



Don't be an energy hog. Reduce utility bills by lowering usage.

A few minor adjustments in our lives will help ensure adequate electric supplies for Michigan and reduce the utilities' need to purchase expensive supplies. The Michigan Public Service Commission suggests using the tips on this card to reduce energy consumption and bills.

Reducing Use of Appliances

- Use hand operated can openers, knives, and toothbrushes instead of electric versions.
- Keep the freezer and refrigerator full but not overcrowded with old milk jugs or other containers filled with water. This helps lower the need to cool down the air.
- Don't leave refrigerator doors open for long periods of time.
- Use a thermos instead of leaving coffee pots on all day.
- Air dry dishes rather than using the dishwasher's heater.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes, use cold-water detergents with cold water, and dry clothes on a line.
- Use electric ovens, dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers, and other large appliances in the early morning or late evening. Shifting the time of use will reduce potential stress to Michigan's electric system at peak times.
- Play a board game or do an activity instead of watching TV.
- Place electronic appliances on sleep mode or turn them off when not in use to save up to \$70 annually.
- Unplug electronics like TVs and chargers when not in use.
- Lower your water heater to medium or 120°F and insulate water heater and pipes.
- Choose energy-efficient models when buying new appliances, which save money over time.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with CFL or LED lights. CFLs can save about 50% on lighting costs, use ¼ the energy and last up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs.
- Examine your appliances and home monthly. Replace old filters and bulbs, and seal leaks around windows and doors.



Heating and Cooling Tips



Increased demand for power during hot or cold weather coupled with rising prices reinforces the need to use energy efficiently. The closer the indoor temperature is to the outdoor temperature, the lower overall cooling costs will be. Use the following tips to reduce utility bills:

Reducing Heat

- Avoid activities that increase indoor heat or humidity. For example, use an exhaust fan to blow hot air out of the kitchen while cooking, grill outdoors, or have a picnic.
- Use microwaves, toaster ovens, and convection ovens when possible. Not only do they use less energy than ovens, they also reduce heat build-up in the home.
- Keep outer doors shut and close curtains/shades during the day to block heat.
- Try using fans or a dehumidifier instead of expensive air conditioning. Ceiling fans can make rooms feel 6 to 7° cooler!

Plants

- Block solar heat in the summer by planting trees on the south and west sides of a home or building.
- Use shrubs and groundcover plants to shade the ground and pavement to reduce surrounding air temperatures.
- Plant climbing vines on a lattice or trellis to shade areas around a home or building.

Air Conditioners

- Set the thermostat as high as possible. When leaving a home or building for more than five hours, raise the thermostat 5 to 10°, or use a programmable thermostat. Each degree you raise the thermostat can save up to 3 to 5 percent on cooling costs.
- Shut the vents or close off unoccupied rooms to save 5-10% on cooling costs.
- Locate window air-conditioners or central air-conditioner compressor units on a shaded side of a home or building. Direct sunlight increases their workloads.
- Schedule periodic maintenance by service professionals. Clean or replace filters and coils once a month or as needed. Keep the compressor unit of a central air-conditioner free from debris that clog vents.

Maintenance

- Insulate, caulk, and weatherstrip to keep heat in or out, depending on the season.
- Insulate your home (particularly the attic) to keep heat outside from filtering through the roof and into the rest of your house.

Energy Efficiency Tax Credits

Tax credits of up to \$1,500 are available to customers who purchase and install energy efficient windows, insulation, doors, roofs, and heating and cooling equipment in 2010. Credits vary according to the improvement made. For details, visit the U.S. Department of Energy at energy.gov/taxbreaks.htm.

Tax credits are also available from the State of Michigan for similar types of home energy efficiency improvements. A credit of up to \$150 (married filing jointly) and \$75 (single taxpayer) is available for eligible improvements. For details visit michigan.gov/energyoffice.

Where to Learn More

For more information, please contact:

- Michigan Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909
michigan.gov/mpsc · (517) 241-6180
(Request an Energy Savers Booklet)
- energysavers.gov
- www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/
- eei.org/ourissues/EnergyEfficiency/Documents/100Ways.pdf
- efficiencyunited.com