

ENERGY-SAVING IDEAS

Tips To Help You



(NAPSA)—According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the average U.S. household spends about \$1,800 a year on home energy. Fortunately, as a homeowner, there are several measures you can take to control, or even lower, your monthly utility bills:

Your Home

- Monitor your heating and cooling systems. Replace filters monthly for a clean and adequate airflow. Keep registers and vents free of dust, dirt and other blockages. Keep registers and doors closed in unused rooms.

- Add or replace insulation. Appropriate insulation can save you up to 30 percent on your heating bill, according to the Alliance to Save Energy. Use high-quality materials and replace any insulation that's matted or torn.

- Caulk or add weather stripping around windows and doors where small openings can let heated or cooled air out. Caulk and weather stripping can also protect your home from moisture damage.

- Install ceiling fans. They more evenly distribute warm or cool air throughout the year.

- Attic fans or vents can keep hot or cold air from being trapped in your attic.

- When you get new appliances, look for the most energy-efficient models you can afford. Appliances that have earned the Energy Star have met Environmental Protection Agency and DOE guidelines. According to the Alliance to Save Energy, that can cut annual energy bills by as much as 30 percent.

- Install storm windows and

storm doors with screens.

- Ease up on the thermostat being too high in winter or too low in summer. For each degree you lower your thermostat, you can save up to 5 percent on the heating portion of your energy bill, according to the Alliance to Save Energy.

Your Family

- Turn out lights that are not in use.

- Let Mother Nature light your home. Sunlight is often brighter than bulbs.

- Shut off the water when you brush your teeth, wash dishes by hand or the like. That can save as much as four gallons a minute, according to Water—Use It Wisely.

- Plan meals so you can bake more than one item at a time.

- Cook with the lids on the pots.

- Use a microwave or toaster oven to heat smaller portions, rather than a conventional oven.

- Close the refrigerator door completely. The refrigerator is one of the most-used appliances—it runs 24 hours a day.

- Don't leave doors and windows open when the heat or air-conditioning is running.

- Run your washing machine or dishwasher only when it is full. According to Water—Use It Wisely, this could save as much as 1,000 gallons of water a month.

Learn More

You can get more energy- and money-saving advice from the NeighborWorks organization, a national nonprofit group created by Congress to provide support, assistance and training for communities. You can find it at www.nw.org and by calling (202) 220-2300.