

No or Low-Cost Energy Savings Tips for Your Home

1 INSULATE YOUR ATTIC, WALLS, AND CRAWLSPACES to reduce your energy usage by up to 30 percent. Insulation material is rated by its R-value, or resistance to heat flow. Experts recommend the following minimum (R) values of insulation for Chicago: attics (43), wall cavities, crawl spaces and basement walls (19). Roll of R-19 insulation = \$15

2 CHOOSE ENERGY SAVING WINDOW TREATMENTS particularly for north and west-facing windows. Close them at night to keep warm air in and open them during the day to allow the sun's rays to come in. Thermal drapes = \$35 per pair

3 ADD CAULK AND WEATHERSTRIPPING AROUND DOORS AND WINDOWS. Also caulk and seal air leaks where plumbing, ducting or electrical wiring penetrates through walls, floors and ceilings. Tube of silicone caulk = \$6

4 TURN OFF THE WATER WHILE BRUSHING YOUR TEETH to save up to 8 gallons of water per day or 240 gallons a month, lessening the demands on your hot water heater. Turning off the tap = FREE

5 INSTALL LOW-FLOW DEVICES ON SHOWERS AND FAUCETS. The energy involved in pumping water to your home and then heating it can be very energy intensive. 1.5 gallons per minute faucet aerator = \$4.30

6 USE YOUR OVEN EFFICIENTLY. Preheat it only when baking. Don't open the oven door to check your food. Each time you do the oven temperature drops by 25 degrees. Instead watch the clock or use a timer. Use a microwave or toaster oven to cook small or medium sized meals. Cooking more efficiently = FREE

7 SAVE ENERGY WHEN USING YOUR DISHWASHER. Use the no-heat air-dry feature on your dishwasher. If you have an older dishwasher that doesn't include this feature, turn the dishwasher off after the final rinse

cycle and open the door to allow air drying. Wash only full loads. The dishwasher uses the same amount of water whether it's half-full or completely full. Washing up more efficiently = Free

8 ADJUST THE TEMPERATURE SETTINGS ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER. Incorrect temperatures can be unsafe and waste both food and energy. Check the temperatures using a digital thermometer. Leave it inside for 15 minutes with the door closed. Adjust the settings to be within the following safe ranges: refrigerator (36° F - 38°F) and freezer (0° F - 5°F). Digital thermometer = \$6

9 KEEP YOUR THERMOSTAT AT 68 DEGREES OR LOWER in the winter to save money and energy. You save roughly 3% on your heating bills for every degree you lower your thermostat. Install a programmable thermostat to adjust your temperatures to a pre-set schedule. Turning down thermostat = FREE; programmable thermostat = \$40

10 SWITCH TO COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS (CFLS). Compact fluorescent light bulbs use up to 75 percent less energy and last up to 10 times longer than conventional incandescent lighting. 4-pack of 25 watt CFLs = \$8

11 SAVE ENERGY WITH CEILING AND WINDOW FANS in both the summer and the winter. In the summer, fan blades should revolve in a counterclockwise direction. In winter months, set your fan at its slowest speed and reverse it in order to push warm air down. 42" ceiling fan with light = \$40; box window fan = \$20

12 UNPLUG DEVICES OR PLACE THEM ON A POWER STRIP and turn off the strip when not in use. Devices such as chargers, cable box and tv's consume standby or phantom power when they are not being used and can account for 7-10% of your home's energy use. 6-outlet power strip = \$3.40

13 GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AIR CONDITIONER. Check your filter every month. If the filter looks dirty, change it. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder, wasting energy. Schedule a yearly tune up for your cooling system. Set your thermostat to 76° F during the day. 20" x 25" filter = \$15; annual service = \$99; thermostat setting = FREE

14 RIDE A BICYCLE, TAKE PUBLIC TRANSIT OR WALK for shorter trips near your home. Walking = FREE

15 LOWER THE SETTING OF YOUR WATER HEATER THERMOSTAT to 120 degrees to save approximately 3 to 5 percent in energy costs. Install an insulation blanket around your heater to help keep the water hot longer. Lowering thermostat = FREE; R-11 insulation blanket = \$21

16 HAVE YOUR FURNACE INSPECTED AND TUNED. Check your filter every month. If the filter looks dirty, change it. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder, wasting energy. Schedule a yearly tune up for your heating systems. Air filter = \$14; cost for service = \$99

17 HANG A CLOTHESLINE IN YOUR BASEMENT OR BACK YARD and air dry your clothes. An electric dryer costs about \$130 a year to run. Retractable clothesline = \$14

18 WASH CLOTHES IN COLD WATER. About 90% of the energy used for washing clothes in a conventional top-load washer 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. Washing in cold water = FREE

19 CREATE A SUSTAINABLE BACKYARD. Use a rainbarrel to capture and store water for use in the garden or washing the car. Compost food scraps and plant waste to make your own all-natural fertilizer. Rainbarrel or compost bin = \$100 minus \$30 City of Chicago

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You don't need to spend a lot to have a more energy efficient home and experience greater comfort, lower utility bills and the feeling of pride that comes with helping to protect our environment. Try these simple tips at home.

