

Top 10 Energy-Saving Tips

1. Switch off lights and electrical appliance when not in use

- a. To save the most energy, switch off the power rather than leaving appliances on standby.
- b. Turn off supplemental heating/cooling units and appliances when you go to bed or leave the house.
- c. Switch off your computer and equipment such as printers or Wi-Fi routers overnight or when you're away. Most computers have energy saving settings that will turn the computer and screen off after a period of inactivity.
- d. If you tend to fall asleep with a TV, utilize the sleep function so the TV will turn off at a preset timeframe (typically ranges from 10 minutes to 2 hours).

2. Replace traditional (incandescent) bulbs with LEDs

- a. Energy Star LED bulbs can save up to 80% of your lighting costs and typically last longer than a traditional bulb.

3. Use Smart Power Strips

- a. "Phantom energy," is the electricity used by electronics when turned off or are in standby mode. This is also known as "standby energy" or "vampire energy."
- b. According to the US Department of Energy, "phantom energy" accounts for 5-10% of residential energy use and costs the average household as much as \$100 per year.
- c. Smart power strips (or advanced power strips) eliminate the problem of phantom loads by shutting off the power to electronics when they are not in use.
- d. Many smart power strips can be set to turn off at an assigned time of the day, during a period of inactivity, through remote switches, or based on the status of the "master" device.

4. Install a Programmable or Smart Thermostat

- a. Both programmable and smart thermostats can be set to turn the temperature up or down (depending on the season) when you are asleep or away.
- b. Smart thermostats can learn your schedule to keep your house at an optimal temperature when you're typically home, and then automatically adjusts for the times you're asleep or away.

5. Insulation

- a. Insulation plays a key role in lowering your utility bills through retaining heat during the winter and keeping heat out during the summer.
- b. Having the proper insulation can save you up to 20% on heating and cooling costs.
- c. According to Iowa Electric Cooperative Living, insulation in your attic should be between an R49 and R60. R-value is the resistance to conductive heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness.

6. Appliances

- a. Whenever possible, purchase/install Energy Star appliances to help conserve energy.



- b. Refrigerators
 - i. The recommended temperature for your refrigerator is 40°F and freezer is 0°F.
 - ii. Ensure the door seal is tight and that gaps or cracks do not let cold air escape.
 - iii. If you have a second refrigerator or freezer, only turn it on when needed.
- c. Cooking
 - i. When cooking, use the microwave when you can. Microwaves use less energy than an electric oven.
 - ii. When using a stove, keep lids on pots and pans to reduce cooking times.
- d. Dishwasher
 - i. Use the economy cycle on your dishwasher, and only run it when it's full.
 - ii. Use the delay start to ensure it is not running during peak times.
- e. Laundry
 - i. Washing clothes in cold water will save money and can increase the lifespan of your clothes.
 - ii. Use the shortest washing cycle for the clothes you are washing.
 - iii. Consider hanging clothes outside to dry.
- 7. Clean or Replace Your Air Filters**
 - a. Replacing dirty filters regularly in your HVAC system will reduce energy and allow your HVA system to run efficiently and reduces strain on your system.
- 8. Weatherize Your Home**
 - a. Sealing air leaks around your home is another great way to reduce your heating and cooling expenses.
 - b. The most common source of air leakage is around windows and doors.
 - i. For stationary items, such as the wall and window frame, apply caulk.
 - ii. For moveable objects, such as a door or window, apply or replace weather stripping.
- 9. Upgrade Your HVAC System**
 - a. Replacing older heating and cooling equipment with Energy Star certified equipment can cut your annual bill by approximately \$140 per year.
 - b. When replacing your air conditioner, consider an Air-Source Heat Pump. These systems are efficient and allow you to choose between electric and gas (natural/LP) heating, when paired with a gas furnace, during times of the day when costs fluctuate.
- 10. Dress Appropriately for the Weather Inside and Outside**
 - a. While it may seem obvious to bundle up outside when it gets cold in the winter, doing so while inside can also help save on heating costs.