



# Summer energy tips for apartment and condo residents

## FACT SHEET



APARTMENT & CONDO EFFICIENCY SERVICES



ENERGY STAR PRODUCTS



HOME PERFORMANCE WITH ENERGY STAR



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**A**ir conditioning is the biggest contributor to higher summer electric bills for people who live in apartments and condos. There are several things you can do to keep these costs low without sacrificing comfort. If you don't use air conditioning, many of these tips will help keep your apartment more comfortable.

### SUMMER ENERGY COSTS

If you have air conditioning—either central air or window air conditioners—a high percentage of your summer electric bill goes toward cooling your apartment or condo. Reducing the amount of heat in your home and managing your air conditioning use will lower those costs.

### Reduce heat and humidity

A few changes in your daily activities can reduce the amount of heat and humidity in your home and help keep your cooling bills low. Many of these changes won't cost you a cent.

**Shades and drapes.** Close draperies or shades on south- and west-facing windows to reduce solar heat gain.

**Cooking.** Limit the amount of cooking you do on hot days. Cook outside on the grill if it doesn't pose a fire hazard. Match the appliance to the task; use smaller appliances such as a toaster oven or microwave instead of a conventional oven. Use pots that fit your stove's burners.

**Lighting.** Ninety percent of the energy used by an incandescent bulb makes heat. ENERGY STAR® qualified compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) produce a fraction of the heat and last much longer.

- Replace incandescent bulbs with ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs in fixtures that you use for more than four hours a day.
- Replace halogen torchiere lamps with ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent lamps.
- Turn off lights when you are not using them.

**Humidity control.** Dry air is easier to cool than humid air. Use the bathroom exhaust fan to remove excess humidity when showering. Hang wet clothes outside to dry, if possible.

**Dishwashing.** Run your dishwasher only when it is full. Use the energy saver cycle (no heat drying) and run it at night when outside temperatures are cooler.

### Manage air conditioning use

**Central air conditioning.** Use a programmable thermostat to set the cooling temperature at 78°F when you are home and higher when you are sleeping or away from home. Each degree above 75°F saves three percent of the energy used to cool your home.

**Window air conditioners.** Use a timer to turn on the air conditioner half an hour before you get home from work, rather than running it while you are gone. Keep the filters clean. If possible, locate the air conditioner in a window that is most central to the area you are cooling and on the shadiest side of the building.

If you are planning to purchase a window air conditioner, look for one that has the ENERGY STAR label. ENERGY STAR qualified room air conditioners exceed minimum federal standards for energy consumption by at least ten percent.

**Fans.** On cooler summer days, use a fan to remove heat from your home.

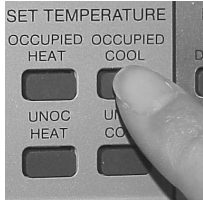
- **Ceiling fans.** Used in combination with your air conditioner they will allow you to raise your thermostat setting by as much as four degrees without reducing your comfort. During only moderately hot weather, you may be able to avoid using your air conditioner altogether. If your ceiling fan is reversible, set the rotation of the fan to pull the warm air up to the ceiling.
- **Window fans.** Draw cool air in or push hot air out to provide cross ventilation and naturally cool your home.

### INCANDESCENT VS. ENERGY STAR QUALIFIED CFLS

Incandescent Bulb	CFL Equivalent	Lifetime Savings
40 watt	9 – 11 watt	\$15 – \$25
60 watt	13 – 17 watt	\$25 – \$30
75 watt	18 – 20 watt	\$30 – \$35
100 watt	23 – 26 watt	\$40 – \$45
150 watt	32 – 42 watt	\$60 – \$70



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The power is within you.



### MYTH

Setting your air conditioner thermostat to its coolest setting when you start it will cool your home faster.

### FACT

You won't cool your home any faster. You'll just use more energy.

## OTHER PLACES TO SAVE ENERGY

### Water heating

Use a standard meat thermometer to test the water temperature at your kitchen sink. If it is higher than 120°F, you are spending more than you need to for hot water. Water that is hotter than 120°F poses a burn hazard, especially to children and older people. If you have access to your water heater, lower the temperature setting, or have your landlord do it.

A one-person household uses 20 gallons to 35 gallons of hot water per day. A family of four uses 50 gallons to 80 gallons. To reduce your hot water use:

- Have the landlord fix leaky or dripping water faucets—a leak of one drop a second on a hot water faucet can waste as much as 48 gallons of hot water a week.
- Install a low-flow showerhead if yours uses more than three gallons per minute.
- Wash clothes in cold water if possible and always use the cold-water rinse cycle.

### Appliances

Refrigerators use the most energy of all of your appliances. Keep refrigerator energy use down by:

- Keeping the refrigerator's fresh food compartments at 37° to 40°F and the freezer compartment at 0° to 5°F.
- Regularly defrosting manual-defrost refrigerators and freezers. Don't let more than a quarter of an inch of frost build up.
- Replacing dried, cracked or broken door gaskets. Have your landlord replace them.

In general, ENERGY STAR qualified appliances use ten percent to 15 percent less energy and water than standard product models.

Dehumidifiers can also be big energy users. Clean the dehumidifier coils before you start using it for the summer.

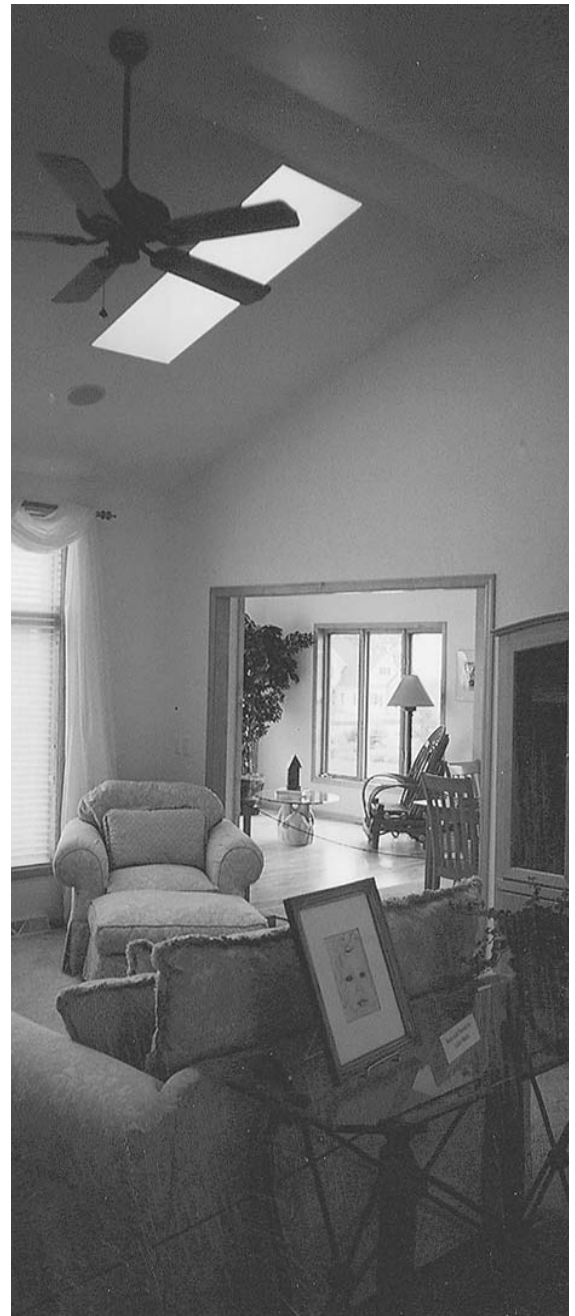
### Learn More

[focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com)

Contact Focus on Energy to learn more about smart energy choices.

[energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)

ENERGY STAR qualified appliances. This site provides information on energy efficient products that meet ENERGY STAR standards. The product information pages link to a calculator letting you compare



operating costs and energy use of ENERGY STAR qualified products with non-ENERGY STAR units. You can use this site to compare costs for appliances such as air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes washers and lighting products.

[www.eere.energy.gov](http://www.eere.energy.gov)

The Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network links to fact sheets on energy efficiency and renewable energy for your home.



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