

ENERGY-SAVING IDEAS

Facts & Tips from the U.S. Department of Energy

That Old Refrigerator May Be Costing You

(NAPSA)—That six-pack of soda in the garage refrigerator could be costing you a lot more than you think.

Millions of homeowners have an old refrigerator in their garage or basement, which is often a hand-me-down from the kitchen. These older refrigerators may still run, but can consume twice the amount of energy of a new energy-efficient model. At a time when homeowners are looking for ways to cut their energy bills, spending as much as \$125 a year to keep a few sodas or beers cold may not make sense.

In a home where the extra refrigerator is regularly stocked with food, replacing it with a new ENERGY STAR®-qualified refrigerator is an option to consider. You'll still save up to \$275 over the next five years, plus you'll get better performance. New ENERGY STAR-qualified refrigerators are available in a variety of sizes and price points, so you don't need to buy anything extravagant (some companies make refrigerators designed just for the garage).

If the extra refrigerator tends to be empty, or home to just a few batteries, stale sodas or mystery containers of food, you should probably get rid of it altogether. Think of all the extra space you'll have in your garage for storing equipment or tools.

If giving up your second refrigerator causes too much angst, consider opting for a smaller compact fridge. These units are smaller than a regular refrigerator but can still hold extra sodas and other small items. They also use only a fraction of the energy of a



Is there an energy hog feeding in your basement? It could be costing you as much as \$125 a year to keep a few sodas.

full-size model. Look for one that has earned the ENERGY STAR and save up to \$80 per year.

If a large amount of food storage is needed, but only at certain times of the year, some families may find it better to keep the old model but only plug it in when it is needed. Leaving the old refrigerator unplugged for 10 months of the year can save as much as \$105.

To help consumers evaluate their choices, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) now offers an online Refrigerator Retirement Calculator, available at www.energy.gov/refrigerators. This interactive tool allows homeowners to calculate how much it costs to operate their current refrigerator, and how much money they can save by retiring it or replacing it with one that has earned the ENERGY STAR.

These models help reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases caused by burning fossil fuels and use less energy than a 75-watt lightbulb.