



earthcents®

Energy-Saving Tips



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How Do You Spend Your Energy Dollars?

Knowing where your energy dollars go can help you plan your usage and reduce your power bill. Heating and cooling systems account for about 50 percent of a home's typical energy usage.



Here's a snapshot comparison of the typical energy cost to run an older common appliance around the home for a year versus the typical energy cost of new ENERGY STAR qualified appliances.

Appliance	2012 Standard	2012 ENERGY STAR *	Annual Savings**
Clothes Washer	\$94	\$67	up to \$27
Dishwasher	\$55	\$42	up to \$13
Refrigerator	\$57	\$45	up to \$12
Freezer	\$80	\$72	up to \$8

* Source: Applied Proactive Technologies, INC.

** Actual savings may vary due to customer usage.

For more information, visit the ENERGY STAR website.

Easy Ways to Save

There are many steps you can take to save money and energy without impacting the overall quality of your life and comfort level.

The following tips under each heading are arranged from those that are inexpensive and easy to implement to those that will require more effort either in time or money on your part.

HEATING & COOLING

- Set your thermostat at 78° F in the summer and 68° F in the winter and leave it alone. With each degree decrease on your thermostat in the winter and increase in the summer, you can immediately realize a 3 percent to 4 percent decrease in energy use.
- Install and preset an ENERGY STAR programmable thermostat to automatically reduce energy usage when you are away or sleeping. Constantly changing the temperature causes your system to work harder.
- Help your heating and cooling system operate more efficiently by keeping air vents clear of obstructions such as furniture, curtains and rugs.
- Maintain heating and cooling unit efficiency by changing your standard filters monthly or pleated filters at least once every three months.
- Have your heating and cooling systems professionally serviced annually to keep them running at top efficiency.
- Clean dust from supply and return air grilles and heating outlets.
- Make sure the caulk and weather-stripping around your windows and doors are in good shape. If the caulk is cracked or the weather-stripping is damaged or peeling, replace the old material.
- Seal around wiring and plumbing penetrations. Use caulk for small holes and expanding foam for larger areas. This will keep unconditioned air from entering the house or conditioned air from escaping.
- Make sure your ductwork is properly sealed. Gaps in joints of the ductwork can cause your heating and cooling bills to increase by as much as 30 percent and can allow outside air to enter your home.



- Weather-strip and insulate your attic hatch or add a thermal hood to cut down on conditioned air loss.

In the winter

- On sunny days, open curtains and shades to let the sun warm your home naturally.
- If you have a fireplace, make sure the damper is closed when the fireplace is not in use. This will keep cold air from coming down the chimney and into your home. It also will reduce warm air loss from your home.
- Dress warmly, even indoors. This will allow you to set your thermostat a few degrees lower and still stay comfortable.

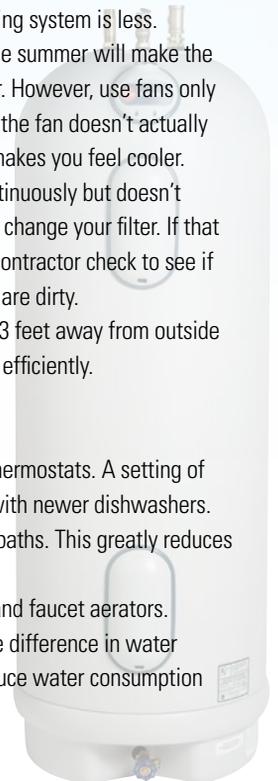


In the summer

- Keep curtains and shades closed during the summer, especially on the east and west sides of your home.
- Avoid using appliances that give off heat during the hottest times of the day as they will make your cooling system work that much harder. Do your cooking, washing and drying clothes in the morning or in the late evening, when the demand on your cooling system is less.
- Using a ceiling or area fan in the summer will make the air feel up to six degrees cooler. However, use fans only if you are in the room. Running the fan doesn't actually lower the temperature; it just makes you feel cooler.
- If your cooling system runs continuously but doesn't seem to be cooling adequately, change your filter. If that doesn't work, have a licensed contractor check to see if refrigerant is low or if the coils are dirty.
- Keep plants and brush at least 3 feet away from outside units so they can operate more efficiently.

WATER HEATING

- Turn down your water heater thermostats. A setting of 120° F is fine for most homes with newer dishwashers.
- Take quick showers instead of baths. This greatly reduces the amount of hot water used.
- Install low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators. You probably will not notice the difference in water flow, but these fixtures can reduce water consumption by up to 50 percent.



- Install a water-heater timer. Setting a timer to heat water four to five hours a day or less will result in significant monthly savings.

APPLIANCES

Refrigerator

- Refrigerators and freezers can be an area of significant energy loss. Make sure they are as full as possible and that the seals are in good condition. This will cut down on energy escaping when you open the door.
- For best operation, keep your refrigerator's temperature between 35° and 38° F.
- Keep food away from the interior walls so cold air can circulate faster.
- Keep your refrigerator condenser coils clean. Clean them every six months.
- Avoid putting refrigerators or freezers in unconditioned spaces like garages.
- Think carefully before deciding to put your old refrigerator in the garage or basement for overflow storage. Many secondary refrigerators are not ENERGY STAR qualified and typically use 75 percent more energy than newer ENERGY STAR models.



Dishwasher

- Wait until your dishwasher is full before using it. Automatic dishwashers require the same amount of hot water and electricity to wash a partial or full load.
- Turn off the drying cycle if you do not need to dry dishes immediately.



Washer and Dryer

- Wash clothes in warm or cold water and rinse them in cold water. Use hot water only when necessary.
- Wash a full load at a time, but do not overload. A small load in a washing machine consumes just as much energy as a full load.
- When using a dryer, wait until you have a full load. Also, separate drying loads into heavy and lightweight items. The lightweight items take less time to dry, so the dryer doesn't have to be on for as long with these loads.

- Dry clothes in consecutive loads, as the dryer will retain heat from the previous load.
- Clean the lint filter thoroughly after each load. A clogged filter restricts the flow of air and reduces the performance of the dryer. Also check the vent periodically to make certain there are no clogs.
- Don't overdry clothes. Overdrying causes shrinkage, shortens the life of the fabric, generates static electricity and uses more energy.



Cooking

- Cooking small portions in the microwave or toaster oven generates less heat than the stove or oven and can reduce electrical usage for cooking by as much as 80 percent.
- Use the correct-sized pot on electric stove burners. A 6-inch pot on an 8-inch burner wastes over 40 percent of the burner's heat.



Phantom load or standby power refers to the electric power consumed by electronic equipment and appliances while they are switched off or in a standby mode. Phantom load can be avoided by unplugging appliances or using a smart power strip and using the switch on the smart power strip to cut all power to appliances. This can save up to \$100 a year.

LIGHTING

- Use smaller lamps over work areas such as desktops so work can be done without lighting the whole room.
- Turn off lights when you do not need them and use motion sensors where practical.
- Use ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They use three-quarters less electricity, generate 75 percent less heat and last up to 10 times longer than standard incandescent lighting.
- Outdoor lighting can be on many more hours than indoor lights. Install CFLs and new ENERGY STAR qualified outdoor fixtures.

CFL Recycling

CFLs contain a small amount of mercury and should be disposed of properly, ideally by recycling.

Georgia Power has partnered with The Home Depot to offer recycling for compact fluorescent light bulbs at the retailer's stores in Georgia. Georgia Power sponsors in-store bins at all 88 Home Depot locations in the state, which creates the state's most widespread recycling program for CFLs. For more information about the CFL recycling program, visit homedepot.com/ecooptions. Find a Home Depot location near you or visit lamprecycle.org.

Broken CFL?

If a CFL should break in your home, EPA provides cleanup guidelines that can be performed by the general public.

Investing in Energy Savings

The following energy tips will require a larger monetary investment, but, over an extended period of time, will generally pay for themselves in energy savings. Call Georgia Power – The Energy Expert® at **1-800-524-2421** for more information and details on possible rebates.

- Install double-paned replacement windows, ENERGY STAR qualified Low-E windows or storm windows. They will greatly reduce heat loss in the winter and heat gain in the summer. They will also help decrease the outside noise that enters your home.
- Consider installing storm doors. Storm doors create a pocket of insulated air space between the door and the storm door, helping to reduce heat transfer into and out of the home.
- Make sure your attic, walls and floors are properly insulated. We recommend R-30 for the attic, R-19 for floors and R-13 for walls or local codes, whichever is higher. (Most homes built prior to 1978 were not required to have wall insulation.)
- If your water heater is electric and in an unconditioned space, insulate the water tank and pipes. This will reduce the amount of heat lost from the water stored in the tank (consult your warranty before insulating your water heater).
- If your water heater is more than seven years old, chances are it's wasting energy. Today's water heaters are much more efficient, saving you energy and money. Replace your old water heater with a Marathon electric

water heater. Marathons have an inner tank that won't rust or corrode and are backed by a manufacturer's lifetime warranty.

- If your heating and cooling system is older, consider installing a more efficient system with a higher SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio). Today's heat pumps are the most energy efficient way to heat and cool your home year-round. ENERGY STAR qualified heat pumps can save you up to \$300 a year on your home's energy bill when you replace your gas furnace and air conditioner with a high-efficiency heat pump. Heat pump system benefits include long-term energy savings, heating and cooling with one system, year-round comfort, and easy installation and maintenance.

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EarthCents is Georgia Power's portfolio of energy efficiency programs that help our customers save money, use energy efficiently and help the environment.

EarthCents aligns under one name the programs and resources Georgia Power has available to help residential and business customers. From providing energy efficiency tips and advice, to conducting energy audits, to offering incentives and rebates to help customers make efficiency improvements, Georgia Power can help you save. Over time, programs will be enhanced and new programs may be added.

Current EarthCents programs include:

Home Energy Improvement Program – Rebates are available to offset the cost of improving the energy efficiency of your home through a Whole-House approach (resulting in combined savings of at least 20 percent) or by making Individual Improvements. Whole-House rebates total up to \$2,200 and Individual Improvement rebates range from \$50 to \$400, with an annual total cap of \$700.

Lighting and Appliance Program – Georgia Power customers may be able to take advantage of special pricing incentives on CFLs and may qualify for appliance rebates following the purchase of ENERGY STAR qualified appliances.

New Home Program – Enjoy a home that is more efficient than current standard building codes, providing you with annual energy savings of up to \$400.

Refrigerator Recycling Program – Recycle your old, inefficient second refrigerator or freezer through responsible recycling with the EarthCents Refrigerator Recycling Program. Georgia Power customers can receive \$35 and free removal of their working old refrigerator or freezer.

Water Heating Program – Take steps to reduce your water heating costs. Ask about low-flow water devices, thermostat set points and the installation of free water heater jackets and pipe wraps on qualifying equipment.

Commercial Energy Efficiency – Rebates available to help commercial customers reduce the cost to install high-efficiency equipment, resulting in lower energy costs.

Home Energy Audits

Customers can learn ways to save up to 30 percent on their annual energy bill through Georgia Power's In-home or Online Energy Audit.

- **In-home Energy Audit** – Georgia Power will perform a free in-home audit. To schedule, please call **1-800-524-2421** or visit georgiapower.com/auditrequest.
- **Online Checkup** – Customers can visit georgiapower.com/energycheckup to take a free online audit.

Other Helpful Services

MAKE PAYING YOUR BILL EASY

- **Paperless Billing:** Sign up for Georgia Power's FREE Paperless Billing program and relax. Access your account 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Enjoy the convenience of email notification and eliminate any worry of a late payment through our secure online transactions. To get started, visit georgiapower.com/paperlessbilling.

- **Auto Pay:** Auto Pay is a free bill payment program where you can authorize your bill amount to be automatically debited from your checking or savings account. With Auto Pay, we will continue to read your meter and calculate your bill each month. You will continue to receive your bill as you normally do, but instead of "Please Pay By" being displayed on the bill, we will print the date when your bank account will be drafted for the amount of your bill.

ENERGY STAR

ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy designed to educate the public on ways to save money and protect the environment through energy-efficient products and practices.

An easy way for you to save is to look for the ENERGY STAR label when buying new appliances. ENERGY STAR qualified appliances can use 10 percent to 50 percent less energy and water than standard models. For example, an ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator requires about half as much energy as models manufactured before 1993.

Visit the ENERGY STAR website at energystar.gov.

Government Programs & Tax Credits

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Weatherization Assistance provides funding for home improvements to increase energy efficiency for qualifying low-income customers. Visit gefa.com to find out more.



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**For more energy-saving tips, visit
georgiapower.com/earthcents.**

**Customer Service/Power Outage
1.888.660.5890**

**Energy Audit
1.800.524.2421**