

# SIMPLE STEPS TO SAVE MONEY & GREEN YOUR HOME

**Rethink, reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, and respect to improve your home savings and carbon footprint**

## Home - Weatherizing & Energy Efficiency

- Turn off the lights when you leave a room. (16 kWh)
- Get an energy audit. Check [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org) for help to prioritize improvements based on cost and return on investment.
- Use a power strip or unplug electronics when not in use (stereo, VCR, tv, clocks in guest rooms, etc). (60 kWh) Appliances running on standby power and lights consume a great deal of energy, unnecessarily.
- Replace incandescent and halogen lamps with CFLs or LED bulbs. (990 kWh) If every US household replaced 1 regular light bulb with a CFL it would eliminate 90 billion pounds of greenhouse gases (= to taking 7.5 million cars off the road).
- Use task lighting; instead of lighting an entire room, focus the light where you need it. (23 kWh) Have dinner by candlelight regularly. Take advantage of daylight – read near a window. In summer eat and cook outdoors. For privacy, use light-colored, loose-weave curtains that allow daylight in while preserving privacy. (8 kWh yearly)
- Turn off kitchen, bath and other exhaust fans w/in 20 minutes of showering or cooking and vacuum vents annually. (15 kWh) Install motion sensors and/or photocells on outdoor lights. (164 kWh)
- Switch to energy star appliances as you can afford to. Donate used appliances.
- Refrigerator - Check the temperature, and change to warmer setting, or 37° to 40°F for refrigerator and 5°F for the freezer section. Freezers for long-term storage should be kept at 0°F. (60 kWh).
- Keep refrigerators full. Fill empty space w/ gallons of water. Regularly defrost manual-defrost refrigerators and freezers. Make sure your refrigerator door seals are airtight, it should have some grip when you pull on it (12 kWh)
- Using a vacuum with a brush attachment to clean the coils behind or under your refrigerator annually. (120 kWh)
- Unplug rarely used refrigerators and recycle if not needed. (300 kWh)
- Improve insulation and seal air leaks, starting with the attic. Go to [http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=diy.diy\\_index](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=diy.diy_index) for detailed steps and downloadable information and/or hire someone. (90kWh, 9 therms; cut 1,000 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions/year) Caulk and weather strip doors and windows that leak air.(180 kWh, 18 therms yearly)
- Block crawl space vents with foam blocks in the fall and remove in the spring.
- Tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames in winter. (510 kWh, 16 therms yearly) Save even more w/ storm windows.
- Recycle whatever you can. Reformed new products reduce mining, drilling or harvesting the raw resources and the energy to convert.

## Heating and Cooling

- Turn down the heat or air-conditioning a fraction. Do you really need to get around in summer clothes in winter? Setting your thermostat up or down 2 degrees can make a huge difference in electricity consumption and save 2,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> yearly.
- Install programmable thermostats and adjust so temperature goes down to 58-60 at night in the winter and when no one is home. (450 kWh, 45 therms yearly)
- Use natural ventilation in summer to let cool night air in, and curtains (insulated or lined curtains are even better) to keep heat out in summer. Use fans to cool your home. (240 kWh yearly)
- Use curtains/blinds to keep heat in during the winter and out during the summer. (45 kWh, 5 therms yearly) Clean or replace filters on furnaces annually; get a tune up. (220 kWh, 25 therms yearly)
- Clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters & radiators as needed make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapes.
- Shade your air-conditioning thermostat if it gets direct sunlight; avoid having TVs or lamps next to thermostat.

## In the Kitchen

- Dishwashing: Scrape off large food pieces from dishes rather than rinse. (570 kWh, 13 therms yearly) If you want to rinse, fill water in sink and let dishes soak.
- Be sure your dishwasher is full, but not overloaded, when you run it. (40 kWh, 25 therms yearly) Use the energy saving cycle. Don't use the drying cycle; let your dishes air dry. (125 kWh yearly)
- Use a covered kettle or pan to boil water; it's faster and it uses less energy.
- Match the size of the pan to the heating element. (55 kWh)
- Use small electric pans or toaster ovens for small meals rather than large stove. (182 kWh)
- Be sure to place the faucet lever on the kitchen sink in the cold position when using small amounts of water.
- In natural gas appliances, look for blue flames; yellow flames mean the gas is burning inefficiently & an adjustment may be needed.

## Laundry

- Wash your clothes in cold or warm water and rinse with cold water. (600 kWh, 20 therms, 500 pounds CO<sub>2</sub> annually) Wash and dry full loads. (12 kWh, 3.5 therms yearly) Use the energy setting or short cycles.
- Clean dryer lint filter after every load to improve air circulation. (163 kWh) Periodically inspect dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. Use the cool-down cycle to finish drying with residual heat in the dryer. (150 kWh yearly)
- Consider air-drying on clothes lines or drying racks. (410 kWh, 13 therms yearly)

## Hot Water/Water

- Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads. (820 kWh, 28 therms, save hot water and about 350 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> yearly)
- Change out old toilets to low-flow models to save thousands of gallons of this vital resource. Limit showers to 5 minutes. (680 kWh, 23 therms yearly) Every two minutes saves 10 gallons of water.
- Keep water off while brushing teeth, shampooing hair or dog, washing car. Only turn it on for rinsing.
- Repair leaky faucets promptly. (1 year leak – 5,475 gallons of water and 70 kWh to treat water)

- Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120°F. (220 kWh, 15 therms yearly) If water heater is more than 5 yrs old, insulate it. Insulate the first 6 feet of the hot and cold water pipes connected to the water heater. (480 kWh, 22 therms yearly)

### **Fireplace**

- If you never use your fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue. (540 kWh, 54 therms yearly)  
Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is going. (135 kWh, 14 therms yearly)
- Install tempered glass doors. (135 kWh, 14 therms yearly)

### **Work/office**

- Turn off computer, monitor and printer at night. (1035 kWh yearly)
- Use power saving options to put computer into sleep during periods of non-use. (50 kWh yearly)
- Ask to work from home one day a week. This will save you gas, money and time and your employers a bit of electricity.
- Print double-sided, recycle
- Talk to your employer about carbon emission reduction strategies like a "lights off when not in use" policy, consider solar panels, etc.

### **Travel/Getting Around**

- Cut out short car trips. Cars release the most emissions when cold. Americans make 123 million car trips each day that are walkable. Plan your shopping to make fewer trips to the store each week. (Every gallon gas unused keeps 20 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> out of atmosphere.)
- Remove unnecessary weight from your vehicle; this will cut down fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions
- Keep tires properly inflated and improve gas mileage by 3%. Get regular tune-ups. If only 190,000 Americans switched to regular car tune-ups, they would keep approx. 90 million lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere.
- Use public transport, walk or bicycle wherever possible. If public transport is lacking in your area; make some noise with local officials! Walking and biking are good exercise and give you an opportunity to really notice your neighborhood and your community.
- Carpool when you can. Try these sites: <http://www.cwride.org/> and <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/>.
- When you are out of town, unplug appliances and turn down the heat (or turn a/c off).

### **Food**

- Try to source locally, organically grown fruits, vegetables, eggs, cheeses and meats. (All available at the Albany Farmer's Market.)
- Supporting local farms keeps more jobs and money in our community and reduces transport emissions.
- Cut down on red meat. The livestock industry is responsible for millions of tons of methane, a greenhouse gas, each year. 16 pounds of wheat and up to 2,500 gallons of water are necessary to produce one pound of grain-fed beef. Check out the carbon footprint of different food types: <http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/201111/grapple3.aspx>.

### **General purchases**

- Reduce your consumption. Before buy it, do you need it? Where was it manufactured? Does it contain toxins? Can it be recycled or reused in the future? How many hours of your workday will it cost? Is there a nontoxic or organic option?
- Buy what you can in bulk, especially things typically packaged in plastic – such as liquid soap, shampoos, oils etc
- Use washable items: cloth napkins, cloth rag/towels, handkerchiefs, cloth diapers, mops or reusable/washable Swiffer covers, etc.
- Carry your own water bottle, coffee mug and bring your own bags. If you need bags, get paper bags and reuse or recycle.
- Receive Less Junk Mail! Send a short letter to: DMA Mail Preference Service, P.O. Box 643, Carmel, NY 10512. List your name, in all its infinite variations, and request that all of these names be removed from their national database. This removal lasts five years, so keep this address handy. For more information contact the DMA at 212-768-7277. Also unsubscribe to catalogues that you don't need. Receive bills electronically, file and pay them electronically.
- Recycling half your household waste will save 2,400 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> yearly.

### **Outside**

- Compost your food scraps (no meat or processed foods), coffee grounds and dye-free paper towels.
- Use native plants and water-efficient plants to save on water and to attract bees, birds and butterflies. Visit this site or search for other water efficient landscape ideas. <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/greenscapes/owners.htm>
- Plant shade trees on the west and south side of your house. If you have enough unobstructed sun on the south side, consider solar panels for electricity generation or thermal water heating.
- Plant trees or bamboo to absorb carbon dioxide during photosynthesis and they give off fresh oxygen.
- Don't burn leaf or plant clippings; mulch or compost it instead. Burning vegetation spews great volumes of carbon dioxide and other heat trapping pollutants into the atmosphere.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SAVE, VISIT THESE SITES**

<http://www.epa.gov/gateway/learn/greenliving.html> - There are lots of pages and information on ways to green your home, etc.

<http://energytrust.org/> - Check out incentives. Take the free home energy profile under the heading "How efficient is your home?"



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