

Save Money and Resources by Bringing Energy Efficient, Sustainable Practices into Your Personal Lives

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On average, 43% of your utility bill goes toward heating and cooling a home. Typically, 11% of the energy budget goes towards lighting. Put practical strategies into action to save energy and money while reducing your emissions contributing to global climate change.

Energy & Money Saving Tips for Individuals

- CFL's last longer and emit far less heat than incandescent bulbs.
- LED's are even better! They use less energy than CFL's and last even longer.
- In the winter close all curtains, blinds and shutters during the night. During the summer, do the reverse.
- Plant deciduous trees on south and west sides of a house/building to provide shade during the summer without blocking sunlight in the winter.
- Reduce phantom energy suckers. Unplug the appliance or use a power strip for less frequently used products. The switch on the power switch will cut all power to the appliance.
- Energy Tax Credits – learn more and save: www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index

Please visit www.ecopromotionsonline.com or email info@ecopromotionsonline.com for more tips and information on sustainable practical practices.

Lighting Knowledge

The average household spends 11% of its energy bill on lighting. Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFL's) have received plenty of publicity in recent years. Prices have steadily dropped and although still more expensive than incandescent bulbs, the energy savings alone make them the smart option for any lighting used frequently. Think of areas where lighting is left on for a long time; kitchen, family room, hallways, outdoor lights, etc. CFL's last considerably longer than regular bulbs and the fact that they also emit far less heat means that they can also reduce energy used for cooling in the summer. Light Emitting Diodes (LED's) use even less energy than CFL's and last even longer. Look for Energy Star certified bulbs to be sure you will realize the biggest benefits.

There are rarely perfect solutions to any environmental problem. Most CFL's for example travel many miles from the manufacturing facility in Asia to get to your home and as they contain small amounts of Mercury, their disposal is also an important consideration. Safe disposal options are increasing, however it is not wise to simply discard a CFL into a garbage can. Reference: <http://lighterfootstep.com/2007/09/five-ways-to-dispose-of-old-cfls/>

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Utilizing the Free Sun

Another easy step to help you control your home energy usage; in cold climates, close curtains, blinds or shutters during the night, open them during the day. In hot climates, the opposite approach will shield you from the sun's intensity during the daytime.

You can enhance your surroundings and help your home or office be more energy efficient at the same time. Plant deciduous trees on south and west sides of a building to provide shade during the summer, without blocking sunlight during the winter. Temperatures in the shade can be 3 to 6 degrees cooler, well positioned trees can therefore giving your air conditioning system a little help. The same principal applies for your air conditioning condenser outside the home; shade will make your system more efficient.

"Stop the Leak"

Many appliances continue to draw a small amount of power when they are switched off. These "phantom" loads occur in most appliances that use electricity, such as televisions, stereos, computers, and kitchen appliances. These phantom loads can be avoided by unplugging the appliance or using a power strip and using the switch on the power strip to cut all power to the appliance.

2009/2010 Energy Tax Credit

Certain purchases aimed at improving energy efficiency are eligible for a 30% tax credit up to a total of \$1,500. Unlike a deduction, which reduces the amount of taxable income, a tax credit directly reduces the tax itself. A tax credit can amount to a considerable savings on your tax return. Visit www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index for more information.

Beware of the Rebound Effect

Unfortunately human nature often works against us! If you install a CFL bulb in a light fitting, are you sub-consciously more likely to leave the light on? Lower priced or more efficient energy can actually increase consumption. For example, if your car gets more miles per gallon, the cost of your commute to work becomes cheaper, leading some of us to be more accepting of a longer commute, thereby offsetting some of the potential energy savings. This is known as the rebound-effect.

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References:

Campaign for an Energy-Efficient America is a coalition of more than 75 leading businesses, industry associations, faith organizations and environmental groups advocating for a national energy efficiency resource standard (EERS) to help the nation maximize energy efficiency - the fastest, cheapest, cleanest way to meet our growing energy needs. Visit www.energyefficiencyworks.org

Not all energy is created equally. US Dept of Energy: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy - Green Power Network http://apps3.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/buying/buying_power.shtml

U.S. Department of Energy: www.energysavers.gov/seasonal/