

Energy Savings FACT SHEET

The **Big 4** of Low-cost Energy Savings!!

1. **Seal Air Leaks** – Air leaking in and out of your home wastes energy and makes your home less comfortable. Instead of turning up the thermostat or turning on your air conditioner, seal all air leaks in the building, starting with windows and doors. And don't forget your basement windows.

To test for air leaks:

- **Wet Hand Test** – Use a washcloth or sponge to wet the palm of your hand. On a cold, windy day, use your wet hand to slowly move around suspected leak areas. For example, you know your bathroom is getting a draft from one wall. Use your wet hand to follow the source of the cold air. The wet hand test will lead you to the source. Then you know where to seal.
- **Rattle Test** – Tap on the glass with your knuckle. If the glass rattles, it's loose in the frame and therefore leaking air.

To seal air leaks (at a low cost):

- Attach a 'door sweep' to a door to cover the gap at the bottom and weather-stripping at the top and sides of a leaky door.
- Use caulk to seal leaks around trim or other small leaks.
- Use 'rope caulk' to seal leaks that require a temporary seal (e.g. around a window that you'll want to open in the spring).
- Use a foam sealant in a spray can to fill up larger gaps.

2. **If you are not using it, turn it OFF (or DOWN)** – You can save electricity and gas by doing a lot of little things that add up to big savings.
 - Turn off unused lights and electrical appliances when not in use including TVs, stereos, computers and video games. Consider installing timers, occupancy sensors or power strips where useful.
 - During the winter, turn down your thermostat at night or when you're away all day for considerable savings. Dial down your thermostat – each degree you permanently set your thermostat below 72 degrees Fahrenheit reduces your heating costs by approximately 3 percent. This is one of the most important and easy ways to save. Every degree you turn down can save lots of money as long as you're turning it down for 5 hours or longer. During the summer, turn the thermostat up to give your central air conditioner a break. Set the thermostat to 78 degrees Fahrenheit during the day when you're home and higher when you're away.
 - Turn down major appliances where appropriate: set water heater and refrigerator temperature dials to the middle at the factory recommended setting.

3. Switch to Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs

- Starting with the lights that you use the most, switch your regular light bulb out for compact fluorescent light bulbs. While these spiral bulbs often cost \$5 / bulb, they will typically save you \$10 - \$20 a year. And they're usually rated to last 10 times as long as a regular bulb, meaning one bulb will often last 4-7 years. Changing one bulb could save you \$70 in the long run.

4. Get the whole household involved

- Unless you live alone, you do not create the utility bills by yourself! All members of the household should be aware of how they are using energy and look for ways to save. Hold a House Meeting. Show everyone the utility bills and discuss different ways to cut back on your usage. Be sure to praise the kids when they save energy. Better to reward savings than pay for waste.

Other Ideas

- Don't run a second refrigerator or freezer unless you really need it – they'll run the bill up fast.
- Buy energy efficient equipment and appliances whenever possible. Look for the Energy Star logo when you purchase new appliances to help ensure energy savings.
- Dress warmly in the winter – especially consider that cold feet make you feel cold even if the room temperature is comfortable.
- Let the sunlight in to get free heat and light during a cold day, then close drapes and blinds at night or to keep the sun out during the summer.
- Unplug hair dryers, irons and curling irons when not in use.

Find more energy-efficiency tips at YourEnergySavings.com

