



Topic: Tips for Reducing Energy Consumption

Below are some simple things people can do to make a big difference in their energy consumption.

High energy consumption hurts the environment and your wallet. Consider helping your home be more energy efficient. Reducing your energy consumption doesn't involve demanding tasks, simple home activities can make a big difference. Here are some suggestions to help you reduce energy consumption in your household in the new year.

Heating and Cooling System. As you plan home maintenance activities this year, add a calendar reminder to clean or replace the heater and air conditioner filter. Your air filter helps maintain optimal air quality in your home and keeps your system running smoothly. Maintenance experts recommend writing the date of the new filter on the side of it, so you remember when you last changed it.

Appliance Usage. The beginning of the year is an excellent time to start forming new habits. When it comes to using the appliances in your home, there are easy practices you can incorporate to lower your energy consumption. For example, try using your large appliances in the early morning or late evening, which are generally considered off-peak hours. The result can be lower energy bills. Your utility provider will have insights on recommended usage times. Alternatively, not running your appliances, such as air-drying clothes or dishes, can lower energy bills.

Water Heater. According to EnergyStar.gov<https://www.energystar.gov/products/energy_star_home_upgrade/super_efficient_water_heater>, water heaters use about 20% of a home's energy. One way to reduce your water heater energy consumption is to take shorter showers. Another option is to set your water heater to 120 degrees. Savings resulting from turning down your water heater temperature are based on reducing standby losses (heat lost from water heater into surrounding area), according to Energy.gov<<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-savings-project-lower-water-heating-temperature>>. Set too high, or at 140°F, your water heater can waste anywhere from \$36 to \$61 annually in standby heat losses<<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-savings-project-lower-water-heating-temperature>>.

Outdoor Water Usage. Taking shorter showers and turning off the faucet while brushing your teeth are standard water-saving techniques in your home. You can incorporate several outdoor water-saving usage behaviors into your routine this year. For example, it's best to water your lawn in the morning to avoid evaporation. And if you're willing to give your home garden a refresh this year, consider planting native or drought-tolerant plants.

Recycling. You can reduce the garbage you generate by buying and using products wisely and recycling everyday household items. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, plastic bottles are the most recycled plastic product in the U.S.<<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/frequent-questions-recycling>> Recycling 10 plastic bottles saves enough energy to power a laptop for more than 25 hours<<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/frequent-questions-recycling>>. If you haven't already, take advantage of your curbside recycling program in your community. If you're not in a program, contact your county or municipality to determine your recycling options.

See our member directory to find a licensed contractor to install your heat pump, windows, or other energy conservation upgrade today!

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