



99

ways to

conserve

energy

Saving money
on your energy
bill is easy!
Just follow
these simple
energy-saving
practices

To save energy and money on your utility bills, it's important to know where energy is being consumed in your home. The largest energy users are your air conditioning and heating systems and your water heater. In a typical home, air conditioning and heating account for approximately 60% of the energy consumed and water heaters account for about 21%. Your refrigerator and freezer, the lighting in your home, cooking, and the operation of other household appliances all contribute to your home's energy consumption.

It's easy to cut back on the amount of energy consumed in your home in each of these areas. Simply follow these 99 energy saving suggestions.

For more do-it-yourself energy-saving ideas and links to online resources, visit DirectLink e-Services on our Web site at www.nipsco.com.

WATER HEATING

- 1** Get a well-insulated water heater and set the thermostat no higher than necessary for household uses (120°F to 140°F).
- 2** When away from home for more than a week, turn the water heater control to a low temperature setting.
- 3** Insulate hot water pipes from water heater to place of use.
- 4** Leaky faucets waste tremendous amounts of water. A small leak that fills a coffee cup in 10 minutes wastes 3,280 gallons of water a year. And if it's hot water, you're wasting fuel as well.
- 5** If you need to boil water, start with water from the hot water tap...part of the heating job is already done.
- 6** Wash a full load of dishes. Dishwashers use approximately 15 gallons of hot water. Washing by hand could use as much as 20 gallons.
- 7** Use only cold water when operating a food disposer. With hot water, the disposer doesn't work as efficiently and the energy used to heat the water is wasted.
- 8** Quick showers usually require less water than tub baths. Also, insert a showerhead restrictor.
- 9** When shaving, partially fill the basin with hot water rather than letting the hot water go down the drain.
- 10** Don't waste water. If it's hot water, you're wasting the energy it takes to heat it.



HEATING AND COOLING

- 11** Make sure your home is well-insulated. Install or add to attic insulation.
- 12** In the winter, keep the thermostat set at 65°F, or two to four degrees below what you're used to, and wear heavier clothing.
- 13** Install an automatic setback thermostat to save energy while you're away from home, and bring the home temperature to a comfortable level by the time you return.
- 14** Have your heating system checked before each heating season and replace filters. Change filters often throughout the season as dirty filters block the flow of air.
- 15** Use storm windows and doors or sheets of clear plastic to help prevent heat loss in winter. If your home is air-conditioned, they'll help keep it cooler during the summer.
- 16** Uninsulated ducts and pipes should be wrapped with low-cost fireproof insulation to avoid loss of heat or cooled air.
- 17** Check heating distribution ducts for cracks, holes or separations at joints. Repair inexpensively with ductwork tape.
- 18** With gas-fired heaters, be sure to keep the equipment, vents, and chimneys clean and in good repair.
- 19** If attached garage is heated, the garage walls and doors should be insulated.
- 20** Stop drafts by weather-stripping or caulking all cracks and crevices.
- 21** Keep return heating air grills and ducts clean. Dust and lint can keep a room from receiving sufficient heat.
- 22** If registers are adjustable, direct warm airflow across the floor. Air deflectors may also be used for this purpose. Remember warm air rises, cool air falls.
- 23** Don't go in and out of doors needlessly. Frequent opening and closing of doors wastes heat and money.
- 24** Keep the fireplace damper closed when not in use, but be sure the fire is out and the ashes are cold before closing the damper.
- 25** If radiators are near cold walls, a sheet of aluminum or aluminum foil between the wall and the radiator will reflect heat into the room. It would otherwise be lost.



- 26** Do not block off registers or radiators with draperies or curtains, furniture and other obstructions.
- 27** Clean thermostat yearly by removing the cover and carefully blowing away dust.
- 28** Place window air conditioning units on the cool side of the house if possible
- 29** If using a central air conditioner, the compressor-condenser unit located outside of the home should be shaded.
- 30** With a cooling system, keep the house at the minimum comfort level. Each degree cooler than 78°F uses substantially more energy.
- 31** At night, raise the air conditioner's thermostat setting, and while away turn off the air conditioner.
- 32** An attic exhaust fan removes hot air from the attic and helps reduce the cooling load of the air conditioner.
- 33** Thermostats for heating and air conditioning should be on an inside wall or where they'll not be subject to draft.
- 34** Keep blowers and motors of heating and air conditioning equipment lubricated for more efficient operation.
- 35** Make sure all sun-exposed windows have draperies. Let the sun in on cool days and keep it out on warm days.



COOKING

- 36** Good maintenance, including periodic thorough cleaning, assures more economical and efficient operation of your range.
- 37** Adjust flame so that it fits the pan. Never allow flame to lap up around sides of pan. Fuel will also be wasted and food could burn easily.
- 38** When using a gas range, place utensil on burner, then turn on flame. It instantly begins to heat. When cooking is complete, turn burner off immediately.
- 39** When cooking with electricity, remember to turn surface unit off a few minutes before food has completed cooking since the burner is slow to cool and cooking continues.
- 40** Cook vegetables in as little water as possible, just until they're tender but still crisp for the best nutrition.
- 41** Cover pans, when practical, to hold in heat and food vapors. You'll save vitamins, minerals, and energy and have a cooler kitchen.
- 42** Use a slow cooker to save time, energy, and money. Also less expensive cuts of meat can be used to reduce cost of food.
- 43** Defrost foods before cooking to save fuel used for cooking them.
- 44** Preheat oven only when necessary. Follow recipe instructions.

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- 45** Avoid opening the oven door when food is cooking. Use the door's window. Peeping causes heat loss.
 - 46** Plan oven meals and grill meals to accommodate more than one dish at a time, and time your baking for multiple purposes.
 - 47** Do not use aluminum foil to line the oven. It can reduce the oven's efficiency by interfering with air circulation.
 - 48** If there is an exhaust fan over the range, use it! Cooking odors will be eliminated and so will heated air, reducing air conditioner's cooling load. In winter, only use it when necessary.
 - 49** Use cooking aids such as a meat thermometer, meat probe, and time and temperature chart for accurate cooking times.
 - 50** If the range has a temperature control top burner, use it to reduce continuous energy usage. It uses only the amount of energy necessary to maintain the temperature the thermostat is set on.
 - 51** When using a range with the pyrolytic self-cleaning feature, send it through the cycle after using the oven since it's still warm.
 - 52** Don't use the oven to heat the kitchen on a chilly day.
 - 53** Cooking on an outdoor gas grill usually uses less energy than cooking inside. Your kitchen stays cooler so less air conditioning is needed.
 - 54** Be sure outdoor gas grills are turned off when not in use.

REFRIGERATION/ FREEZING

- 55** Keep an up-to-date inventory of foods in the freezer. Indicate the location of each item. If something is needed, the freezer door won't have to be opened as long when looking for an item.
- 56** A chest freezer allows less cold air to escape when opened than does an upright.
- 57** Keep the freezer section full or near capacity. Less cold air is lost during door openings because the frozen food helps retain the cold.



58 Try to take everything for a meal out of the refrigerator at once. Follow the same procedure for replacing food.

59 Always cover liquids stored in frost-free refrigerators. Uncovered liquids draw more moisture into the air making the unit work longer.

60 If the refrigerator has a power saver or power economizer switch, use it according to manufacturer's instructions.

61 Let hot dishes cool before they're put in the refrigerator.

62 Use the refrigerator section to full capacity, but allow enough space between items for free air circulation and don't block air vents.

63 Defrost often those refrigerators that are not frost-free. Ice acts as insulation and lessens cooling power.

64 An open refrigerator door wastes energy by causing the furnace to work harder to reheat the air and the refrigerator motor must work harder to cool the refrigerator.

65 Locate refrigerators and freezers away from the direct flow of warm air such as from range, heat register or sunshine.

66 Adjust refrigerator and freezer controls to avoid unnecessary colder settings that waste energy.

67 Make sure the condenser tubing on the back of the refrigerator and freezer isn't touching the wall.

68 If refrigerator or freezer has a forced-air condenser that blows air out at the bottom, make sure the condenser doesn't accumulate dust and hair.

69 Periodically check door gaskets on refrigerators and freezers for wear.

LAUNDERING

70 Use the water level control on clothes washers. Less water should be used for smaller loads.

71 Use the right water temperature for washers. Hot water is not always necessary.

72 Follow detergent instructions carefully. Oversudsing makes the washing machine motor work harder than necessary.

73 Don't over-wash clothes. Delicate clothes don't need as long a wash cycle as dirty work clothes.

74 Try to place the dryer in a heated area of the home. A dryer will have to operate longer in an unheated garage or utility room.

75 If the dryer has an automatic cycle, use it. Over-drying merely wastes energy and clothes don't last as long.

76 Your dryer should be vented to the outside. This prevents build-up of excessive moisture in the laundry area.

77 Removing garments from the dryer and hanging them up as soon as the cycle is finished will eliminate much ironing.

78 Clean the lint filter on the dryer after each load to help keep the machine running efficiently.

79 Load washers and dryers to capacity, but do not overload. Overloading can cut down on efficiency.



GENERAL

- 80** Buy proper-sized equipment to meet your family's needs.
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- 82** Compare appliances before you buy. Remember high-efficiency-rated appliances save energy.
- 83** Repair appliances immediately at even the first hint of a malfunction.
- 84** Replace old, outdated equipment with new energy-efficient models.
- 85** Replace old or inadequate wiring.
- 86** Turn off electric lights and appliances that aren't being used.
- 87** Don't overload electric lights and appliances that are not being used.
- 88** If possible, avoid using major electrical appliances during peak demand hours between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- 89** Maintaining security lighting while you're away from home is a good idea, but it needn't be excessive. Use common sense.
- 90** Use fluorescent lamps when possible. They produce more light for the same amount of energy and have a longer life than incandescent bulbs.
- 91** Locate lighting equipment carefully to obtain the best illumination with minimum equipment.
- 92** Select low-wattage bulbs for decorative and protective lighting and higher-wattage bulbs for tasks such as reading, sewing, etc.
- 93** Keep lamps clean to ensure maximum light. Dirty lamps and fixtures can significantly reduce light output.
- 94** If a lamp has a three-way bulb, use a lower setting for watching television or background lighting, and a higher setting for tasks such as reading.
- 95** Make sure pilot light and burners are adjusted properly for most efficient use of gas.
- 96** Change the vacuum cleaner bag frequently to make sure it works more efficiently. Keep filter clean.
- 97** To save on electricity, run the dishwasher through the wash and rinse cycles, but turn it off at the drying cycle. Open the door to allow dishes to air-dry.

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- 98** Wait until you have a full load of dishes before you run your dishwasher.
- 99** Use the "short wash" cycle on your dishwasher rather than the "heavy-duty" cycle. It will save on hot water.

IMPORTANT GAS SAFETY TIPS

The safety of our customers is very important to NIPSCO. The following information will help you keep your household safe throughout the year.

Carbon monoxide and natural gas leaks

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas produced if natural gas or any other fuel isn't burned and vented properly. Continued exposure to CO can be extremely dangerous and can cause death. Unborn babies, infants, young children, senior citizens, and any individuals who have coronary or respiratory problems are at greatest risk.

The symptoms of CO exposure are similar to the flu. They include headache, dizziness, drowsiness, ringing in the ears, nausea, violent coughing and irregular breathing. If you experience the symptoms of CO poisoning, leave your home and immediately call your local emergency services number or 911.

If you smell natural gas or think you have a gas leak, it's important to do the following:

- Leave your home immediately.
- Call NIPSCO at 1-800-4-NIPSCO (1-800-464-7726) to report the problem, using a phone away from your home.
- Do not return to the home until a NIPSCO representative indicates that it's safe.
- Do not light a match or candle.
- If you're smoking, extinguish your cigarette immediately.
- Do not open windows in an attempt to ventilate.
- Do not touch an electrical switch or use your phone and, most important, do not try to find the source of the leak yourself.

Heating and air conditioning systems

Properly working equipment also affects the safety of your home. To ensure that your equipment is operating safely and efficiently, follow these instructions:

- Do not tamper or attempt to adjust automatic vent dampers, heat reclaiming devices or safety controls on your heating equipment. This can create an unsafe condition. If your heating equipment does not operate properly, call a qualified service company for needed repairs and safety checks.
- When buying new equipment, check the label plate for certification. This indicates that the equipment is designed to meet national safety standards.
- Have heating equipment installed by a qualified heating dealer to ensure it's properly connected.
- Follow manufactures' instructions for proper operation and care of your equipment.
- Make sure your chimney is kept clean. Inspect the vent pipe for rust. Replace it if corrosion has caused a hole.
- Check furnace filters frequently and clean or replace them, if dirty. Check belts for wear.
- Keep equipment and burner area free of dust, dirt and debris.
- Keep furnace unit intact. Do not remove panels without replacing them.
- Use equipment for the job it was designed to do. Never use the cooking range top or oven to heat your home.



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1-800-4-NIPSCO
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www.nipSCO.com