

TIPS FOR GOING GREEN



TIPS FOR A LOWER GAS BILL

HEAT & HOT WATER

- Adjust the thermostat one degree higher in the summer and one degree cooler in the winter to conserve.
- Lower the temperature at night or plan to be away for more than 4 hours or install a programmable thermostat.
- Lower the water heater's thermostat to 120 F.
- Increase your water heater's efficiency by draining it every six months to remove lime deposits and sediment.
- Clean or replace your furnace filters regularly.
- Open the drapes on sunny winter days and close the drapes on colder days to help keep the room warm.
- Use thermal window coverings for energy efficiency.
- Install flow-restricting shower heads to reduce hot water use.
- Do a full load of laundry using lower water temperatures and clean the dryer's lint trap after every use.
- Line-dry clothes rather than using the gas dryer.

IN THE KITCHEN

- Do a full load of dishes, use lower water temperatures, and air dry or towel dry the dishes instead of using the dishwasher's dryer to conserve hot water and energy.
- Limit use of a gas stove or gas oven. Use the microwave whenever possible in heating or cooking food.
- Make sure the burners on the stove are burning with blue cone-shaped flame. A yellow flame means air inlets or burners need repair.
- Check the seal on the oven door regularly for gaps or tears that let heat escape.

THE THREE R'S

REDUCE

- Edit on screen, not on paper.
- Use e-mail to minimize paper use.
- Think before you print or photocopy! Print as little as possible.
- Send and store documents electronically instead of on paper.
- Circulate documents instead of making copies for everyone.
- Reuse plastic containers and glass jars as storage containers.
- Reuse plastic shopping bags as trash bags for small garbage cans.
- Choose produce that comes loose or in very little packaging.
- Bottled water is a major waste of resources. Instead, buy a reusable water bottle and a water purifier.
- Go online or to yard sales to purchase new or gently used second hand products like books, cds, and dvds.
- Donate or Recycle old cell phones and computers.

REUSE

- Reuse envelopes by placing a new label over the old address.
- Designate a box for scrap paper and use it for printing all drafts or unofficial documents.
- Reuse plastic bags or better, get reusable canvas bags.

RECYCLE

Recycle the following items to reduce waste disposal costs, landfill waste, carbon emissions, and greenhouse gases:

- Magazines, newspapers, books
- Binders, file folders, index cards
- Cardboard
- Plastic bottles and containers
- Glass jars
- Metal cans, aluminum foil

Quick Fixes

Quick Fix #1

Stop drafts by applying weather stripping and caulk to seal leaks around windows, doors, heating ducts, plumbing, and anywhere cold air can enter.

Quick Fix #2

Wrap the hot water heater in a water heater insulating blanket and insulate the first 3 to 6 feet of hot and cold water pipes. This takes less than an hour and costs only about \$50. Energy bills and carbon emissions will decrease by 25%.

Recycling Tidbit

The energy saved by recycling one soda can could run a TV for three hours.



MORE TIPS FOR GOING GREEN

CONSERVE ENERGY

- Turn off unused or unneeded lights.
- Use natural lighting instead of electric lighting whenever possible.
- Use compact fluorescent bulbs instead of incandescent bulbs. They last about 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs, decrease greenhouse gas emission, and save money.
- Keep windows and doors closed in heated and air-conditioned areas.
- Turn off computers and printers when they are not in use.
- Minimize use of screen savers and instead enable power management features.
- Purchase only energy-efficient products – look for the star!
- Energy Star labeled appliances use 10-50% less energy and water.
- Unplug appliances when they are not being used.
- Conduct an energy audit, at work and at home - see other side.

ON THE ROAD TO SAVING

Here are a few simple ways to save gas, money, and the planet while you're on the road.

- Change the air filter every 12,000 miles.
- Add fuel cleaner to the gas tank every 3,000 miles.
- Check tire pressure regularly to make sure they are properly inflated.
- Avoid quick starts and sudden stops.
- Slow Down! Gas mileage rapidly decreases at speeds above 60 mph.
- Combine errands to reduce the number of trips.
- Walk or bike when possible.
- Hybrid cars save around \$500 in gas annually.

CLEAN AIR TIP

Purify your indoor air quality with a houseplant. Plants help absorb carbon dioxide and can clear a room of harmful toxins.

INSULATION TIDBIT

Insulation is rated in terms of thermal resistance, called R-Value, which indicates the resistance to heat flow. A high R-Value indicates effective insulation.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Recycling one glass container saves enough energy to light a 100-watt bulb for 4 hours.
- About 1.5 million tons of plastic are used on the bottling of 24 million gallons of drinking water each year.
- If we recycled every plastic bottle we used, we would keep 2 billion tons of plastic out of landfills.
- Recycling just the Sunday papers would save more than half a million trees every week.
- Every ton of paper recycled saves 17 trees, almost 400 gallons of oil, and three cubic yards of landfill space.
- Production of recycled paper uses 80% less water, 65% less energy and produces 95% less air pollution than virgin paper production.
- Green buildings on average can provide savings of up to 40% in energy and water consumption, and reduce waste production by 40%.
- The U.S. alone uses nearly \$1 million worth of energy every minute.
- Only 10% of the energy used by incandescent bulbs produce light; the rest is given off as heat.
- Turning off one light for one hour saves up to 22,000 watts per year.
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth and soaping your hands. This can save around 4 gallons a day. That's 1,460 gallons of water per person per year.
- A dripping tap can waste over 5,000 gallons of water every year.
- A home with 4 faucets wastes as much as 12,000 gallons a year from water that goes down the drain while you're waiting for it to heat up.

LOCATE POSSIBLE AIR LEAKS

Look for gaps and air flow leaks around electrical outlets, windows, baseboards, doors, fireplaces, attic hatches, pipes, foundations and mail slots.

- ☐ Test for air leaks by closing all exterior doors, windows and fireplace flues and by turning off all combustion appliances (gas furnaces, water heaters). Then turn on all exhaust fans to suck air out of the rooms. Use smoldering incense sticks to locate leaks; moving air causes the smoke to waver.

Solutions:

- ☐ Caulk, plug or install weather-stripping around leaks and holes.
- ☐ Replace old windows with high-performance ones or place plastic sheeting over the windows.

DETERMINE INSULATION NEEDS

- ☐ You'll want to ascertain the current insulation's R-value, thickness or depth. If it is a fairly new building, you may ask the builder. For older buildings, you'll have to see what type of insulation is present and determine how thick it is.
- ☐ Determine whether the attic and basement insulation meets the recommended R-value for the location.
- ☐ Once you know the insulation type and amount, go online to <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/insulation>. Here you can enter the location zip code to see what R-values are suggested for your local climate.
- ☐ Inspect the attic for an existing vapor barrier. This may be in the form of tarpaper, a plastic sheet, or kraft paper attached to fiberglass batts under the insulation. This barrier reduces the amount of water vapor that can pass through the ceiling. Since moisture can reduce insulation effectiveness, if a vapor barrier isn't there, it's best to install one.
- ☐ Switch off the electrical breaker and check the wall insulation by removing an electrical outlet cover plate. Poke into the wall with a screwdriver. If you feel resistance, there is some insulation. Unfortunately, this can't tell you if the entire wall is insulated or whether the insulation has settled. Only infrared scanning, called thermography, performed by a professional using special equipment can achieve this.

Solutions:

- ☐ Increase the amount of insulation throughout the building as needed.
- ☐ Coat attic ceilings with vapor-barrier paint.
- ☐ Insulate the water heater, hot water pipes and furnace ducts.

EXAMINE HEATING & COOLING EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Enlist professional maintenance once a year.
- ☐ Clean or replace filters monthly if there is a forced-air furnace.
- ☐ Check ductwork for dirt streaks, which may indicate air leaks.

Solutions:

- ☐ If the HVAC system is more than 15 years old, consider replacing it. New systems are energy-efficient.
- ☐ Insulate ducts or pipes in unheated spaces. An R-value of 6 is the recommended minimum.

Reducing drafts can result in an annual energy savings of 5 -30%!