

No cost ways to save on home energy

Keep refrigerator and freezer full - use containers of water or other liquids to retain cold and help cool the refrigerator and freezer

Clean refrigerator coils once or twice a year

Turn down the temperature on your water heater [to 120-125 degrees]

Turn down thermostat during the heating season, especially when not home or sleeping (lowering thermostat 1 degree will give a 1% savings in heating costs). [See low cost ways below for programmable thermostats that do this for you automatically]

Dress warmly, use blankets when reading or watching television to stay comfortable with a lower temperature setting

Use bathroom and kitchen fans sparingly; they will remove heated air from house in winter

Turn off lights when not in use or when you're not in the room - this goes for other electrical devices as well

Unplug when not in use: televisions, dvd/video players; chargers for cell phones, tools, etc.; computers; and other electrical devices---most of these devices continue to draw power even when turned off [Some people put these devices on a power strip and then turn the power strip off - check to see that your power strip isn't using electricity when off.]

Wash full loads of clothes and dishes and use the cold setting when washing clothes - an estimated 90% of energy use in washers is for heating the water

Reuse your bath towel a bit more than usual - one of the most bulky items to wash, besides you're clean when you use it!

Hang clothes to dry instead of using a dryer

Clean the lint filter in the dryer after every load

Make sure your windows are fully closed and locked during the heating season

Open curtains and blinds on the east, south, and west sides of your home on sunny days

Keep furniture and rugs away from heating vents

Close heating vents in unused rooms and close the doors to those rooms too, to prevent heated air from entering the room from the part of the house you're using

Remove window air conditioners during the heating season

In the summer, open your windows at night and close them during the day to hold cool air in your home

Low cost ways to save on home energy

Install a programmable thermostat to automatically turn down the temperature setting when you're away or in bed

If your water heater is five or more years old, insulate it – will save 5% or more

Switch to Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs (CFLs) (see below for figuring cost savings). CFLs have greatly improved - do a little checking to find low-mercury content bulbs and bulbs which put out the color light you prefer. [Find disposal methods at XXXXXXXXXXXX]

Install low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators to reduce hot water expense [priced from \$5 on up]

Repair leaky faucets and toilets

Use weatherstripping to seal windows and doors

Use caulk to seal holes to exterior - saves money and reduces pests coming in

Plug any holes between your attic and living space (expandable foam, etc.). Be sure to insulate and weatherstrip your attic door too

Replace/clean the filter on your furnace

Have your furnace serviced annually if possible

Other ways to reduce your home energy costs

Insulate! --decent attic insulation [after sealing the attic from the living space]

Insulate! --the sill plate in your basement [foam best]

Storm windows and/or window replacement

If you or your family members cannot remember to turn off lights - install timers/motion detectors

Replace your appliances, furnace, air conditioner and other energy users with Energy Star rated devices

Calculating the energy cost of CFLs and other electricity using items

Watts times cost per Kilowatt hour (.12 for Alliant) divided by 1,000 = cost per hour

So: 60 watt "regular" light bulb times .12 = 7.2 divided by 1,000 = .0072 or less than one cent per hour

Let's say you, on average, have this bulb on for 5 hours a day (from 5pm-10pm), 7 days per week.

Electricity for this costs you $.0072 \times 35 \text{ hours/week} \times 52 \text{ weeks} = \underline{\$13.10}$ for the year

What if you replaced this with a 60 watt equivalent Compact Fluorescent Light?

60 watt equivalent uses 13 watts $\times .12 = 1.56$ divided by 1,000 = $.00156 \times 35 \text{ hours/wk} \times 52 \text{ weeks} = \underline{\$2.60}$ for the year

By switching this one bulb you save approximately $\underline{\$10.50}$ per year [and even more when electricity rates go up].