

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

It's WATT You Know!

No Cost Energy Tips

These simple steps don't cost a thing, but can potentially save you 10-25% on your monthly energy bill.

- Turn off lights and appliances when not in use. Don't forget your computer. Most new computers have sleep settings.
- In the cold months, set the thermostat to 68 degrees when home, and then back to 55 - 68 degrees when unoccupied.
- In the winter, open window coverings on the sunny side of your home to take advantage of free heat from the sun. Close the coverings on cloudy days or right after the sun sets.
- In warm months, set the thermostat to 78-80 degrees when home and 5 to 10 degrees warmer at night or when you're not home.
- In the cooling season, close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.
- Also, use your dishwasher, clothes washer and dryer, and cook as late in the evening as possible.
- Barbecue outdoors when practical, keeping in mind the heat and effect of sun on your body. Reducing the heat coming into your home from any source, such as cooking, will reduce the load on your air conditioning.
- Use pool trippers to reduce the time your swimming pool pump runs--eight to twelve hours a day is plenty.
- Set your water heater to 120 degrees.
- Close foundation vents in the winter months.
- Vacuum your refrigerator coils (underneath and in the back) and don't obstruct the coils. They need air space to work.
- Dress according to the weather.
- Keep the seals (gaskets) on refrigerators and freezers clean.
- Keep your freezer as full as possible. You can place containers or plastic bottles filled with water in the empty spaces.
- Make sure food is cool and covered before it goes into the refrigerator.
- Run full loads in your washer and dryer, and use "solar drying" (clotheslines).
- Use energy saver option on your dishwasher, allowing dishes to air dry.
- If your A/C unit is on the ground, keep the area around it clean and free of obstructions to maintain air flow.
- Unplug your televisions/VCR when you're on vacation. Most new sets draw power even when they're turned off.
- Keep lights and lighting fixtures clean, especially if you're reducing the number of lights you use. Dirt absorbs light. Let lights cool before cleaning them and never touch halogen bulbs with your bare hands. The oil from your skin can greatly damage the bulbs. Use a small piece of paper to hold the bulb.
- If your dishwasher has a filter, keep it clean.
- Clean the reflectors underneath the burners on stovetops.

This 'Green' fact sheet is provided by the Sustainability Center at Southwestern Illinois College. For more information, please contact sustainability@swic.edu.

