

## Quick Tips for Home Energy Savings

You can start to save energy and \$\$ in your home today. Read on for ideas about typical opportunities to cut your electric and natural gas bills. Start with [no-cost](#) and [low-cost](#), then consider [moderate-cost](#), and [higher cost](#) approaches.

### No cost

- Turn off lighting and appliances when you're not using them;
- Enable the power management software on your computer;
- Set back the temperature on your thermostat at night during the winter, and when you're not home during the day;
- Lower the thermostat a couple of degrees and wear an extra layer during the winter;
- Open windows in the evening to bring in cool outdoor air during the summer. Close windows during the day to keep the "coolth" inside;
- Set the thermostat at a higher temperature or use other means to keep your house cool (portable fans, ceiling fans, etc.);
- Operate your curtains and shades with the sun—let it in during the winter, keep it out during the summer;
- Check to be sure that heating registers aren't blocked by furniture, carpet, drapes;
- Close the fireplace damper and doors when not in use;
- Turn down the thermostat on your water heater to the lowest setting that works for you. Experiment! Turn the setting to "Pilot" or turn the water heater off when you're away from home for several days;
- Take showers rather than baths;
- Turn off the faucet while shaving or brushing teeth;
- Wash clothes in cold or warm water; rinse in cold water;
- Wash full loads of clothes as the first choice; for smaller loads, select the appropriate water level setting;
- Dry your clothes on a clothesline;
- Clean the lint filter after every load when using a dryer. Be sure the vent pipe is not kinked or otherwise blocked;
- Use a microwave oven for small cooking jobs;
- Run your dishwasher only when full; select the "energy saver" cycle;
- Check temperatures in your refrigerator and freezer; adjust as needed;
- Check to be sure that air flow around your refrigerator is not obstructed;
- Unplug a second refrigerator and dispose of it;
- Unplug and dispose of a separate freezer if you're not using much of the capacity;
- Keep water beds covered; a comforter is best;
- Borrow an "appliance meter" from Fort Collins Utilities to learn more about how your appliances use electricity; and
- Learn more by checking other [resources](#) available through this web site.

### Low cost

- Install an insulation blanket on your water heater. Be sure to follow manufacturer instructions carefully;

Insulate the pipes—both hot and cold—that connect vertically to your water heater;

Seal air leaks. Some leaks are obvious: windows, doors, penetrations through the foundations and exterior walls. Less obvious, but often much larger, leaks may be found in attics, basements and crawl spaces. A blower-door test can help evaluate air leakage problems;

Seal air leaks in ductwork in attics and cold crawl spaces. Always use a permanent "duct mastic" material for sealing—never use "duct tape." Insulate the ductwork in these locations after they're sealed;

Close crawl space vents. Be sure the floor of the crawl space is covered with plastic, at least 6-mil, to reduce moisture coming from the soil;

Install a low-flow showerhead. This will save both energy and water;

Replace some lighting with compact fluorescent bulbs. For the greatest savings, start with lighting fixtures that you use a lot;

Install plastic covers over single-pane windows during the winter;

Buy an [Energy Star®](#)-labeled unit when replacing an appliance;

Plant fast-growing vines to block unwanted summer sun—results in months;

Plant shade trees to block unwanted summer sun—results in years;

Maintain your heating and cooling equipment;

Place insulation beneath waterbeds sitting on concrete slab floors;

Stop heating your hot tub;

Buy power strips for appliances you want to be able to turn all the way off when not in use; and

Purchase or make something to block air flow through your fireplace when not in use.

### **Moderate cost**

Add insulation to attics and crawl space walls;

Schedule a [home energy rating](#) for a professional assessment of energy use and savings potential; and

Apply for a [ZILCH](#) loan to affordably make higher cost upgrades.

### **Higher cost**

Blow cellulose insulation into uninsulated frame walls;

Insulate basement walls;

Replace an older water heater with an efficient model;

Replace your washing machine with an [Energy Star](#)-labeled model for substantial energy and water savings;

Replace an older furnace or boiler with an efficient model;

Replace an inefficient refrigerator with an efficient, [Energy Star](#)-labeled model;

Install storm windows over single-pane windows;

Install solar screens over windows that get too much unwanted sun; and

Replace windows with double-paned, low-e windows. Specify "solar-control" windows in locations where windows are exposed to a lot of unwanted sun.