

Energy-Saving Tips & Tricks from SEEDS



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. You can replace older weather-stripping on doors. If you're not sure how, there are great "how to" videos on YouTube.
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. Wrapping your cold pipes will also cut down on condensation.
3. 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, when they register online? Switching incandescent bulbs to LED bulbs can save 50% – 80% on the lighting portion of your electric bill. LED bulbs have dropped in price so significantly that you shouldn't wait to swap out old incandescent or CFL bulbs. Change them all now!
4. Turning the thermostat down about one degree saves about 2% on your heating bill. Turning it down five degrees saves about 10%!
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. Or, switch to an on-demand water heating system.

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 on 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. Install a rain barrel or two 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 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 to take and recycle your old refrigerator or freezer!
12. Use outlet gaskets in all your **exterior** wall electrical receptacles. They are very inexpensive and easy to install.
13. Check your caulking or putty around the utility wires where they enter your home, and re-caulk if needed. Remember that softball? Cheaper caulk can be less flexible, so spend a bit more to get the better caulk.
14. Rethink energy usage – do you need a second refrigerator? Do you keep lights on when you are not 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.

Energy-Saving Tips & Tricks - Room by Room; including your car!

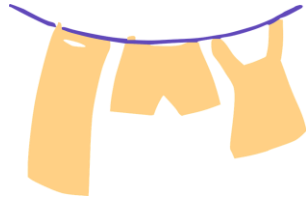
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In the kitchen:

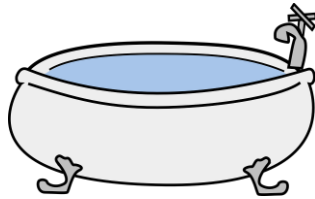
- Cook more than one thing in a pot
- Layered steamer
- Cut up things like potatoes in smaller pieces—they will cook faster
- Water take too long to heat up at faucet? Think about moving the heater closer to end use or install an on-demand water heater. Meanwhile, collect the cold water in a bucket to use for watering plants.
- Plan your trips to the refrigerator and freezer so they are not open too long.
- Using the oven? Bake several things at once, or one after the other, to minimize energy use.
- Worried about quality of water at your tap? Instead of buying bottled water, consider a faucet-mounted water filter.



In the laundry:

- Use cold water setting on the washing machine. Modern detergents will work fine in cold water.
- Use clothes drying racks in the house in winter (adds humidity). Use a clothes line in other seasons. Clothes smell fresh—no need for dryer sheets with unhealthy perfume additives.

In the bathroom:

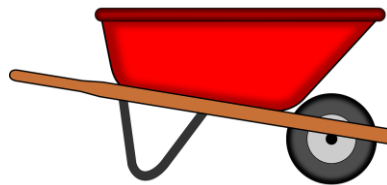


- In winter, let the bath water sit until it cools before draining.
- Use a low flow toilet.
- Use water-saving shower heads and faucet aerators.



General household:

- Try to avoid plastics as much as possible. They are made from petroleum.
 - Forget the air fresheners. They just cover up the problem and many people are allergic to them. Open a window in nice weather.
 - Use re-usable bags for shopping.
- Try an old-fashioned broom or duster mop on wood floors before dragging out the vacuum that uses electricity.
- Consider re-usable “green” cleaning cloths. Local company: gleencloth.com 888-654-5336. These work magic on windows & mirrors as well as most other cleaning chores.
- Recycling can substantially cut your garbage bills. Maybe carpool to deliver recyclables.
- 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.



Yard work:

- Reduce the size of your lawn. Less mowing uses less gas and leaves you more leisure time. Use moss in shady areas.
- Compost those leaves rather than burning them.
- Plant native plants:
 - One tree can absorb a ton of CO₂ during its lifetime.
 - Trees help cool you in summer and warm you in winter.
 - Groundcovers on bare spots can reduce the nearby temperature by 10°.
 - A shovel, broom, or rake will be better exercise than a leaf or snow blower and will use your own energy instead of fossil fuel.



Vehicles:

- Please consider gas mileage when purchasing a vehicle. If we all use the power of the purse, car makers will adjust to our demands.
- Check your tire pressure often. Proper tire pressure can improve gas mileage by more than 2%. Every gallon of gas saved keeps 20 lbs of CO₂ out of our air.
- Addressing these ideas 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!

