

Co-ops Offer More Ways To Save

From www.stopenenergyleaks.com

STOPPING ENERGY LEAKS IS A LOT EASIER than you think. It doesn't require a lot of time or a lot of money. Here are a few tips from your local electric cooperatives...the energy experts.

1. Replace your light bulbs. Replace regular light bulbs with energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). CFLs consume 66 percent less energy and last up to 10 times longer!



2. Draw the drapes. During the hot summer days keep shades on south facing windows closed so you don't heat up the house with the afternoon sun. During the winter, close drapes at night so you keep the heat from the sun's energy inside your home.

3. High-tech temperature control. Turn your thermostat and air conditioning down when you are away from home.



Installing a programmable thermostat is a great way to automatically control the temperature.



4. Chill out. Your refrigerator is one of the biggest energy consumers in your house. To keep it from leaking energy set it between 37 and 40 degree Fahr-

enheit. Keep your freezer at or slightly above zero, it will keep food frozen and use less energy.

5. Drip dry. Use cold water to clean clothes and use inside drying racks and outdoor lines as much as possible. If you can cut your dryer usage by half you could save approximately \$45 a year.



6. Unplug. Home electronics, like computers and televisions, can leak energy even when they are turned off. Simply unplugging these electronics when they aren't in use can help cut your energy bill. Don't forget when you go away for the weekend or on vacation unplug all your electronics... every little bit helps.



7. Keep out the cold. Seal cracks near windows and use weather stripping around doors. This keeps the heat in and cold air out. This simple tip could save as much as 25 percent off your heating/cooling bill.



8. Hit the Switch. How often do you, or kids, leave a room but don't turn off the lights, TV or video game? Leav-



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Detecting Air Leaks

ing the lights on consume precious energy and over time the costs add up.



9. Check Your Insulation. You spend the most money on heating and cooling your home. Inadequate insulation is often the culprit of energy leaks. It's an easy fix and you'll notice a difference immediately.

10. Window Wraps. Double paned storm windows can cut the amount of heat lost in the winter by as much as 25 percent to 50 percent. If replacing single paned windows is out of your budget, use plastic sheeting to keep out the cold.

11. Get Pumped. Replacing your gas furnace with an efficient electric heat pump can help you save as much as 30 percent on your heating and cooling costs. Plus, unlike traditional heating sources, electric heat pumps offer year round comfort keeping you warm in the winter and cool in the summer.



12. Hit the Showers in Five. As good as that hot shower feels, cutting down on the time you spend in it will also help you save money on your energy bill. Keep showers to five minutes or less and avoid taking long hot baths.



13. Wrap it up. A water tank insulation wrap is inexpensive but the savings are significant. Adding pre-cut insulation wraps to pipes leading to your water heater can also stop energy leaks.

14. Check Filters Regularly. Make a monthly date to check your furnace and air conditioning filters. Dirty filters can block the flow of air in and out of your home increasing energy costs.

15. Put a lid on it. The next time your cooking dinner for the family put a lid on your pots and pans. This will help cook the food faster so you use less energy. Microwave cooking uses even less.

16. Check the Clock. Try to limit the use of large appliances-washers, dryers, ovens and dish-washers-during the peak hours of the day. Save these chores for later in the evening when it's cooler.

17. Ask the Expert. Helping you stop energy leaks is part of Touchstone Energy's responsibility to you, our cooperative member owners. Talk to one of your local electric cooperative representatives about a home audit and we'll help you find even more ways to stop energy leaks.



You may already know where some air leakage occurs in your home, such as an under-the-door draft, but you'll need to find the less obvious gaps to properly air seal your home.

For a thorough and accurate measurement of air leakage in your home, hire a qualified technician to conduct an energy audit, particularly a blower door test. A blower door test, which depressurizes a home, can reveal the location of many leaks. A complete energy audit will also help determine areas in your home that need more insulation.

Without a blower door test, there are ways to find some air leaks yourself. First, look at areas where different materials meet, such as between brick and wood siding, between foundation and walls, and between the chimney and siding. Also inspect around the following areas for any cracks and gaps that could cause air leaks:

- Door and window frames
- Mail chutes
- Electrical and gas service entrances
- Cable TV and phone lines
- Outdoor water faucets
- Where dryer vents pass through walls
- Bricks, siding, stucco, and foundation
- Air conditioners
- Vents and fans.

You can also try these steps to depressurize your home to help detect leaks:

1. Turn off your furnace on a cool, very windy day.
2. Shut all windows and doors.
3. Turn on all exhaust fans that blow air outside, such as bathroom fans or stove vents.
4. Light an incense stick and pass it around the edges of common leak sites. Wherever the smoke is sucked out of or blown into the room, there's a draft.

If you don't want to turn off your furnace, you can just turn on all your exhaust fans to depressurize your home.

Other air-leak detection methods include the following:

- Shining flashlight at night over all potential gaps while a partner observes the house from outside. Large cracks will show up as rays of light. Not a good way to detect small cracks.
- Shutting a door or window on a piece of paper. If you can pull the paper out without tearing it, you're losing energy.

