

## Summer Home Energy Efficiency Tips

### free ways to save

- Set thermostat as high as possible while maintaining reasonable comfort levels.
- Set thermostats to 84 degrees when you're away from home or install a programmable thermostat to do that automatically.
- For windows that receive direct sunlight, keep shades closed during the day.
- Wear lightweight, loose fitting clothes.
- Close fireplace damper to prevent cool air from escaping.
- Don't block vents with furniture, curtains, or rugs.
- From 3:00 to 6:00 pm, avoid using heat producing appliances like ovens and dryers.
- Reduce the temperature setting on your water heater to 120 degrees or less.
- Clean the coils on the bottom or the back of your refrigerator regularly.
- Remove weeds, grass, bushes, and other obstructions from around the outside AC condensing unit so air can flow freely.
- Recommended temperature for your refrigerator is 37 to 40 degrees and 5 degrees for the freezer.
- Inspect and clean your dryer vent tube on your dryer periodically. Built up lint can lead to longer drying times and can be a fire hazard.
- Plant deciduous trees on the south and west sides of your house to keep it shaded in the summer.
- Take 5-minute showers instead of baths.
- Run washer, dryer, and dishwasher only when you have full loads and during cool times of the day.
- Wash clothes in cool or cold water whenever possible.
- Since some appliances use electricity all the time, plug them into a power saving electric strip or turn a regular strip off when the appliances are not in use.
- Scrape your dishes rather than rinsing them before putting them in the dishwasher. Air dry dishes instead of using the drying cycle feature on your dishwasher.

avoid heating up the house during the afternoon and early evening to keep your air conditioner from working extra hard to keep you cool

## low-cost ways to save

### Air Conditioning

- Replace the system's filter every three months or more often if it gets clogged with items like pet hair.
- Schedule a tune-up before heating and cooling season so your HVAC system has optimum efficiency.

### Windows/Doors

- Replace missing window putty or glazing as needed.
- Caulk window and door frames on the exterior side.
- Replace weatherstripping on exterior doors.
- Check door bottoms and thresholds to make sure air is not escaping. Replace when necessary.

### Air Sealing

TIP: On a windy day, place a lit stick of incense to check for air leaks. A horizontal flow of the smoke means you have a leak. Dirt and spider webs can also indicate an air loss.

- Install foam gaskets behind light switches or outlets located on exterior walls.
- Magnetic kitchen exhaust fan covers can keep air from leaking when fan is not running.
- Seal holes in the exterior walls, crawl space or basement where air conditioning and plumbing pipes penetrate the building.
- Close off openings between a masonry chimney and surrounding wood framing in the attic with sheet metal or foil-faced foam board insulation.
- Install weatherstripping around the perimeter of attic access hatches and pull-down stairs.

### Ductwork and Air Distribution

- Seal leaky duct connections with duct sealing mastic. Do not use duct tape, as it will dry out and come loose.

### **Water Heating**

- Install an insulation blanket around your water heater.
- Install low-flow showerheads in your bathrooms.

### **Lighting and Appliances**

- Test your refrigerator gaskets by closing the door over a piece of paper. If you can easily remove it with the door closed, consider replacing either the gaskets or the appliance.
- Install timers or motion switches on exterior lighting fixtures.

## **investments for larger savings**

### **Insulation**

Here are the minimum recommendations:

- Attic Insulation: R-38 (12 to 15 inches)
- Floor: R-19 above unheated areas (6 inches)
- Crawl Space Wall Insulation: R-10 with a vapor barrier (foam board)
- Duct Insulation: R-13 in unheated areas
- Rim Joist Insulation: R-13 (4 inches)

### **Windows**

- Install storm windows to provide additional insulation and to reduce air leakage.
- Replace your old, leaky windows with new, energy-efficient double pane windows.

### **Ductwork and Air Distribution**

- Insulate all uninsulated ductwork in unconditioned spaces (attics and crawl spaces).

### **Air Conditioning**

- Replace your air conditioning unit with a new unit with a SEER rating of 14 or higher.

### **Heating**

- Replace your furnace with a new unit with an AFUE rating of 95 percent or higher.

### **Water**

- If your water heater is over 7 years old, consider replacing it with an energy-efficient model.

### **Appliances**

- When replacing appliances, purchase Energy Star qualified models.