

Vermont Energy Partnership Issues 101 Energy Saving Tips to Keep Money in Your Pocket and the Heat off Your Back

Montpelier, VT/July 25, 2007 – Today the Vermont Energy Partnership issued its annual list of 101 ways for Vermonters to conserve electricity during the hot summer days while saving money in the process.

These easy to implement summer energy saving tips come from publicly available information collected and distributed by the U.S. Department of Energy, Green Mountain Power, Central Vermont Public Service, and Efficiency Vermont. The website links below provide additional information.

The 101 tips include ideas for savings on air conditioning, home appliance usage, lighting, landscaping, cooking, and water usage. Sample tips include:

- Clean your air conditioner regularly.
- Buy light bulbs with the ENERGY STAR® label. Bulbs account for up to 5–10 percent of your total lighting costs.
- Do not place lamps or TVs near your air conditioning thermostat. The heat from these appliances will cause the air conditioner to run longer.
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not using them or install “sleep” software. This can save as much as \$100 a year in electricity costs.
- Do not use the “rinse hold” on your washing machine for just a few soiled dishes. It uses three to seven gallons of hot water each time you use it.

For additional information Vermonters can visit the following websites to learn more about energy conservation practices.

The U.S. Department of Energy

<http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/> and <http://www.energysavers.gov/>

Green Mountain Power

<http://www.greenmountainpower.biz/energy101/lights.shtml>

Central Vermont Public Service

<http://www.cvps.com/CustomerService/EnergyEfficiency.shtml>

Efficiency Vermont

<http://www.encyvermont.com/index.cfm?L1=83&L2=53&sub=Res>

Founded in January 2005, the Vermont Energy Partnership (www.vtep.org) is a diverse group of more than 70 business, labor, and community organizations and independent energy experts working to ensure that Vermont has ample and clean energy. This is important to maintaining the state's quality of life and prosperity, so Vermont stays a great place to live and work.

101 Energy Conservation Tips

Air Conditioner/Windows

1. Look for the ENERGY STAR® label. The new energy efficient air conditioner models can save you up to 50 percent on your cooling bills.
2. A window air conditioner should be installed on the north side of your home to be most effective.
3. Shade windows facing to the south and west during the day. Sunny windows can make your air conditioner work two to three times harder.
4. At night open windows and use fans to bring in cooler air.
5. Delay heat-producing tasks (dishwashing, baking, laundry) for cooler hours in the evening.
6. Install white window shades, drapes or blinds to reflect heat away from the house.
7. Open windows and use portable or ceiling fans instead of operating your air conditioner.
8. Use a fan with your window air conditioner to spread the cool air through your home.
9. Use a programmable thermostat with your air conditioner to adjust the setting to be warmer at night or when no one is home.
10. Consider replacing single-pane windows with energy-efficient ones.
11. Do not place lamps or TVs near your air conditioning thermostat. The heat from these appliances will cause the air conditioner to run longer.
12. Each degree that you raise the thermostat on your cooling system saves 2% on your electric bill. Experts recommend setting the thermostat on the air conditioner at 78° F or higher.
13. Seal gaps along the sides of your air conditioner.
14. Clean your air conditioner regularly.

Dishwasher

15. Check the manual for the manufacturer's recommendations on water temperature. Many have internal elements that allow you to set the water heater to a lower temperature.
16. Scrape, don't rinse off large food pieces and bones. Soaking and pre-washing is normally only recommended for dried or burned on food.
17. Be sure your dishwasher is full but not overloaded.
18. Do not use the "rinse hold" on your machine for just a few soiled dishes. It uses 3 to 7 gallons of hot water each time you use it.
19. Check that the hose from the dryer to the outside is not plugged or kinked and is the shortest length possible.
20. Try air drying your dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle. If you don't have an automatic air-dry switch, turn off the control knob after the final rinse and prop the door open a little so the dishes will dry faster.

Electronics

21. When buying home electronics (TV, DVD player, cordless telephone, etc...) look for ENERGY STAR® qualified products.
22. Turn off your computer and monitor when you're not using them. This can save as much as \$100 per year in electricity costs. Printers, copiers and fax machines also consume a large amount of electricity, so turn these off when not in use.
23. Plug home electronics such as TVs and DVD players into power strips and turn off the power strips when not in use. TVs and DVDs in standby mode still use several watts of power.
24. Unplug small appliances and electronics.
25. Install "sleep" software on you computer that puts your monitor to sleep after a few minutes of non-use.

Indoor/Outdoor Lighting

26. Turn off all lights in any room you're not using, or consider installing timers, photo cells, or motion sensors.
27. Utilize natural light when you can.
28. Buy bulbs with the ENERGY STAR® label. Bulbs use up 5 – 10 percent of your total lighting costs.
29. Keep light bulbs clean. Dirt absorbs as much as 50 percent of the light from the bulb.
30. Buy light colored or translucent lampshades.
31. Reduce background light levels and use task lighting to focus the light where you need it. Example: Use fluorescent under-cabinet lighting for kitchen sinks and countertops under cabinets.
32. Use light-colored, loose-weave curtains on your windows to take advantage of daylight. Decorating with light colors can reflect the daylight too.
33. Consider using 4-watt mini-fluorescent or electro-luminescent night lights, which are more efficient than incandescent lights.
34. Place outdoor lighting on automatic controls such as timers or motion sensors.
35. Reduce "ganged" lights (many lights controlled by one switch).
36. Install low accent lighting along walkways and drives.

Landscaping

37. Plant trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units, but do not block the airflow. A unit operating in the shade uses less electricity.
38. Trees whose leaves fall off in the winter, planted on the south and west sides, will keep your house cool in the summer and let the sun warm your home in the winter.
39. Just three trees properly placed around a house, can save between \$100 and \$250 annually in cooling and heating costs.

Laundry

40. Wash your clothes in cold water using cold-water detergents.
41. Eliminate warm rinse cycles to save \$25 per year with electric washers, \$10 with gas.
42. Use the suds-saver option when washing lightly soiled or delicate clothes.
43. Wash and dry full loads. If you have a small load, use the appropriate water-level setting.
44. Dry towels and heavier cottons in a separate load from lighter-weight clothes.
45. Use the moisture sensor if your machine has one, so you do not over dry your clothes.
46. Check that the hose from the dryer to the outside is not plugged or kinked and is the shortest length possible.
47. Clean the lint filter in the dryer after every load to improve air circulation.
48. Use the cool-down cycle to allow clothes to finish drying with the residual heat in the dryer.
49. Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Rigid venting is recommended by most manufacturers, not plastic vents that may collapse or cause blockages.
50. Line dry clothes whenever possible.
51. Don't over dry clothes you intend to iron. Taking clothes out while still slightly damp will reduce the need to iron, another large energy user.
52. Avoid using your dryer on hot days.

Kitchen/Cooking

53. Place the faucet lever on the kitchen sink in the cold position when using small amounts of water. Placing the lever in the hot position uses energy to heat the water even though it never reaches the faucet.
54. Place aluminum foil over foods that splatter to reduce cleanup time.
55. Use small electric pans or toaster ovens for small meals rather than your large stove or oven. A toaster uses a third to half as much energy as a full-sized oven.
56. Use a microwave oven instead of a conventional electric range or oven. It can save cooking time and reduce energy use significantly.
57. Keep your oven doors and pan lids on. Peeking in the oven causes the temperature to drop 25-50° F.
58. Make sure your oven door gasket seals properly.
59. Glass and ceramic pans heat more efficiently than metal. Lower the oven temperature by 25° F but keep the same cooking time.
60. Use an exhaust fan to blow hot air out of your kitchen while you are cooking.
61. Avoid laying foil on the racks, and stagger multiple pans allowing at least one inch of space on all sides so air can circulate freely inside the oven.
62. Keep range-top burners and reflectors clean.
63. As soon as water boils, turn down the heat to low to maintain the boil.
64. Copper and copper-bottomed pans conduct heat quickly.
65. Use a covered kettle or pan to boil water. It is faster and uses less energy.
66. Match the size of the pan with the heating element.

Kitchen/Cooking Cont.

67. If you cook with electricity turn the stovetop burners off several minutes before the allotted cooking time. The heating element will stay hot long enough to finish cooking without using more electricity. Apply the same principles to cooking in the oven.

Pools

68. Place the pool filter pump on a timer to reduce electric consumption. Running the pump when water is stirred up will yield best results.
69. Cover a heated pool with a solar cover, especially when the air temperature drops below the water temperature.

Reduce Moisture Inside/Outside the Home

70. Keep all windows and doors closed, including the basement and crawl space windows, which will stop the humidity from entering the home.
71. Keep covers on pots while cooking to reduce cooking time and moisture.
72. If moisture is entering your home through a concrete basement floor or concrete walls, consider using a vapor barrier paint to reduce the humidity.

Refrigerators/Freezers

73. Unplug unused refrigerators.
74. Don't stand with the door open. The average family opens the refrigerator door 40 to 60 times per day, which eats up \$20 of the annual electric bill.
75. Empty your refrigerator, then unplug it and leave the door slightly open if you are going away for an extended amount of time.
76. Keep frost-free freezers full. Stored ice will help to keep the freezer at the desired temperature.
77. Turn off the "moisture control" switch on all but the hottest summer days and save up to 10% on your energy costs.
78. Do not keep your refrigerator or freezer too cold. Recommended temperatures are 37° F - 40° F for the fresh food compartment and 5° F for the freezer section. Separate freezers for storage should be kept at 0° F.
79. For manual defrost freezers, regularly defrost them. Don't allow frost to buildup more than one-quarter of an inch.
80. Check the refrigerator door seals. If you close the door on a dollar bill and can easily pull it out, then the door seal is not very effective. To find a proper seal look at refrigeration parts stores.
81. Place the refrigerator out of direct sunlight and away from hot appliances. A five degree difference in air temperature can have a 20% impact on energy consumption.
82. Give your refrigerator at least two inches of breathing space on all sides, particularly around the coils and compressor.
83. Avoid putting foods directly into the freezer.

Refrigerators/Freezers Cont.

84. Make sure the refrigerator is level.
85. Thaw foods completely before cooking.
86. Label items in the freezer so that you can identify them quickly when you open the freezer door.
87. Cover liquids and wrap foods stored in the refrigerator. Uncovered foods release moisture and make the compressor work harder.
88. Move your refrigerator out from the wall and vacuum its condenser coils once a year unless you have a no-clean condenser model.

Water

89. Repair leaky faucets. A leaky faucet can waste gallons of water in a short period.
90. Insulate your electric hot-water storage tank and pipes, but do not cover the thermostat.
91. Insulate your gas or oil hot-water storage tank and pipes, but be careful not to cover the water heater's top, bottom, thermostat, or burner compartment (when in doubt seek professional help).
92. Lower the thermostat on your water heater. A setting of 115° provides comfortable hot water.
93. If you're going on vacation turn the water heater's thermostat down to the lowest possible setting when you are gone.
94. Drain a quart of water from your water tank every 3 months to remove sediment that impedes heat transfer and lowers the efficiency of your heater. Follow the manufacturer's advice on appropriate steps to take.
95. Showers use less hot water than a bath.
96. Turn off the faucet while you shave or brush your teeth.

Weatherize

97. Seal air leaks that can waste energy dollars year round.
98. Caulking and weather-stripping will keep cool air in during the summer.
99. If you see holes or separated joints in your ducts, hire a professional to repair them.
100. Check to see that your fireplace is tightly closed.
101. Check your insulation.