

Energy Conservation Tips and Ideas

Help conserve energy and
reduce your energy bills



Space heating

- ▶ **Adjust thermostats** between 65°F and 70°F during the winter and to 58°F when away from the house for more than a few hours. For homes with ill or elderly persons or infants, warmer temperatures are recommended.
- ▶ **An automatic setback thermostat** is a good investment in homes heated and cooled with forced-air systems. Once programmed, it will automatically adjust the temperature settings for you.
- ▶ **Change furnace filters** regularly, generally once per month during the heating season. Furnaces consume less energy if they “breathe” more easily.

Keeping the cold out



Your heating system basically replaces the heat that is lost through your home's shell. The most common places where air escapes in homes can be found in the following places:

- Floors, walls and ceilings.
 - Electrical outlets.
 - Plumbing penetrations.
 - Fans and vents.
 - Ducts.
 - Doors.
 - Windows.
 - Fireplaces.
- ▶ **During winter months**, open drapes and shades during the day to let in the sun. Close them at night to keep out the cold.
 - ▶ **Be careful not to block** heating registers – move furniture away from registers to allow heat to circulate freely.

- ▶ **When replacing older appliances**, consider replacing them with high-efficiency models. They use less energy, which will save you money.
- ▶ **Avoid closing** too many heating registers or doors to unused rooms. This can cause your furnace to run inefficiently due to the restriction of air movement through your heating system.
- ▶ **Seal leaks** around doors and windows. Also seal other openings around pipes and ducts with caulk or weather-stripping.
- ▶ **Check** to see if your attic walls, crawl space and basement have recommended levels of insulation.
- ▶ **Install** storm, thermal or double-pane glass doors and windows.

Water heating

In most homes, water heating is the second largest household energy expense, after heating and cooling. To cut your water heating costs, start with the following tips:

- ▶ **Factors** that affect the amount of hot water a home uses include the number of people using the hot water, how much they use and the size of the tank.
- ▶ **The location** of the hot water heater can affect the amount of energy that is required. One that is located in a heated area will experience less standby heat loss than one located in a cold basement or chilly outdoor shed.
- ▶ **Replace old water heaters** with models that have an energy-efficiency factor of .64 or greater.
- ▶ **Set your thermostat** on your water heater at 120°F. Extremely hot water can lead to scalding accidents. Maintaining a higher-than-necessary temperature uses energy needlessly.



- ▶ **Repair leaky faucets.** A leak that fills a coffee cup in 10 minutes wastes 3,280 gallons of water a year.
 - ▶ **In washing machines,** use hot water only on clothing that requires hot water, and always use a cold-water rinse. Rinsing with warm water is wasteful and rarely, if ever, better than rinsing with cold water.
 - ▶ **Run appliances** such as dishwashers, washing machines and clothes dryers with a full load.
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Fireplaces

- ▶ **Consider models** with tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room. An open fireplace is not an efficient heating source. Most of the heat will go up the flue and out the chimney.
 - ▶ **Make sure** your fireplace is properly vented. Fireplaces require a great deal of oxygen. If you do not have an outside source of combustion air, your fireplace will draw air from inside the house, including the air you paid to heat.
 - ▶ **Keep the fireplace** damper closed when the fireplace is not in use. An open damper can let as much as 8 percent of your heat go out the chimney.
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