being used. Even computers and some TVs draw electricity in the off position.

More and more you can see videos illustrating the above tips at www.youtube.com

You can find more energy saving tips on line at:
www.energysavers.gov/tips