

Residential Conservation Ideas

1. Make sure outside doors are closed when not in use to prevent loss of conditioned air to the outside.
2. Turn lights off when you leave a room, even for a few minutes. It has been found that it does not reduce the life of the light bulb.
3. Turn off electrical appliances when you are not using them. Many electronic devices, such as TV's, video recorders, coffee makers, and radios continue to use small amounts of electricity while in "Standby" mode for clocks and programs. While Standby operation is needed in of some of these devices, others that are not needed for automatic starting (such as coffee makers) should be unplugged when not in use.
4. For computers, it's best to set the monitor to turn off after 20 minutes. The CPU should be set to turn off after 2 hours.
5. Turn your computer screen saver to plain black. Standard screen savers cause the computer to work harder to follow and display the animation file. Plain black does not need this extra operation.
6. Unplug chargers for cell phones, toothbrushes, and other personal electronic items when they are not charging anything. Power is wasted the entire time they are plugged in.
7. Use compact fluorescent light bulbs. They use 80% less energy and last 5 times longer than conventional incandescent light bulbs. They contain trace amounts of mercury, so do not break them when you throw them away. It's best to put them in a sealed plastic bag.
8. Turn thermostats down in winter and up in summer.
9. Repair air leaks around windows and doors.
10. Fix leaky faucets and toilets.
11. Recycle plastic, glass, paper, and cardboard per instructions from your local recycler. But remember, more energy is conserved if you reuse a container than if you recycle it.
12. If you have a home irrigation system, make sure the timer is set correctly for the minimum amount of water needed. Also check the heads and lines for leaks.
13. Have regular maintenance done on home cooling and heating units.
14. Purchase products made from recycled materials.
15. Purchase locally produced products to save energy on transport and to support local businesses.
16. Double up on errands to save on driving.
17. Use solar heated water when possible.
18. Use low flow shower heads.
19. Replace old appliances with high efficiency models.

20. Start a compost or use mulch. If you like to garden, you can compost vegetable waste from your kitchen to produce gardening soil or use shredded material (mulch) as a covering to protect the soil underneath. Visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture about:

COMPOSTING - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/FEATURE/backyard/compost.html> and,

MULCHING - <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/FEATURE/backyard/mulching.html>

21. Check with your electric utility and tax consultant for utility rebates and tax credits for residential upgrades.

22. Also check with your electric utility on time-of-day metering. If you can schedule your large electrical loads (dishwashing, laundry, pool filter, etc.) for off-peak times, you'll save money.

23. When you have the choice, use natural gas rather than electricity for heaters, dryers, cooking, etc. It is more efficient and less expensive.

24. Use Evaporative coolers rather than Air Conditioners when possible.

25. Install double pane windows.

26. Upgrade home insulation in roof and outside walls.

27. Residential Conservation Websites: There are hundreds of websites with tips, forums, and blogs on how to conserve energy around the home. Just go to your favorite search engine and search for "home energy conservation".

28. Share your experiences and ideas with others who are interested in home energy conservation. Pass the information on to friends and family.