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Take a Summer Vacation from High Energy Bills

MADISON, Wis. (June 12, 2007) - Many Wisconsin residents view the summer months as a vacation from cold temperatures and high heating bills, but as temperatures spike and humidity levels rise, maintaining a comfortable environment in a home can be costly. According to Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, this doesn't have to be the case. By looking for the ENERGY STAR[®] when purchasing cooling equipment such as ceiling fans, room and central air conditioners and dehumidifiers, residents can achieve comfort in their homes without discomfort in their wallets.

Products that earn the ENERGY STAR help prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy. They take less energy to operate, which results in less money spent on energy bills. In short, ENERGY STAR qualified cooling products are better for the environment and cost less to run while functioning as well, if not better than standard models.

“ENERGY STAR qualified cooling products allow consumers to reap the environmental and economic benefits of energy efficient technologies without sacrificing any of the features found on standard models,” said Bobbi Fey, program manager for Focus on Energy. “Doing something as simple as looking for the ENERGY STAR when shopping for cooling equipment can mean a better environment for future generations and less money spent on energy bills.”

Be Cool With The ENERGY STAR

Ceiling fans are a great way to increase a person's comfort level in a home on hot days. When run counter-clockwise, a ceiling fan will help circulate warm air out open windows and create a nice breeze in the room. In fact, depending on temperatures and humidity, a ceiling fan

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may provide enough comfort to allow the air conditioning to be turned off – saving energy and money.

To save even more energy and money, look for ENERGY STAR qualified ceiling fans when purchasing a new unit. ENERGY STAR qualified models save energy by incorporating efficient motors with improved blade design. They operate 15 percent to 20 percent more efficiently than conventional ceiling fans and when they are used with an ENERGY STAR qualified lighting kit, the savings increase to as much as 50 percent compared to standard incandescent fan and light combinations. To make the purchase of an ENERGY STAR qualified ceiling fan with a qualified light fixture even more appealing, Focus on Energy is offering a \$15 mail-in Cash-Back Reward on the purchase of this combination. The reward form is available on the Focus on Energy Web site, focusonenergy.com.

Air conditioners are the most recognizable method for beating the heat during summer. Wisconsinites can save themselves money and help protect the environment by looking for the ENERGY STAR on room air conditioners and central air conditioners. ENERGY STAR qualified room air conditioners exceed minimum federal standards for energy consumption by at least 10 percent due to high efficiency fan motors, compressors, heat transfer surfaces, timers and improved insulation. These enhanced features enable room air conditioners to absorb more heat from the air than conventional models do and use less energy to compress the refrigerant. Models with timers allow even more control over energy use.

Central air conditioners are an effective way to cool and dehumidify a home, but older models are costly to run because of the amount of energy they use. Today's models can use up to 50 percent less energy than typical equipment from a decade ago. Purchasing a new model, especially one featuring the ENERGY STAR, is a great way to cut down on energy use and cooling costs. Focus on Energy offers up to \$200 in Cash-Back Rewards on the purchase of high efficiency central air conditioners installed by a contractor partnering with the program. Lists of Cash-Back Rewards and contractors partnering with Focus on Energy are available at focusonenergy.com.

Purchasing a high efficiency, ENERGY STAR qualified air conditioning unit is a great first step to energy and money savings, but choosing the right size unit for the intended space and installing it properly will determine if it functions correctly and efficiently. Visit energystar.gov to learn how to determine the proper size unit and for tips to optimize efficiency.

Even when temperatures are tolerable, high humidity can make any home feel uncomfortable. Focus on Energy recommends investing in an ENERGY STAR qualified dehumidifier to remove unwanted moisture in a home. ENERGY STAR qualified dehumidifiers offer the same features as conventional models – effective moisture removal, quiet operation and durability, but also have more efficient refrigeration coils, compressors and fans than conventional models. This allows them to use up to 20 percent less energy than standard models.

By choosing ENERGY STAR qualified products and taking steps to optimize the performance of cooling equipment, Wisconsin residents are helping to prevent global warming while increasing the comfort of their homes and saving money. For more information about ENERGY STAR qualified products or tips for reducing energy consumption, call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not get completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About ENERGY STAR

ENERGY STAR was introduced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 as a voluntary market-based partnership to reduce air pollution through increased energy efficiency. Today, with assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy, the ENERGY STAR program offers businesses and consumers energy efficient solutions to save energy and money, and help protect the environment for future generations. More than 8,000 organizations have become ENERGY STAR partners and are committed to improving the energy efficiency of products, homes and businesses. For more information, visit energystar.gov.

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