

SAVE ENERGY ON YOUR OWN

Electricity Use Savings & Safety

▪ Easy

1. Check the seals in your refrigerator(s) – Close the door on a piece of paper and then try to pull it out. If it comes out easily the seal is bad and is letting hot air into the refrigerator causing the refrigerator’s compressor to run more often. **FIX:** Replace the seal.
2. Check the contents of your refrigerator(s) – Freezers work better when they are full, and refrigerators work best when the air can flow freely within them. So check to make sure your freezer(s) are full, and that nothing is blocking the air flow within your refrigerator (especially on the top rack.) **FIX:** rearrange items in the refrigerator to promote air flow, and fill the freezer with food or empty bottles filled with water.
3. Keeping refrigerators too cold costs money. Proper temperatures: 37-40 degrees for fresh food and between 0-5 degrees in your freezer. Easy way to check: put one thermometer in a glass of water in the center of the refrigerator, and another between packages in the freezer – read after 24 hours.
4. Check your computers’ power management settings – If you leave your computer and monitor on all the time, you are wasting a significant amount of energy. You can find the power management settings under the Control Panel. **FIX:** Have the computer go into hibernate mode after 30 minutes of inactivity (this mode saves your current working environment to the hard drive and then shuts down.)
5. Check your lighting – Determine which lights you use most and look at the wattage of the bulbs. **FIX:** Lower the wattage of the bulbs in your most used areas (seriously consider using CFLs or LED lights to significantly reduce the wattage.) Also, make sure you turn off lights in rooms that you are not using – this is the simplest and cheapest way to start saving on your lighting.
6. Clean your dryer’s lint filter after each use.
7. Dry consecutive loads to get the most from heat retained in the dryer.
8. Use your microwave and save up to 75% of the energy.
9. Vacuum the cooling coils on your refrigerator to remove dust.
10. Select the “air dry” cycle or simply turn the dishwasher off after the dishes have been washed.

▪ Moderate

1. Check the coils on your refrigerator(s) – This usually requires you to pull the refrigerator out, since the coils will be located on the back or bottom of the unit. If the coils are dirty and covered with dust and grim, the refrigerator compressor needs to run longer to keep the inside cold. **FIX:** Cleaning the coils and underside of the refrigerator with a vacuum or broom.
2. Check your appliances – Older models use considerable more energy than the newer energy efficient models (if you have a [Kill-a-Watt Meter](#) you can check exactly how much electricity they are using.) **FIX:** Replace worn out appliances and begin to use appliances more efficiently (i.e. only run full loads of laundry and dishes.)

❖ Safety

1. **Routinely check wires, extensions cords, and appliance cords for signs of wear (they should not be cracked or frayed)**
2. **Use plastic safety caps in electrical outlets when there are small children in the home.**
3. **Do not touch appliances, wires or electrical switches with wet hands.**
4. **Do not insert metal objects into an appliance (ie: knife into a toaster) without unplugging it first.**

Heating and Cooling Component Energy Savings & Safety

▪ Easy

1. Check for air leaks around windows and doors – On a cold and windy day, feel around your windows and window moldings for air infiltration. If you are having trouble feeling for leaks, you can use a stick of incense to detect the leaks. Find the places where the smoke gets disturbed by air leaking into your home. **FIX:** Caulk all places where air is leaking into your home.
2. Check the insulation level in your attic – Since heat rises, having the recommended level of insulation in your attic goes a long way at keeping the heat within your home. stick a ruler or yardstick into the insulation to determine the depth. Depending on your location you should have between 12 to 24 inches of fiberglass, or 10 to 20 inches of blown cellulose insulation. **FIX:** Add more insulation, either batts or blown in insulation.
3. Check your furnace's air filter – Always remember to check the air filter on your furnace at least once a month. A dirty filter will make the furnace work harder and longer, shortening its life. **FIX:** replace dirty air filter.
4. Check heating registers – Make sure that nothing is blocking the heating registers. **FIX:** Move furniture off all heating registers.
5. Check thermostat – For each degree you can turn down the thermostat, you will save 3% on your heating costs. **FIX:** Turn the thermostat down when you are not home and when you are sleeping. Replace your standard thermostat with a programmable one, and let it do all the work.
6. Keep outdoor units clean and clear of leaves and debris.
7. Install foam insulator pads between electrical outlets and switchplates.
8. Keep windows and doors closed, especially the outside doors of attached garages.

▪ Moderate

1. Check for air leaks into the attic. Look for places where the insulation is a darker color. This can indicate a leak that is blowing dust into the insulation. Also look around the tops of walls, above lights, and wherever wires, pipes, and duct work enter the attic. These air leaks are pulling the heat right out of your home. **FIX:** Seal leaks with spray foam, rope caulking, and plumber's putty. Be careful to keep flammable materials away from any chimneys or can lights. To seal these you will have to use a high temperature caulking.
2. Check duct work for leaks – If your duct work goes into the attic or any unconditioned space, check to make sure it is insulation and that there are no air leaks. **FIX:** Seal the duct work with metal duct tape (do not use standard duct tape – it will deteriorate too quickly.) and then wrap the ducts in insulation.

❖ Safety

1. **Do not use gas, wood, or kerosene heaters unless all gases are vented to the outside.**
2. **Do not place space heaters near drapes or furniture that can catch fire. Place space heaters on non-combustible surfaces – like a sheet of metal.**
3. **Do not use the cook stove/oven to heat your home.**
4. **Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms – if the carbon monoxide alarm goes off, call your fuel company immediately.**