



If kids playing softball put a hole in your window, you'd fix it! Right? Well, did you know that there are often small air breaches in many different places in our homes that, if combined, could easily be the size of a softball or bigger? Below is a checklist of 15 things that will make your home more energy efficient right away!

1. Run your hand around windows and doors to feel where air is entering or escaping. Use caulk to seal these spots.
2. Wrap your water pipes! This is very easy and inexpensive to do, especially with pre-made pipe wrap tubes. Wrapping hot water pipes will cut down on time waiting for hot water to reach your faucet. It will cut down on condensation and protect pipes from freezing.
3. Turning the thermostat down about one degree saves about 2% on your heating bill. Turning it down five degrees saves about 10%!
4. Lighting is a significant part of a home's energy bill. Did you know that ppelectric.com will show its customers exactly how much energy they are using, and on what, when they register online? Energy saving bulbs such as CFLs or LEDs can save 75% – 90% off the lighting portion of your electric bill. Start by deciding which lights you use most often – and change those first. Any light you use more than two hours per day is a good candidate for a more efficient bulb.
5. Wrap your water heater in a water heater blanket. Newer models have insulation inside the shell, but additional wrapping makes it cheaper to heat, and can keep water hot longer in the event of a power outage! Water heating accounts for the second largest use of energy in most homes. Set the water heater thermostat to 120 degrees. It is one of the easiest ways to save.
6. Use low flow shower heads, and water aerators on your faucets. If replacing a toilet, choose a low-flow one. You will save over a gallon on each flush. That can be an enormous water savings over a year! For well owners, using less water means using less electricity to pump it. For metered water systems, using less water cuts down your bill. You will be heating less water, too!
7. Consider a waste water heat exchanger. It recovers heat from waste water (showers, baths, sinks, etc.) and uses it to warm incoming water on its way to the hot water heater. 50 to 70% of the energy required to heat the water may be recovered.
8. Prepare for next spring by getting a rain barrel which can provide water for your garden.

9. Use wool balls or tennis balls in your dryer to help significantly decrease dryer time. Don't have tennis balls? There are great YouTube videos on how to make your own wool dryer balls! These are also a terrific gift for others! Even better – use a clothesline or drying racks instead of a dryer. They add humidity in a dry winter house!
10. Use a smart strip to decrease vampire power and save money. Most electronic devices plugged into outlets are pulling a certain amount of “vampire energy” at all times, even when not being used. Using power strips or unplugging these devices when not in use will cut off this cycle of wasted energy.
11. Keep your appliances cleaned and maintained properly. They will run more efficiently. We would like to share one local contractor's website we found particularly helpful: <http://gersheyappliance.com/tips-tricks.html>. Using Energy Star certified appliances and devices will cut your energy cost considerably. New Energy Star certified clothes washers themselves can cut your utility bills by an average of \$50.00 per year. PPL is currently offering \$35 for your old refrigerator or freezer.
12. Use outlet gaskets in all your exterior wall outlets. They are very inexpensive and easy to install.
13. Check your caulking or putty around your utility wires where they enter the home, and re-caulk if needed. Remember that softball?
14. Rethink Energy usage – do you need a second refrigerator? Do you keep lights on when you aren't in the room?
15. Plan ahead when cooking or baking. Can you bake more than one thing at a time? Can you put more than one veggie in your pot as in corn on the cob on top of beans? Cut your items in smaller pieces to cut the cooking time.

Answering these questions and rethinking your energy usage can save you some real money! Your savings can be put back into your own family budget. Energy efficiency is great for your pocketbook, our local economy and our environment! Conservation is the cheapest fuel!

If you have other helpful hints, SEEDS would love to hear them!!! We are always interested in learning about ways you saved on your energy costs, so please track your usage and share your success stories with us!

For those of you who may not be familiar with us, SEEDS – Sustainable Energy Education and Development Support, is a nonprofit organization based in Honesdale. SEEDS is working to reduce carbon emissions and promote a healthy environment. We do this by helping to develop a renewable energy infrastructure and promoting sustainable living. We host educational forums on energy efficiency topics such as lighting efficiency, winterizing your home, water conservation, and insulation. We have also hosted forums on renewable energy topics including solar photo voltaic and solar thermal energy, geothermal heating and cooling, Do-It-Yourself Solar and small scale wind power. SEEDS works with area businesses and residents alike to find ways to help them conserve energy, and operate more efficiently. If you want to stay on top of the latest renewable energy technologies, or if your business wants to focus on the triple bottom line – people, planet and profit – then please join us! Call 570-245-1256 or email me, Jocelyn Cramer, SEEDS' Executive Director and learn more about what SEEDS is doing here in northeastern PA. My email address is [Jocelyn@seedsgroup.net](mailto:Jocelyn@seedsgroup.net). Our website is [www.seedsgroup.net](http://www.seedsgroup.net) and contains more information about the work we have done in this area.

You may also contact us if you want to sign up for a free home energy assessment. SEEDS sponsors a program each summer (pending funding) helping residents in Wayne and Pike Counties lower their energy costs.

Our program is called TEAAM (The Energy Awareness Action Movement)

