



# Tips On Saving Energy This Summer

## FACT SHEET



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With higher home energy costs this year, it is especially important for residents to keep their homes cool and comfortable while managing their utility bills. Focus on Energy has developed some tips to make your home more efficient this summer.

### KEEP YOUR COOL

#### Central air conditioners.

To keep your central air conditioner at peak efficiency, it is important to keep it maintained. That means scheduling yearly maintenance and regularly checking the refrigerant charge as well as indoor and outdoor air coils.

#### Window air conditioners.

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

#### Programmable thermostats.

Setting back your thermostat or using a programmable thermostat allows homeowners to use less energy without sacrificing comfort when away from home during set periods of time throughout the week. Through proper use of a thermostat's set back mode, you can save up to \$100 every year in energy costs. Remember to keep the thermostat set at energy-saving temperatures for long periods of time, such as during the day when no one is home and through the night. Resist the urge to override the pre-programmed settings. Every time you do, you use more energy and may end up paying more on your energy bill.

#### Ceiling fans.

Used in combination with your air conditioner, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise your thermostat setting without reducing your comfort. The airflow produced by the ceiling fan creates a wind-chill effect, making you "feel" cooler. Be sure to turn the fan off when you're not in the room to save energy – ceiling fans cool people, not rooms.

#### Schedule a Home Performance Evaluation.

A Home Performance with ENERGY STAR evaluation helps homeowners find hidden problems in their homes. The evaluation includes a comprehensive inspection of all systems in the home. Once the evaluation is complete,

homeowners receive a report that identifies problems and recommends solutions.

#### Shades and drapes.

Close draperies or shades on south- and west-facing windows to reduce solar heat gain. Also, sun screens installed on the outside of windows reflect solar gain while allowing a view. Sun screens can be removed in the winter to let solar heat in.

#### Landscaping.

Landscaping is a natural and beautiful way to keep your home cool in summer. Carefully positioned trees can save up to 25 percent of a typical household's energy used for cooling. In addition to adding aesthetic value and environmental quality to your home, a well-placed tree, shrub or vine can deliver effective shade, act as a windbreak and reduce overall energy bills.

### OTHER WAYS TO SAVE

#### Compact fluorescent bulbs.

Ninety percent of the energy used by an incandescent bulb makes heat. ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs, (CFLs) produce a fraction of the heat and use 75 percent less energy, while lasting up to 10 times longer. By replacing the five light bulbs you use most with ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs, homeowners can save at least \$60 per year.

#### Dishwashers.

To reduce the amount of hot water used for dishwashing, residents should use the dishwasher only when it's fully loaded. Also, if available, use the dishwasher's energy saving features such as partial-load setting and no-heat drying cycle.

#### Look for the STAR.

By looking for the STAR – the ENERGY STAR – when replacing appliances or electronics, residents can save energy and money on a variety of qualified products including clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators and computers.

For more information about Focus on Energy programs, call Focus on Energy at 800.762.7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

Focus on Energy is a public-private partnership offering energy information and services to energy utility customers throughout Wisconsin. The goals of this program are to encourage energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, enhance the environment, and ensure the future supply of energy for Wisconsin. For information about the Focus on Energy services and programs, call 800.762.7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).



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