



"Where Legacies Are Made"

Home Energy Checklist for Action

To Do Today

- Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120°F). You'll not only save energy, you'll avoid scalding your hands. Also, if the temperature is too hot, it can be unsafe for kids to wash hands, or bathe in.
- Check if your water heater has an insulating blanket. An insulating blanket should pay for itself in one year or less!
- If you have one of those silent guzzlers, a waterbed, make your bed today. The covers will insulate it, and save up to one-third of the energy it uses.
- Start using energy-saving settings on refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines, and clothes dryers. You should see direct savings on your corresponding monthly electric bill.
- Survey your incandescent lights for opportunities to replace them with compact fluorescents (CFLs). These lamps can save three-quarters of the electricity used by incandescents. The best targets are 60-100W bulbs used several hours a day. New CFLs come in many sizes and styles to fit in most standard fixtures. These bulbs may cost you more up front, but will pay for themselves in the long run.
- Check the age and condition of your major appliances, especially the refrigerator. You may want to replace it with a more energy-efficient model before it dies.
- Clean or replace furnace, air-conditioner, and heat-pump filters. Replacing these filters is one of the easiest ways to get more life out of your HVAC equipment.

This Week

- Visit the hardware store. Buy a water-heater blanket, low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and compact fluorescents, as needed.
- Rope caulk very leaky windows. Depending on the season, you do not want to pay to heat or cool the outside.
- Assess your heating and cooling systems. Determine if replacements are justified, or whether you should retrofit them to make them work more efficiently to provide the same comfort (or better) for less energy.



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This Month

- Collect your utility bills. Separate electricity and fuel bills. Target the biggest bill for energy conservation remedies.
- Crawl into your attic or crawlspace and inspect for insulation. Is there any? How much? Proper insulation in the attic is a very easy way to save money on your monthly utility bill.
- Insulate hot water pipes and ducts wherever they run through unheated areas.
- Seal up the largest air leaks in your house—the ones that whistle on windy days, or feel drafty. The worst culprits are usually not windows and doors, but utility cut-throughs for pipes ("plumbing penetrations"), gaps around chimneys and recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets. Better yet, hire an energy auditor with a blower door to point out where the worst cracks are. All the little, invisible cracks and holes may add up to as much as an open window or door, without you ever knowing it!
- Install a clock thermostat to set your thermostat back automatically at night.
- Schedule an energy audit (ask your utility company or state energy office) for more expert advice on your home as a whole.

This Year

- Insulate. If your walls aren't insulated, have an insulation contractor apply blown-in insulation (cellulose or fiberglass) to the walls. Bring your attic insulation level up to snuff.
- Replace aging, inefficient appliances. Even if the appliance has a few useful years left, replacing it with a top-efficiency model is generally a good investment.
- Upgrade leaky windows. It may be time to replace them with energy-efficient models or to boost their efficiency with weather-stripping and storm windows.
- Have your heating and cooling systems tuned up in the fall and spring, respectively. Duct sealing can also improve the energy efficiency and overall performance of your system (warm-air furnace and central air conditioners).
- Know that you are making a difference!