Cooking

28. Use pots and pans with flat bottoms that cover the burners on your range. You can cook more efficiently when heat transfers directly from the surface element to the pan.

29. Cook with the lids on. Tight-fitting lids help keep heat in the pan, permitting you to use lower temperature settings and shorter cooking times.

30. Heat only the amount of water you need for cooking. The water will boil faster if you cover it with a lid. Also, cold water boils faster than hot water.

31. Start vegetables on high heat in a covered pan. When steam appears around the lid, lower the heat setting and allow food to simmer until done.

32. Use a pressure cooker more often. It cuts cooking time to one-third that of conventional methods and uses less electricity than a burner or the oven. The same for your microwave-it uses less energy than any part of your stove.

33. Consider buying a smaller coffee maker if you're only making one or two cups of coffee. It uses less electricity and keeps your coffee fresher (and better!)

34. Carefully time your preheat period when baking. There is no need to preheat for broiling, roasting or cooking most casseroles.

35. Don't peek while baking. Each time you open the door, a considerable amount of heat escapes and that's money lost.

36. Activate the self-cleaning cycle on your electric oven only when the oven is heavily soiled. Start the cycle right after using the oven while it is still hot.

37. Never use an oven to heat the kitchen or to dry clothing. It wastes energy and it's dangerous!

Doing the Laundry

38. Wash only full loads. It takes almost as much energy to run a small load as it does a full one.

39. Use cold water for most loads. Tests indicate that today's cold-water detergents thoroughly clean most fabrics in cold water just as well as detergents requiring hot water. In this, there's considerable savings on the energy required for water heating.

40. Always use cold water for rinse cycles.

41. Don't use too much detergent- Too many suds can hamper effective washing action and may require extra rinsing.

42. Dry only full loads in your dryer, but don't overload.

43. Remove clothes from the dryer as soon as it stops. Clothes you promptly fold or place on hangers require little or no ironing so you can conserve electricity.

44. Clean the lint filter after each drying cycle. It lessens the energy required to dry your clothes and reduces your home fire hazard.

45. Iron fabrics that require a lower heat setting first. Irons heat faster than they cool, so it's quicker to go from a low setting to a high setting than the reverse.

46. Turn off your iron a few minutes before you finish ironing. You can complete the ironing of the rest of your clothes with the heat remaining in the iron.

General

47. Unplug things you aren't using! Those cell phone chargers and can openers and garage refrigerators that aren't in use still eat up electricity whenever they're plugged into the outlet. (See #11, #12) Doing this can save up to five percent on your energy bill.

48. Clean or replace filters on your furnace, exhaust fans, humidifiers and other electric appliances, as needed. Clogged filters impair performance and cause units to run longer and use more electricity.

49. Turn off the television when nobody's watching.

50. Only run full loads in your dishwasher. Dishwashers draw the same amount of power whether you operate them fully loaded or half empty.

85th Legislative District

343 Chestnut St, Suite 1
Mifflinburg PA 17844
Phone: (570) 966-0052 or
(570) 837-0052
FAX: (570) 966-0053

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50 Energy Saving Tips

Small changes in our daily lives can add up to significant amounts of power saved just as small investment in cheap energy saving products will immediately return their price and save more money as time passes. Here are 50 tips for conserving energy and helping save on your utility bills. When it comes to saving energy, watching the pennies definitely adds up to dollars saved.

Heating and Cooling

A typical household uses the bulk of its energy for heating and cooling – up to 44% of a typical annual utility bill. Investing a few dollars in insulation, installing a new thermostat and a few other smaller items can save much more in return.

1. Increase your attic insulation by 12 inches of R-30 insulation and your electricity consumption will reduce by 20 percent. **It's the single most important step toward saving energy.** The biggest user of electricity in your home is the heating/cooling system. Retaining as much heat as possible only makes sense. Insulating to a greater extent is just good investing.

2. Install an Energy Star programmable thermostat and learn how to use it. You can easily trim hundreds of dollars from your energy bill each year if you do this. By programming your thermostat to lower the house temperature by ten degrees while you're asleep, you'll save 10% on electricity without sacrificing comfort. Honeywell's 3600 programmable thermostat (model CT3600A1002) retails for around $125 at most stores that would allow your home to realize the promised savings if programmed correctly. Install the thermostat on an inside wall away from windows and doors. Cold drafts will cause the thermostat to keep your heating system running. Each degree you heat your house above 68 degrees F can add three percent to the amount of energy you use for heating. Lower the thermostat a degree or two before you entertain a large group of people.

3. Close hot-air registers and radiator valves in unused rooms with all types of heating systems, except if you have a heat pump system.

4. Make sure draperies and furniture aren't blocking the registers in your house.

5. Plant more trees around your home and they will cool the house in summer and insulate the house in winter. Studies show that a green cover benefits in many ways. You'll also increase your home's value.

6. Consider using a water-saving shower head. Water heating costs for a family can be lowered by at least $250 a year.

7. If you have a forced air furnace, **consider installing a heat pump** in your home to benefit from the most energy-efficient heating system you can buy. You'll also get air conditioning out of it if you don't have it already.

8. Check your furnace filter at least once a month during the heating season and clean or replace it as needed. Oil the motor and/or fan bearings of your forced-air furnace according to the manufacturer's instructions. A little regular maintenance on your furnace can save lots of money and increase your safety from furnace mishaps.

Lighting and Other Appliances

The next-biggest user of household energy is for lighting and appliances. Not counting the fridge, these comprise about 33% of a typical utility bill.

9. Use energy efficient (Energy Star) appliances. These use less energy and (believe it or not) a high efficiency refrigerator uses less electricity than a regular light bulb. Among household appliances, the refrigerator is likely your biggest energy consumer, especially if it's more than 15 years old. A non-Energy Star refrigerator can account for up to 9% of your energy costs alone. Vacuum the condenser coils in the back (or at the bottom) of your refrigerator every three months or so. Dust-covered coils impair the efficiency of compressor operation.

10. Replace your regular bulbs with CFLs. CFLs are those bulbs that look like small spirals, the ones most people skip by because they're "expensive." The truth is that the "expensive" bulbs are the ones that save a lot of money: if you have 15 bulbs in your home (many homes have many more than that) and use them an average of only four hours a day (again, some houses will use even more), you can save $100 a year including the CFL bulb's cost if you switch to CFLs. CFLs last up to 10 times longer according to Home Energy Saver.

11. When you are away even for a few hours or days you should unplug every electrical appliance possible and turn settings on the thermostat, water heater, and refrigerator to the lowest setting.

12. Install surge protectors for all of your electronic devices. Not only will these protect your devices during a storm, they also prevent electrical "drag." "Drag" refers to the small amount of electricity (5 watts or so) that all electronic devices continuously pull out of your sockets even when they're powered off, which can seriously add up if you have a lot of electrical devices. It also protects your stuff should a power surge occur.

13. Turn off your home computer. People who make claims about how powering up your computer uses tons of energy are living in the 1970s. The truth is that modern PCs don't use any extra energy when powering up, so you're better off powering down your computer when it's unused. But if you're like me, you tend to leave it on and forget about it, so set up your PC to turn off every evening automatically.

14. Locate window air conditioners on the north side of your house. Direct sunlight will make them work harder. Draw shades or draperies to block sunlight during the hottest part of the day. Open draperies on south-facing windows on sunny winter days to take advantage of available solar heat.

15. Use three-way switches or dimmer control switches to keep lighting levels low whenever possible. Dimmer lights use less electricity.

16. Turn your outdoor lights off during the day using inexpensive photo-electric controls and timers. This is just good common sense.

17. Clean lighting fixtures regularly. Dust on lamps, reflectors and light bulbs impair lighting efficiency.

18. Locate floor, table and wall lamps in the corner of a room rather than against a flat wall. Lamps in corners reflect light from two wall surfaces instead of one.

19. When painting in your home, choose light colors for walls, ceilings, floors and furniture. Light colors reflect light – dark colors absorb light and require bulbs with higher wattages.

20. Check air conditioner filters at least once a month during the summer and clean or replace them as needed.

Water Heating

Heating water is the third-biggest home-energy cost and typically accounts for 14%-20% of your energy bill.

21. Lower the temperature on your water heater to 120 degrees F (140 degrees F if you have a dishwasher).

22. Repair leaky faucets promptly. A steady drip can waste gallons of hot water each month and that costs you money.

23. Insulate long hot water supply pipes. Foam insulating sleeves, found cheaply in most hardware stores, help retain the heat of the water much better and saves a lot after a very little initial outlay. A very good investment.

24. Slipping a hot water jacket on your hot water heater can save you a lot of money. They usually sell for $10 to $20 and pay for themselves within a month or so. Another cheap and easy investment that pays for itself quickly.

25. Aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads: Using less hot water costs you less money to heat it… The nice thing about ordering from the Energy Guide is that it automatically searches the ZIP code you enter for available rebates given by energy companies and manufacturers.

26. Try turning off running water when shaving or brushing your teeth, and fill a dishpan with rinse water instead of letting the faucet run while you wash dishes by hand.

27. Use cold water when operating your garbage disposal. It saves energy and solidifies grease, which is then ground up and flushed away.