

Energy Efficiency FACTSHEET



Home Energy Saving Tips

No-Cost or Low-Cost:

- ◆ Lower your thermostat at night and whenever the house is unoccupied. Close off and don't heat unoccupied rooms (unless you have a heat pump). If you consistently set your thermostat back at night 10 degrees Fahrenheit, you may reduce your heating bill by 10-20 percent.
- ◆ Lower the thermostat and dress warmer. As little as 1 to 3 degrees (F) makes a noteworthy difference in energy consumption.
- ◆ Lower the temperature on your *electric* water heater to 120 (F) degrees. Turn it off when leaving for extended periods of time. Electric water heaters can be set on timers; gas heaters must be set manually.
- ◆ Set refrigerator temperatures between 37 and 40 degrees (F). Clean the coils. Keep the refrigerator stocked; it takes more energy to cool an empty refrigerator.
- ◆ Consider replacing your older model refrigerator, especially if older than 10 years. Older models can often use over 3 times the energy of newer models.
- ◆ Wash full loads of dishes and air dry.
- ◆ When washing clothes, use warm or cold water and rinse with cold. Air dry clothes, but not indoors as this creates unwanted mold and moisture problems.
- ◆ Shut off lights, computers and other electronic appliances when you're not using them. Many computer monitors have a sleep mode setting which, when activated, greatly reduces energy consumption.
- ◆ Always use the bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans while showering or cooking and baking to avoid potential moisture problems.
- ◆ Use a microwave or toaster oven for smaller items.
- ◆ Install a low-flow showerhead. Showers use less hot water than baths; also consider taking shorter showers.
- ◆ Close your fireplace damper and seal the opening shut when not in use.
- ◆ During the heating season, open south-facing window coverings (e.g. drapes, blinds, etc.) during the day. Close all window coverings at night to keep the heat in.
- ◆ Install foam gaskets behind electric-outlet and switch-plate covers.
- ◆ Examine and adjust, if necessary, weather stripping, door sweeps, and thresholds.

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Steps that cost more, but pay for themselves in two years or less:

- ◆ Install an automatic setback thermostat that adjusts room temperature according to your daily schedule. If you have a heat pump, be certain to use a special thermostat designed specifically for heat pumps.
- ◆ Install do-it-yourself weather stripping and caulking to seal air leaks. Seal all perimeter wall penetrations and ceiling and floor penetrations to stop all air movement between heated and unheated spaces.
- ◆ Install do-it-yourself storm windows that cost less than \$1/sq.ft. such as flexible vinyl glazing.
- ◆ Use motion sensors or timers for outdoor lighting. You'll still have security and save energy.
- ◆ Replace incandescent light bulbs in common areas (where lights are on most of the time) with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). They use about a quarter of the energy.
- ◆ Replace the halogen torchiere floor lamp with a CFL model. They're safer, use 70 percent less electricity and produce as much, if not more, light.
- ◆ Tune up the furnace annually.
- ◆ Replace furnace filters. The dirtier they are, the harder the fan furnace works. Clean filters are essential for heat pumps – airflow is critical and can add years to the life of your heat pump.
- ◆ Add water heater tank and hot water pipe insulation especially if in an unheated space. Don't cover the thermostat or, for natural gas models, the air inlets.
- ◆ Install a sheet metal fireplace cover, especially if the flue damper does not fit tightly.

Home energy improvements that pay for themselves in two to five years:

- ◆ Increase attic insulation to R-38 (the current requirement for new homes).
- ◆ Insulate floors over unheated spaces to R-19.
- ◆ Insulate and seal ducts in attics, crawl spaces, garages and other unheated areas-potential big energy savings!!
- ◆ Install do-it-yourself storm windows that cost less than \$3/sq.ft. such as rigid acrylic glazing.
- ◆ Perform low-cost fireplace modifications, such as flue-top damper or inexpensive glass doors.

Home improvements that take more than five years to pay for themselves:

- ◆ When it is time to replace a home appliance, purchase an energy-efficient model. These appliances cost more initially, but you will save both money and energy over its entire life. An appliance that is cheaper to purchase will have higher operating costs, and savings you'll accumulate from using an EnergyStar appliance will be substantial.
- ◆ Energy Star® clothes washers save energy, water, and detergent.
- ◆ Energy Star® windows only cost ~\$0.50 /sq.ft. more than standard windows, save energy and increase comfort.
- ◆ Look for and purchase Energy Star® labeled electronic goods, and lighting bulbs and fixtures.
- ◆ Add do-it-yourself insulated (quilted) window covers (minimum R-3 and costing less than \$5/sq.ft.) or install blinds, drapes or other window coverings.
- ◆ Wall insulation should be added especially when the wall cavity is made accessible during home remodeling. Depending on your siding type, consider blown in insulation, applied from the exterior.
- ◆ Furnaces, heat pumps, air conditioning and water heaters all have high efficiency models available and should be considered when replacing these appliances.
- ◆ Invest in commercially installed storm windows or insulated glass.
- ◆ Replace conventional oil burner (oil furnace) with a more efficient flame-retention burner.
- ◆ Install a fireplace insert or wood stove in the fireplace.
- ◆ Install a solar water heater.

Visit <http://www.energyideas.org> for publications, software, news, links and other resources that can help you and your home become more energy friendly. You may also want to contact or visit the following organizations:

Your Local Utility - Links to Pacific NW Utilities

Visit <http://www.energyideas.org/pages/default.cfm?o=h,a,ps&c=z,z,46>

Con.Web - on-line newsletter on energy efficiency and renewable energy in the Pacific Northwest.

Visit <http://www.newsdata.com/enernet/conweb/index.html>

EnergyStar® High-Efficiency Residential Windows

Visit <http://www.drpane.com> AND <http://www.energystar.gov/products/>

EnergyStar® Residential Lighting Program

Visit <http://www.lightsite.net> AND <http://www.energystar.gov/products/>

EnergyStar® Home Appliances

Visit <http://www.energystar.gov/products/appliances.html>

The EnergyIdeas Clearinghouse provides information on a broad range of energy technologies for customers of Pacific Northwest utilities. EIC provides a searchable website and has a team of energy specialists ready to respond to technical information requests by phone or email. Funded by the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance.

Web: <http://www.EnergyIdeas.org>

Regional Hotline: 1-800-872-3568

Email: info@energyideas.org

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