ENERGY SAVING TIPS

TIPS TO SAVE ENERGY AND MONEY

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Below are a few tips to make conscious decisions that will help reduce your environmental footprint (save entergy) and money.

By utilizing energy efficiency, you can reduce your home's energy waste and save money while completing the same tasks with less energy. In order to increase your energy efficiency, it's crucial to learn about energy usage, where it's wasted, and how to use it more effectively and efficiently in daily life. To save energy and be more efficient, here are some tips to help at home.

**LIGHTING**

* Replace light fixtures or bulbs with ENERGY STAR-certified products, this can save up to $75 each year.
* Turn off lights when not in use and when you are out of the room for more than 5 minutes.
* Use task lighting; instead of brightly lighting an entire room, focus the light where you need it.
* Consider three-way lamps; they make it easier to keep lighting levels low when brighter light is not necessary.

**WATER USAGE**

* Install low-flow faucets and shower heads.
* Repair leaky faucets promptly; a leaky faucet wastes gallons of water in a short period.
* Take short showers instead of baths.
* If you're in the market for a new dishwasher or clothes washer, purchase an efficient water-saving ENERGY STAR model to reduce hot water use.

**APPLIANCES AND ELECTRONICS**

* Regularly defrost manual-defrost refrigerators and freezers; frost buildup decreases the energy efficiency of the unit. Don’t allow frost to build up more than one-quarter of an inch.
* Unplug electronics, battery chargers, and other equipment when not in use. These small items can use as much power as your refrigerator when used together.
* Plug TV and other electronics into a power strip. Turn off the power strip when electronics are not in use.

**WEATHER-PROOFING**

* Keeping hot air from leaking into your home by installing proper insulation, and weather-stripping.

**CLOTHES WASHING AND DRYING**

* About 90% of the energy used for washing clothes is for heating the water. Unless you’re dealing with oily stains, the warm or cold water setting on your machine will generally do a good job of cleaning your clothes because today's detergents are designed to work well in cold or warm water. Switching your temperature setting from hot to warm can cut a load’s energy use in half.
* Wash and dry full loads. If you are washing a small load, use the appropriate water-level setting.
* Dry towels and heavier cotton in a separate load from lighter-weight clothes.
* Clean the lint filter before each load.
* Make sure that the dryer exhaust vent is clear and opens and closes easily.
* Air dry clothes, but not indoors as this creates unwanted mold and moisture problems.

**KITCHEN TIPS FOR COOKING AND DISHWASHING**

* Be sure your dishwasher is full, but not overloaded when you run it. Use air drying - open the door when the dishwasher cycle is complete.
* Scrape, don’t rinse, off large food pieces. Soaking or prewashing is generally only recommended in cases of burned-on or dried-on food.
* Don’t use the “rinse hold” on your machine for just a few soiled dishes. It uses 3 to 7 gallons of hot water each time you use it.
* When cooking match, the pan diameter to the burner size. If the pan is too small, heat is wasted around the sides. If the pan is too large, only the center gets heated.
* Use small electric pans or toaster ovens for small meals rather than your large stove or oven. A toaster oven uses a third to half as much energy as a full-sized oven.
* Use a microwave or pressure cooker for smaller items. They will save energy by significantly reducing cooking time.

**OTHER WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT**

* Reduce household waste by prioritizing plants, supporting sustainable agriculture, and reducing food waste.
* Reduce car use, choose mass transit or make driving more efficient.
* Limit air travel, look for alternative modes of transportation.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Energy Saver Guide: Tips on Saving Money and Energy in Your Home (2022) <https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/energy-saver-guide-2022.pdf>

**MS Health Professionals for Climate and Health Equity (MSHPCHE)** <https://www.msclimateandhealthequity.com/>