



STRETCHING YOUR ENERGY DOLLAR

We all need to use the energy we have in the most efficient way we can. Use these tips to help stretch your energy dollar.

Do you want to save electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy (DOE), a “typical American family” spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are easy ways to save energy without investing substantial time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home.



Lighting

- Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent.
- Your father was right, you don't own the electric company (although you do own your cooperative) so **TURN THE LIGHTS OFF**. About 5-10% of your electricity bill goes into your light bulbs, so this really could make a difference.

Insulation

- Wet-spray cellulose insulation is not only a great way to slow the transfer of heat through a wall, but it also stops air leakage and is a great sound insulator!
- The single biggest factor that wastes the energy needed to heat your home is air leakage. Spending a few dollars on sealing leaks around doors, windows, and other “holes” to the outside can mean hundreds of dollars in energy savings.



Try this and save...

Caulk cracks and gaps less than 1/4” wide.

Look for gaps around electrical outlets and switches on exterior walls; where pipes go through insulated floors and ceilings; around window, door and baseboard moldings; and where wires go through insulated floors, ceilings and walls.



You'll want caulk that is made for the material it is sealing and that stays flexible for 20 years.

You really don't want to make this a yearly project.

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800-282-5064
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Appliances

- Set your water heater at 120 degrees Fahrenheit. That should be plenty comfortable. Each 10 degree reduction in the water temperature setting cuts the heater's energy consumption by 3-5 %. Consider washing your clothes in the "cool" or "warm" setting. Your dishwasher will still get dishes clean if it has an internal heater to finish heating the water to 140 degrees. If it doesn't have an internal heater, keep the water heater at 140 degrees.
- Self-cleaning ovens, both gas and electric, are more energy efficient than those without the feature because of their extra insulation. But be sure not to use the self-cleaning feature more often than once a month, since it burns energy.
- Check the air filters on furnaces and heat pumps once a month. Dust in them makes the blower work harder, leading to higher energy bills. So clean or replace the filters if you see dirt. Replacement filters are cheap, but if you don't have room to store them or never seem to have one on hand when you need one, consider getting a washable filter.

Try this and save...

In cold climates such as Ohio, turn the temperature down to 68 degrees Fahrenheit during the day when you're home and 55 degrees at night and during days when no one is home. For every degree you turn your home's thermostat down, you reduce your heating needs by about 2 percent. If you have a heat pump, do not change your thermostat.



Heat pumps are designed to operate at their highest efficiency when the thermostat is set at the desired temperature and then left alone.

Setting the temperature back at night and up in the morning may cause your backup heating to operate and cause you to use more energy.

Saving you money

- Look around your home for those black "wall pack" boxes (DC transformers) that are powering your portable TV, cordless phone, hand-held vacuum, answering machine, rechargeable tool and electric toothbrush. As long as those boxes are plugged into the wall they are drawing 2-6 watts of power, even after the appliance is fully charged. (Don't believe it? Put your hand on one. It's warm. It's wasting electricity.) So unplug the wall packs for appliances that are not often used.
- If you don't already have one, consider installing a heat pump in your home. A heat pump will both heat and cool your home. And, at today's energy prices it will cost less to operate than natural gas or propane systems.
- An air conditioner both cools and dehumidifies the air. Oversizing an air conditioner will not lower your energy costs, and it may not allow the air conditioner to run long enough to remove the humidity from the air. This may make you feel cold and clammy instead of cool and dry.
- Supporters of on demand water heaters, sometimes called "tankless" water heaters, claim they save a lot of energy. However, the energy savings from this type of water heater compared to a conventional tank style water heater amount to less than \$20 a year. A whole house on demand water heater will cost as much as \$1,000 more than a tank style water heater. That's a 50 year payback!
- Check the seals on your refrigerator's door. A neat trick to use on older models that don't have magnetic door seals is to close the door on a dollar bill. Try this in five locations around the door. If the door doesn't hold the bill firmly in place you probably have leaky seals letting cold air out. Also if there are cracks, breaks or brittleness in the rubbery gasket that goes around the door, you should replace the seals.

