



Energy Facts

Energy Conservation Tips - Low and No Cost Ideas

E-2790

The following suggestions are low and no cost tips to reduce the amount of energy you consume. When you reduce the total kilowatts used each month, you can save money and energy.

Personal Care

- Minimize the amount of hot water used in bathing. Compare to see if you use less water by showering than tub bathing.
- Do not leave water running while shaving, brushing teeth, and/or washing face.
- Turn off faucets promptly after use.

Laundry

- Sort loads by fabric type and weight.
- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Use heated water only in the wash cycle.
- Use water no hotter than necessary for adequate soil removal and sanitation.
- Use good laundry techniques to get satisfactory results in one washing process.
- Line dry garments and household items when practical.
- Avoid overdrying in the dryer.
- Use the dryer efficiently; avoid drying only one or two items at one time.

- Remove items when dryer stops to avoid unnecessary wrinkling, which may require ironing.
- Reduce ironing to a minimum by careful selection of garments and household linens.

Cooking and Baking

- Use cooking utensils that fit the electric unit or gas burner.
- Use tightfitting lids on cooking utensils, when appropriate.
- Reduce heat to maintain necessary cooking temperature when using surface units or burners.
- Use small appliances, including microwave ovens, for cooking, baking, and toasting if they are more efficient than the stove.
- Use oven to capacity.
- Preheat oven only when necessary (for most leavened foods). Do not preheat longer than needed to reach required temperature.
- Turn off oven, surface units, or burners promptly after food is cooked.

Dishwashing

- Accumulate dishes: hold until the dishwasher is filled. If you hand wash dishes, rinse and hold breakfast dishes until noon or evening.
- Avoid wasting hot water by letting it run continuously while washing or rinsing dishes.

Refrigerator and Freezer

- Locate the refrigerator and freezer away from heat source such as the stove, hot air register, or direct sunlight.
- Avoid opening door or holding it open unnecessarily.
- Keep grills and evaporator coils clean.
- Defrost as needed.
- If cold air is leaking around door, have door adjusted or gasket replaced.
- Turn off, empty, and clean refrigerator, and leave door open when taking an extended vacation.

Heating and Cooling

- Install a programmable thermostat or set your thermostat back at night.
- Reduce your gas bill by up to 21% by turning down the thermostat from 70°F to 65°F. Lowering it even further, to 60°F, can save another 18%. If you are uncomfortable at these lower settings, wear a sweater or layers of clothes and a cap.
- Use extra bed covering at night.
- In very cold weather, try to use a smaller portion of your home, and heat only that area.
- Close off unused areas unless there is the risk of pipes freezing. Shut off the air vents and close the doors. A towel placed under the door reduces drafts.
- Use insulated windows, or insulate them with plastic. An uninsulated window can lose 10 to 20 times as much heat as the same area of a wellinsulated wall. A storm window conserves heat even more efficiently.
- Use caulking and weather stripping around doors and windows to reduce heat loss up to 37 %.

- Wrap your hot water heater with insulation. A hot water heater uses 12 to 15 percent of a typical home's energy. Completely wrap electric water heaters, but wrap gas water heaters on the sides only. On gas heaters, make sure that the pilot light's access door isn't covered or that air isn't blocked from the burner.
- Set hot water at low/medium (120-40° F). Be sure the dishwasher can operate efficiently at this water temperature.
- Change the filter on the heating unit often. Dust can restrict airflow and increase operating costs.
- Fix leaks, especially hot water faucet leaks. Hot water leaks make your hot water heater operate unnecessarily.

More Tips

- Install gaskets behind cover plates
- Install glass doors on fireplaces
- Plant trees to shade your house
- Use EnergyGuide tags when purchasing appliances
- Use compact fluorescent bulbs. Calculate savings at <http://www.pnl.gov/cfl/calculate.asp>
- Maintain proper tire pressure for your vehicles to save gasoline
- Walk, ride a bicycle, use mass transit, and group errands together

Sources of information:

Mississippi State University Extension, "How To Save On Utilities," IS580

Mississippi State University Extension, "The Energy Situation Information Sheet," 1619

State of Michigan, Department of Energy, MDCIS Energy Tips Sheet

Energy Team Acknowledgments

The MSUE Energy Team, led by Eaton County Extension Director Mona Ellard, conceived, researched, wrote and published Energy Fact Sheets for the benefit of the citizens of Michigan. Support came from Sally Stuby, Regional Director, Southwest Region, and Karen Shirer, State Leader, Family and Consumer Sciences. The team members are: Randy Heatley, Patricia Miller, Cindy Straus, and Doug Woodard.



MSU is an Affirmative-Action Equal-Opportunity Institution. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status. Issued in furtherance of Extension work in agriculture and home economics, acts of May 8 and June 20, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Margaret A. Bethel, Extension Director, Michigan State University, E. Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. This bulletin becomes public property upon publication and may be printed verbatim with credit to MSU. Reprinting cannot be used to

endorse or advertise a commercial product or company.

New Single Copy Free to Michigan Residents