

Energy Saving Tips

Most energy saving techniques are simple changes in daily habits. And those that cost money don't cost much. Water saving showerheads, fluorescent lights, and timers for security lights are inexpensive investments.

- Caulk and weather-strip areas around doors and windows to prevent air leakage.
- Insulate your hot water tank if it's located in an unheated area. Set both top and bottom elements of your electric water heater to 120 F, and insulate the first few feet of hot water pipe coming out of the water heater.
- Use a water-saving showerhead rated at 1.5 gallons per minute or less. New showerheads give spray and deliver water with plenty of pressure. Water-saving pulsating shower massage models are also available.
- Clothes washing and dishwashing. Do not run partial loads, or if you must, set the water lever to a smaller load. Use the cold wash/cold rinse setting for most of your laundry loads. Using only full loads is a good rule of thumb for automatic dishwashers. If you wash dishes by hand, use one side of the sink or a large bowl for washing and the other side for rinsing. Do not leave the faucet running which can use as much water as a shower or bath.
- Refrigerators and Freezers. The ideal setting is 40F for the refrigerator and 0F for the freezer. Place a thermometer inside the refrigerator section and take a temperature reading after a half-hour. Adjust the setting higher or lower to achieve 40F. Wait one hour before checking the temperature again. Readjust is necessary. New refrigerators use only a fraction of the energy that older models use; replacing a model that's 10 years old or more will usually pay for itself in energy savings.
- Lighting and Entertainment. Turn off lights, TV sets and stereos when you're not using them. Replace bulbs in ceiling fixtures with lower wattage bulbs. Better yet, replace standard incandescent bulbs that are on 4 hours or more with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) or Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs).
- Air conditioners should be kept at 78F or higher. For every degree you raise your thermostat above 75F, you can save about five percent on your air conditioning bill.
- Raise your thermostat a couple of degrees during the summer and use a ceiling fan, turn of the fan when you leave the room, fans cool people not rooms..
- Setting electric heaters between 65F and 68F will save a substantial amount of energy. Turn off ceiling cable heaters and baseboard wall heaters when not at home to limit their use.
- Consider fireplace inserts, doors or covers. Many older natural fireplaces are inefficient and draw more heat out of the house than they produce. Close the flue to eliminate drafts when not in use.
- Warm with a space heater. A portable space heater can heat a small single room without using your furnace to heat the whole house. However, using a space heater to heat all or most of your home will cost more.
- Clean or replace filters on air conditioners and heaters on a regular basis.
- Keep furniture and other obstructions away from supply vents and air grills.
- Have the air conditioning and electric heater inspected or serviced annually.
- For heat pumps and air conditioners keep the area around the outside condensing unit clear of grass and other obstructions.
- Reduce solar heat gain by shading south and west facing windows during the summer. Use insulating blinds in the winter.
- Turn off your computer monitor. Screensavers do not save energy. A computer monitor uses almost as much energy as a refrigerator.
- Have your heating and cooling ducts checked for leakage.

For more information about the City of Ashland Climate and Energy Programs email climate@ashland.or.us.