

energy-saving tips for all seasons



taking responsibility

As an individual, your efficient use of energy brings benefits such as lower bills, improved comfort levels in your home and a reduced personal impact on the environment.

Acting together, our individual choices add up—for the benefit of our community, our environment and our energy future. That's the power of working together.

As your community energy company, we are committed to sharing our experience and energy expertise. You can always contact us for:

- Answers to your energy questions.
- Energy efficiency information and advice.
- Help in evaluating energy-saving options.
- Assistance in finding energy-efficient products.

Your energy, well spent

The amount you spend on energy depends on more than insulation levels and the types of appliances you use. Your lifestyle has an impact too. This booklet shares some actions you can take today to help save money and energy throughout the year.

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Energy-saving tips for winter

Heating

Benefit

Keep the thermostat at 68°F or below.

Save on heating costs.

Lower thermostat at night and when you're gone (55°F lowest setting).

Save 1% during setback time period for every 1°F decrease in temperature.

Wear warm clothes to stay comfortable at lower thermostat settings.

Improve comfort.

Check furnace filter monthly; replace as needed.

Improve furnace efficiency by increasing airflow.

Tune up heating system at least every other year.

Save money and improve safety.

Keep registers and cold-air returns clear of furniture and drapes.

Improve comfort and system efficiency.

Open drapes to allow sun in. Close at night.

Save money and improve comfort.

Winter drafts

Benefit

Seal around sewer vent pipe in basement and attic. Use fireproof sealant around the chimney in attic.

Save on heating costs.

Replace missing storm windows or install inside plastic film.

Improve comfort and reduce condensation. Save on heating costs.

Keep windows tightly latched.

Improve comfort and security.

Use fireplaces only in the early fall or late spring when not using your furnace. Close the fireplace damper after the fire is out.

Save money and improve comfort. Prevent heat loss.

Cover wall-mounted air conditioners with plastic film or air-tight cover.

Reduce air infiltration.

Energy-saving tips for summer

Cooling

Benefit

Set the thermostat to 78°F or higher.

Save 1% for every 1°F increase in thermostat setting when unit is running.

Turn off the air conditioner when no one is home. Use a programmable thermostat for central air or a timer for room air conditioners to start cooling before you get home.

Save 20 to 60 cents per hour for central units. Save 10 to 20 cents per hour for room units.

Use a whole house fan, room fans or ceiling fans instead of air-conditioning. Room or ceiling fans can also allow you to be comfortable at a warmer air-conditioning setting.

Reduce cooling costs.

If buying a dehumidifier, look for an ENERGY STAR® model.

Save money.

Have air conditioner serviced.

Operates more efficiently.

Shade your windows:

- Close drapes, shades and blinds during the day.
- Use reflective or white-backed shades on south and west sides. Exterior shading from awnings or trellises is even better.
- Plant deciduous shade trees to the east and west of the home.

Save money. Reduce heat from direct sunlight.

Keep heat out of house.

Reduce cooling costs.

Cook outside or use your microwave.

Reduce cooling costs.

Cooling (continued)

Benefit

Check furnace filter monthly if you have central air. Replace as needed.	Reduce cooling and dehumidification costs. Improve airflow.
Use exhaust fans to remove heat and moisture produced from cooking and showering.	Reduce cooling and dehumidification costs. Improve indoor air quality.
Keep registers and cold-air returns clear of furniture and drapes.	Improve comfort and system efficiency.

Energy-saving tips by type of product

Lighting

Benefit

Replace the most-used incandescent bulbs and fixtures with ENERGY STAR fluorescent lights.	Use less than one-third the energy with fluorescent bulbs and fixtures. Keep your home cooler.
Install solid-state dimmer switches for incandescent lights.	Save energy.
Use photo-eyes, motion detectors and timers to turn lights on and off. Turn lights off when not in use.	Keep your house cooler. 100 watts for 10 hours = 12 cents.
Replace halogen torchieres with ENERGY STAR fluorescent torchieres. The 300- to 500-watt halogen bulbs can reach 1,000°F!	Save more than \$300 over 7 years. Keep your home cooler.
Keep bulbs and fixtures clean.	Get more light.

Appliances & entertainment

Benefit

Switch from an electric to a natural gas dryer.	Reduce drying costs by more than 55%.
Cook in a microwave oven rather than stove.	Heat food faster with less energy. Reduce cooling costs.
Use cold water to wash clothes.	Save 12 to 25 cents per load.
If dryer is vented with plastic vent hose, replace with metallic vent pipe.	Reduce drying costs. Prevent dryer fires.
Run the dishwasher at night.	Reduce cooling costs and daytime humidity.
Wash a full load of dishes in the dishwasher.	Save hot water, electricity and detergent.
Use the dishwasher's air-dry or energy-saver cycle.	Save up to 8 cents per drying cycle.
Dry laundry on a line or rack.	Save 8 to 11 cents per load for a gas dryer or 27 to 32 cents per load for an electric dryer.
Clean the clothes dryer lint trap after each load.	Dry faster and safer and save money.
Turn off TV and devices connected to it when not in use. Even better, unplug or turn off the power strip for TV, etc.	Save electricity and keep your home cooler.
If TV has a "Quick Start" option, turn it off.	Save electricity.

Refrigerators

Benefit

Unplug second refrigerator if not needed.

Save \$5 to \$15 per month.

Defrost manual-defrost refrigerators and freezers when the ice gets over 1/4-inch thick.

Better heat transfer means less energy use.

Water heaters, pools and spas

Benefit

Switch from electric to natural gas water heater.

Save 50% on water heater costs.

Replace shower heads made before 1994.

Save water and reduce water-heating costs.

Set water heater at 120°F to 125°F.

Save money and prevent scalding.

Insulate electric water heaters if they feel warm to the touch.

Save money.

Take showers instead of baths.

Save water and energy.

Fix leaky faucets. Use faucet aerators.

Save water and energy.

Insulate the first 5 feet of cold water pipes and all hot water pipes. Start 3 inches above the vent opening.

Use precut tubes, it's easy, and payback is less than five years.

Turn gas water heater control down to vacation or pilot setting when gone for two or more days. Turn off electric water heater at breaker.

Save about \$4 per week. Save twice that if heater is electric.

Use pool cover.

Cut heat loss 70% to 90%.

Keep pool heater thermostat at lowest comfortable setting.

Save money.

Operate pool and spa filters only as much as needed to maintain water quality.

Cut filtration energy costs.

Convert electric pool heater to natural gas or solar.

Cut cost by 50% or more.

Home office equipment

Benefit

Buy ENERGY STAR monitors, printers and computers. Use power-saving settings.

Save money and reduce heat produced.

Shut off equipment that's not in use. A power strip can make this more convenient.

Save money and reduce heat produced.

Use energy-efficient lights.

Save money and reduce heat produced.

Major appliance purchases/ remodeling

Benefit

Replace refrigerators manufactured before 1990 with new ENERGY STAR models.

Save \$70 to \$135 per year.

Insulate and ventilate attic. Insulate walls.

Save money and be more comfortable.

Purchase an ENERGY STAR air conditioner.

Save energy and money.

Look for this symbol when you shop



ENERGY STAR labeled products use less energy than other products. They reduce your energy costs and help to protect the environment. We're an ENERGY STAR partner. Learn more about qualifying products at www.energystar.gov or call MGE at 252-7117.

Resources

Focus on Energy

www.focusonenergy.org



focus on energysm

Partnering with Wisconsin utilities

MGE partners with Focus on Energy to bring energy-saving resources and incentives to our customers.

(800) 762-7077

energystar.gov

Includes information about how to save energy and which appliances are ENERGY STAR qualified.

CNET Energy Efficiency Guide

Energy-saving and TV power-saving tips:

http://reviews.cnet.com/2708-19754_7-42.html

<http://reviews.cnet.com/green-tech/tv-power-savings-tips/>

Energy-saving standards



Save more energy at home. Our *Energy-Saving Checklist* brochure offers checklists to help select products with important energy-saving features.

listening. learning.

MGE takes responsibility to provide information and education to serve our customers and stakeholders. We educate customers today to help inform their decision making. We educate tomorrow's stakeholders so they can help plan our energy future.

In the winter, turn down your thermostat while asleep or at work. Each degree can save 1% on your heating bill. If we all set-back 1°, we'll save enough gas for 3,100 homes.

Working together we can make a difference.

Contact us for information about:

- Heating/Air-conditioning.
- Insulating/Weatherizing.
- Lighting.
- Windows/Doors.
- Appliances.
- Water heating.

Get more home energy information at:

- mge.com/home.
- Home Energy Line 608-252-7117.
- 800-245-1125.

Questions about billing? Call:

- 608-252-7222.
- 800-245-1125.

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your community energy company