

What causes sudden changes in home energy use?

- Weather-related uses are the main cause of seasonal fluctuations in energy bills. Operation of heating and cooling varies with the outdoor temperature. A small portion of water heating energy also changes with the weather.
- Basic energy use includes lighting, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, dishwashers, and electronics. Also included is most of the water heating energy. These uses typically stay consistent each month, except for a change in energy-use habits.
- Other causes of unexpected increases in monthly cost include: a dirty air filter, a changed thermostat setting, powered attic ventilation, a leaky hot water pipe, a faulty well pump, or repairs needed on heating and cooling equipment. Also, household guests use additional energy.

How can I understand the energy use characteristics of my own household?

- Check your electric cooperative account online to see how the outdoor temperature impacts your daily energy use.
- Find the difference between your lowest and current month's energy bills. Typically, most of that difference represents the cost of electric heating or cooling energy. To help focus your energy saving efforts, find that difference for each month of the year.

Lowering your thermostat by **one degree** in winter can save around 6% of heating energy use.



Your checklist for **Saving Energy at Home**



Your local electric cooperative would like to partner with you in an effort to maintain home comfort at a cost that you can afford. To help reduce your energy use, we suggest energy savings projects and tips. Remember that about half of your energy use is for heating and cooling, so those energy saving efforts may be more apparent on your monthly bill. During an extreme weather month, heating and cooling could make up 75% or more of your energy use. Water heating energy comes next in line for savings.

Replace each incandescent light bulb with an ENERGY STAR® LED or CFL bulb.
Read labels for fixture type and location.

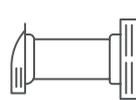


Where to Start Saving Energy Dollars



Energy Saving Projects

- Install an ENERGY STAR® programmable thermostat and use it according to directions.
- Consider eliminating additional refrigerators and freezers in the garage.
- Install motion sensors to control outdoor lighting.
- Use water heater insulation wraps on older electric water heaters.
- Replace your old heating system with an ENERGY STAR® heat pump or geothermal system.
- Install timers on pool pumps and water heaters.
- Seal leaky windows with low-cost interior storm window kits. Use rigid plastic for child safety.
- In summer, shade sunny windows. Outside shading works best.
- In winter, pull back shades and awnings on south-facing windows.
- Weather strip and caulk around leaky windows and doors.
- Caulk or use foam sealant on openings where pipes go through walls. Seal other cracks and openings.
- Seal leaky ducts with mastic to save the most energy. Most ducts leak 20% or more.
- Install R-38 or higher insulation in the attic and R-19 under floors over a crawl space.
- Consult with an energy professional to ensure your attic is properly ventilated.



Quick Tips

- Close the damper on any fireplace not in use.
- Turn off kitchen and bath exhaust fans immediately after use.
- In winter, wear warm clothing indoors and lower the thermostat setting.
- In summer, wear cool clothing and raise the thermostat setting.
- In winter, open the sun-shades on south-facing windows.
- In summer, close the shades on sunny windows.
- Keep interior doors cracked for avoiding pressure imbalances and air leakage.
- Replace or clean the filter on your central heating or cooling system once a month.
- Lower the water heater temperature setting.
- Use the cold cycle on your washing machine.
- Clean the lint filter with each dryer load.
- Make sure that the dryer vent to the outside is not blocked by lint.
- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Use small appliances and microwave ovens for most efficient cooking.
- Check the well pump to see that it does not operate continuously.
- Make sure that the airflow returning to your heating/cooling system is not being pulled from the attic or crawl space.
- Check crawl spaces to see if animals have pulled ducting loose as they seek warm air in winter.
- Check for signs of a hot water pipe leak under the house or around the slab edge.
- For households without central heating and cooling, keep one room more comfortable.

*Energy savings are approximate.
For more information about ENERGY STAR®, see energystar.gov.