

# Easy Ways To Be More Energy Efficient At Home

Helpful tips  
on saving  
energy from  
Duquesne Light



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# Save Electricity and Connect With Cost Savings

Electricity and other types of energy are a big part of our daily lives. In fact, from the time the alarm clock rings early in the morning until we turn in late at night, we count on various sources of energy to help us cook our meals, heat and cool our homes, light our way, and keep us informed and entertained.

At Duquesne Light, we're dedicated to providing each customer with access to a secure supply of reasonably priced electricity. We're also committed to helping customers minimize their bills while getting the most out of every dollar they spend on energy.

On the following pages, we've provided a number of tips that can help you cut electricity consumption and save money. We encourage you to take a few minutes to review these tips. We're sure you'll see that cutting your energy consumption can be comfortable, convenient, and, best of all, easy.

## Lighting...

### Try These Bright Ideas to Contain Energy Costs

**When the sun goes down, these power-saving tips can cut the cost of lighting your home:**



- *Look at Lumens.* When you change a light bulb, look at how many lumens a bulb will produce. Lumens indicate the brightness of a bulb, while wattage simply tells you how much power is necessary to make the bulb work. Choose the greatest number of lumens and the lowest level of wattage.
- *Switch to Compact Fluorescents.* Change your incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescents. They provide more light while using less energy.
- *Turn Lights Off When You Leave.* If you're going to be out of a room for even a few minutes, turn off the lights. You'll save energy and lower your lighting costs.
- *Don't Over-light.* Instead of turning on all the lights in a room, use only the ones that are in the area where you'll be.
- *Try a Dimmer.* Dimmers allow you to control the amount of light you need in a room. They also help you extend bulb life and cut down on energy use. When using a compact fluorescent bulb on a dimmer

switch, you must buy a bulb that's specifically made to work with dimmers (check the package).

- *Keep Those Fixtures Clean.* Don't let dust accumulate on lighting fixtures. It blocks light and cuts down on the efficiency of the fixture.
- *Locate Lamps in Corners.* When you put a lamp in the corner of a room, it will reflect light off two wall surfaces instead of one. This gives you more light in the areas where you need it, and frequently eliminates the need for more lamps.
- *Paint Walls Light Colors.* Light-colored walls give rooms a brighter appearance. As a result, less lighting is needed to achieve a comfortable look.
- *Add a Timer or Two.* Put indoor and outdoor lighting on timers. You can set them to turn lights on when needed and off when they're not. Timers can also help give your home that "lived-in" appearance when you're not there.
- *Install Motion Detectors.* Instead of reaching for light switches in dark rooms, install a motion detector that will turn lights on whenever you walk in. Motion detectors can be easily installed in place of most switches, and can help cut energy costs by turning lights on only when they're needed. Motion detectors also are excellent for use with outdoor lighting because they turn on flood or decorative fixtures automatically, only when motion is detected near your home.
- *Switch to LED Night-lights.* LED lights typically use only 1/3 of a watt and are cool to the touch, helping to avoid burns that can result from incandescent lights.

## Water Heating...

### Cool Ways to Cut Hot-Water Costs

**Your hot water heater can be a big power user. Try these strategies to cut back on your energy consumption.**



- *Turn Down the Tank.* You can cut your power consumption by turning your hot water tank down to 120° or “low.” If you have a dishwasher, set your tank at 140°.
- *Insulate Your Pipes.* To keep the heat in your hot water, insulate the pipes leaving your hot water tank.
- *Wrap Those Old Hot Water Heaters.* A blanket of insulation keeps hot water hot by trapping heat in your tank. To be safe, remember to leave openings around electrical connections, thermostats, heating elements and drain valves. It is not necessary to wrap newer water heaters.

- *Slow the Flow.* Install flow restrictors on shower heads and faucets. Restrictors are easy to install and they use one-third to one-half the water that regular shower heads use.
- *Lose the Leaks.* If your faucets drip, get them fixed immediately. Leaking faucets can waste gallons of hot water in a short period of time.
- *Don't Let the Water Run.* If you're shaving, shampooing or brushing your teeth, turn the water on only when you need it.
- *Take Short Showers.* A short shower takes half the hot water of a tub bath.
- *Do Dishes Wisely.* Wait until your dishwasher is full before running it. You'll do more dishes with less hot water.
- *Wash Full Loads.* Instead of running multiple loads of laundry, only run your washer when you have a full load. Use the hot water setting only when absolutely necessary. And remember to rinse every load with cold water.

## Kitchen...

**Cook Up  
Some  
Serious  
Energy  
Savings**

**Whether  
you're  
making a  
sandwich  
for yourself  
or cooking  
dinner for 20, here  
are some tried and  
true ways to save  
energy in the kitchen.**



- *Use the Right Pot for the Job.* If you're only cooking a small amount of food, use a small pot. It takes more power to heat a large pot. Also, use a flat-bottomed pot that completely covers the burner. This keeps heat from escaping.
- *Put a Lid on it.* When you put a lid on a pot or pan, heat is trapped and food cooks faster. Dinner is done sooner and less energy is used.
- *Maintain an Oven-Cleaning Schedule.* A dirty oven doesn't reflect heat as well as a clean oven does. That means it takes more energy to warm and maintain your desired temperature.

- *Don't Pre-Heat.* Most recipes can be completed successfully without pre-heating the oven. If you must pre-heat for baking, turn the oven on for just a few minutes before putting in your food.
- *Microwave When Possible.* Because microwave ovens cook food 75 percent faster, they use less energy than conventional ovens.
- *Keep the Oven Door Closed.* Opening up the oven door lets out heat and drives up energy consumption. Try cooking several dishes with similar cooking temperatures in the oven at the same time.
- *Use Your Crock Pot.* If you're preparing a roast, use your slow cooker to cook the meat and any vegetables you will be serving with it. This eliminates the need to use both the oven and the stove top.
- *Keep the Refrigerator Full but Don't Overfill.* Air needs room to circulate around food. If you have an extra refrigerator that you're not using, unplug it. Also, a full freezer is a more efficient freezer.
- *Check Refrigerator Door Seals.* Close the door on a piece of paper that is half in and half out of our refrigerator. If you can remove the paper easily without opening the door, you may need to adjust the door latch or replace the seals.
- *Switch on the Power-Saver.* If your refrigerator is equipped with a power-saver feature, use it. If you have an older, inefficient refrigerator, consider replacing it. New refrigerators are much more energy-efficient.

# HOME ENERGY AUDIT

## Test Your Energy Efficiency

Electricity and other types of energy are a big part of our daily lives. Through our Watt Choices program, we're committed to helping customers make the most out of every dollar they spend on energy.

**Complete the home energy audit on the following pages to see how well your household manages energy usage.**

**Every "Yes" answer scores one point toward your household being Energy-Efficient.**

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1. Have you replaced incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs?  Yes  No  
*Compact fluorescent bulbs use 1/4 of the energy that traditional bulbs use.*
2. Do you have dimmers on your lights?  Yes  No  
*Dimmers extend bulb life and cut down on energy use.*
3. Do you turn lights off when you leave a room?  Yes  No  
*Turning off lights when you leave a room is an easy way to save energy and money.*
4. Do your doors and windows close tightly?  Yes  No  
*If you can see light around any outside door or window, heated or cooled air is escaping through the cracks.*

5. Are heating and cooling vents open and clear?  Yes  No

*Blocked vents can stop the flow of warm and cool air, and make furnaces and air conditioners work harder.*

6. Do you change or clean your furnace filters regularly?  Yes  No

*Clogged, dirty filters slow airflow and make your furnace or air conditioner work harder.*

7. Do you turn off computers or TVs when you're done using them.  Yes  No

*Leaving computers and other appliances on when you're not using them wastes energy.*

8. Do you wait until the dishwasher is completely full before you run it?  Yes  No

*Full loads can reduce how often you need to run the dishwasher.*

9. Do you use your microwave oven more often than your conventional oven?  Yes  No

*Microwave ovens cook faster and use less energy than conventional ovens.*

10. Do you have ceiling fans?  Yes  No

*Ceiling fans circulate air to make rooms feel warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.*

11. Is there insulation in your attic?  Yes  No  
*Insulation keeps your house warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. A minimum depth of 8 to 10 inches of insulation works best to optimize heating and cooling.*
12. Is your thermostat set correctly?  Yes  No  
*According to the U.S. Department of Energy, 68° is the recommended setting if the heat is on. If you have air conditioning, the recommended setting is 78°.*
13. Is your thermostat mounted near drafts, lighting fixtures or appliances?  Yes  No  
*Thermostats can malfunction if they are near heat sources or are positioned in drafty locations.*
14. Is your home landscaping energy-wise?  Yes  No  
*When planting trees, consider locations that will shade east-facing walls and windows from 7 to 11 a.m. and west-facing surfaces from 3 to 7 p.m. This will keep your home cooler by blocking the most intense summer rays of the sun.*
15. Does your refrigerator close tightly?  Yes  No  
*A bad gasket on your refrigerator lets the cold out and drives up energy use.*
16. Is your oven clean?  Yes  No  
*A dirty oven has to work harder to heat up.*

17. Do the faucets in your kitchen and bathroom shut off correctly?  Yes  No  
*Dripping faucets can waste gallons of hot water.*
18. Is your hot water heater set at 120°?  Yes  No  
*According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the recommended setting for your tank is 120°. If you have a dishwasher, set your hot water heater at 140°.*
19. Do you take short showers instead of a bath?  Yes  No  
*Short showers typically use half the water and energy of a bath.*
20. Are timers and motion detectors installed on outdoor lights?  Yes  No  
*Timers and motion detectors help cut energy costs by turning lights on only when they are needed.*

### How did you measure up?

- 15-20** Congratulations, you're an energy whiz
- 10-14** Keep up the good work, you're energy-wise
- 5-9** Good job, and keep up those energy-saving skills
- 0-4** With a little focus, your energy-saving skills will soar

## Heating...

### Cut Energy Consumption and Still Stay Comfortable

**When the cold winds begin to blow, keep your home — and your heating bills — in the comfort range by using the following strategies:**



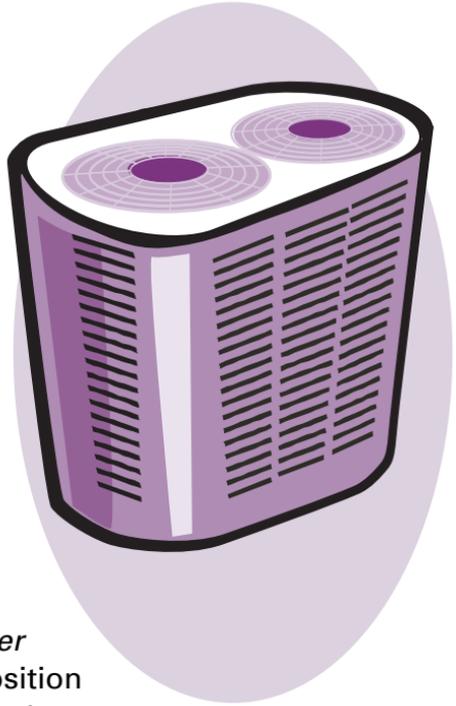
- *Turn Down Your Thermostat.* It's one of the most effective ways to cut your power consumption. Set your thermostat at 68° during the day and lower at night or when you're not at home.
- *Insulate Your Attic.* Make sure your home has a minimum of R-30 to R-38 with a depth of 8-10 inches of insulation in ceilings or attics (a contractor can help you evaluate your current insulation). By adding insulation, your home will be warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.
- *Take a Look at Your Ductwork.* Dust, lint and other debris can block air vents and reduce the efficiency of your furnace. Be sure to keep ducts and grilles clean. Also, take time to insulate ductwork that runs through unheated areas like crawl spaces or garages.
- *Draw the Drapes.* Close your draperies when it gets dark outside. This will help cut heat loss through windows at night.

- *Close the Door and Shut the Vents.* In an electrically heated home close heat registers and all doors leading to unused rooms.
- *Use Bathroom Fans Sparingly.* These fans can quickly pull a great deal of heat out of your house. Turn them off as soon as you're done with them.
- *Get a Ceiling Fan.* Heat rises to the ceiling of a room. Keep it down where you are by installing a ceiling fan.
- *Install Storm Windows and Doors.* Drafts entering your home around leaky windows and doors can steal precious heat. Seal out the drafts with storm doors and windows. Replace any missing caulking.
- *Focus on the Fireplace.* Make sure the damper in your chimney is tightly closed when you're not using the fireplace. Save even more energy by installing glass doors on your fireplace.
- *Put Your Thermostat in the Right Place.* Keep the area around your thermostat clear — drafts created by appliances or heat from lighting fixtures can force your thermostat to function improperly.
- *Consider Installing New Doors and Windows.* Old windows and doors can let an amazing amount of heat escape from your house.
- *Change Your Filters.* Clogged, dirty filters slow air flow in your heating system and cause your furnace to work harder and run longer. Consider having your furnace serviced and cleaned each season.

## Cooling...

### Save Energy Without Breaking a Sweat

**In the summer months, running your air conditioner inefficiently can really run up your electric bills. Keep your energy costs in line by trying these tactics:**



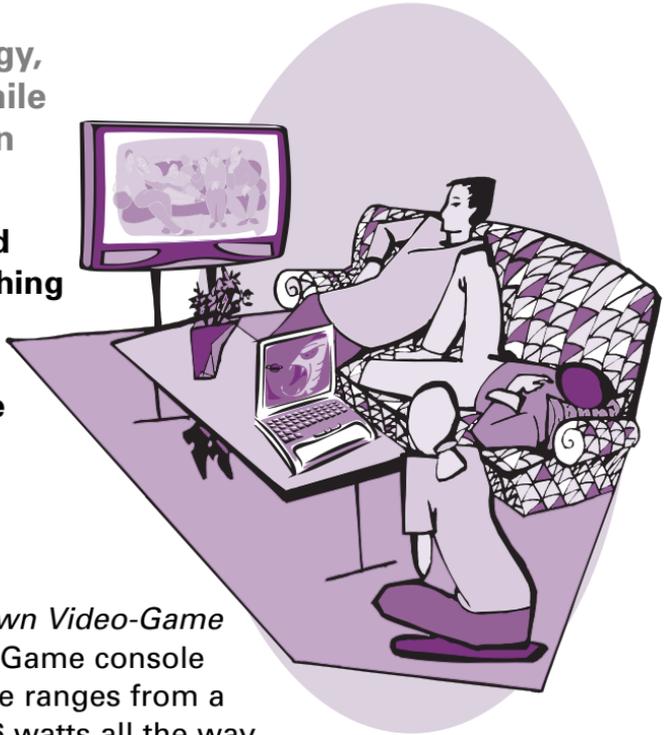
- *Put Your Air Conditioner in the Shade.* If you position your air conditioner on the north side or shady side of your home — away from the direct rays of the sun — it doesn't have to work as hard to keep your home cool.
- *Give Your Air Conditioner Room to Breathe.* Don't let shrubs block the intakes on your air conditioning unit. They reduce airflow and make your air conditioner work harder. Also, keep the area around your air conditioner free from leaves and other debris that can limit air circulation.

- *Close the Blinds.* During the day, close curtains and blinds to keep sunlight from heating up your house. At night, when it's cooler, open windows and shut your air conditioner off.
- *Think About a Fan.* On cooler days, a fan can cool your home quickly and efficiently. Fans use considerably less energy than air conditioners.
- *Turn Up That Thermostat.* Most homes are still comfortable at a temperature of 78°. Every degree you raise your thermostat can cut your energy consumption up to four percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.
- *Put in a Clean Filter.* Dirty filters in your cooling system can cut efficiency. Install new filters or clean the filters regularly on central air conditioning systems and on window units.
- *Get a Cooling System Tune-Up.* Properly functioning equipment uses less energy. Have your cooling system serviced at the beginning of each season.

## Family Room...

Save Energy,  
Money While  
Having Fun

Keep these  
tips in mind  
while watching  
television,  
playing a  
video game  
or using  
your home  
computer.



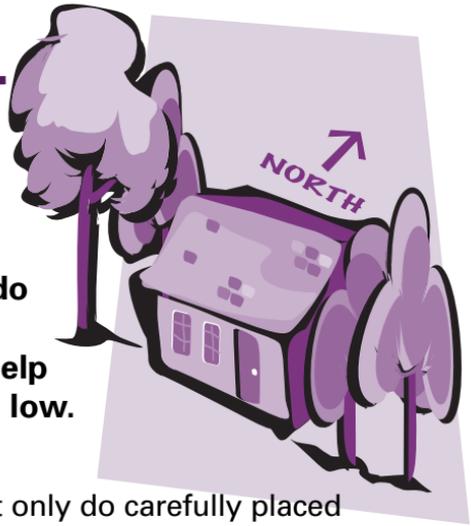
- *Power Down Video-Game Consoles.* Game console energy use ranges from a miserly 16 watts all the way up to a hefty 150 watts. Play it smart by enabling the power-management feature found on most modern consoles. Better yet, plug it into a power strip and turn off the strip when you're done playing.
- *Ditto for Computer Systems.* By enabling power-management features on your home computer and monitor, your system will automatically go into a low-power mode when you step away.

- *Shut it Down.* If you're not going to use your computer system for several hours, or even days, it's advisable to shut it down. Remember that using a power strip as a central "turn-off" point is a convenient way to ensure that your entire system is fully powered down.
- *Bigger TVs Use More Power.* A 32-inch LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) uses about half as much power as a 52-inch LCD.
- *Plasma TVs Use Even More Power.* The average plasma TV consumes 400 watts compared to 180 watts for an LCD TV.
- *Lose Phantom Power.* Modern TVs use power even when they're not turned on so that they respond to your remote in an instant. This is called phantom or standby power. Although standby power use is small, it's a good idea to use a power strip to fully power off your TV when you're away for an extended period.

## Landscaping...

### Save Power by Planting in the Right Place

**Trees and shrubs can do a lot to beautify your home. They also can help keep your electric bills low. Here's how:**



- *Plant a Shade Tree.* Not only do carefully placed trees help cut up to 25 percent of cooling costs by shading your home from the summer sun, they also let the sun's rays reach your home in the winter when they lose their leaves in the fall. The Arbor Day Foundation notes that the highest level of energy savings and the best use of shade generally comes from planting broadleaf trees about 10 feet from the walls to the west, east or northwest of the house.
- *Think Evergreen.* Protect your house from howling winter winds by planting evergreen trees and shrubs on the north and west sides of your property.
- *Think Lower.* Use turf or groundcover plants between homes and paved areas such as drives and walks. The temperature a few inches above the groundcover is frequently 12 degrees lower than paved surfaces, which may keep the exterior of your home cooler.
- *Go Native.* Plant native shrubs and grasses, which require less attention and watering other than Mother Nature herself.

## Energy Star...

Look for the  
Energy Star Label

Energy Star products  
and appliances may  
have a higher up-front  
cost, but that cost will  
be more than offset by  
energy savings over  
the life of the product  
or appliance.





Duquesne Light's Watt Choices program is designed to help customers conserve energy and reduce demand while lowering their electricity costs. Watt Choices is Duquesne Light's primary effort to meet energy-consumption and demand reductions established in statewide legislation, Act 129, and is consistent with the company's longstanding commitment to the environment.

Following are brief summaries of the major programs. For full details, go to [www.wattchoices.com](http://www.wattchoices.com).

**REBATES** Rebates on Energy Star appliances, programmable thermostats and much more, plus instant savings on compact fluorescent light bulbs at more than 160 local retailers (see [wattchoices.com](http://wattchoices.com) for a complete list).

**ONLINE HOME AUDIT** A detailed, interactive analysis of how customers can save energy and money, plus easy links to rebates.

# OUR ENERGY... YOUR POWER TO SAVE®

**REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER RECYCLING** Receive a check for \$35 and free disposal of your old refrigerator or freezer.

**SCHOOL ENERGY PLEDGE PROGRAM** Teaching students how to save energy at school and at home.

**LOW INCOME PROGRAM** Look for the “Low Income Energy Efficiency” section of our website for information on efforts to help these customers save energy and receive help paying electric bills.

## **IF YOU DON'T HAVE WEB ACCESS ....**

Call for more information on the following programs:

- Residential Rebate Program: 1-877-694-2197
- Refrigerator/Freezer Recycling Program: 1-877-270-3521
- Low-Income Program: 1-888-393-7600



[www.duquesnelight.com](http://www.duquesnelight.com)