

Conserve Energy and Save Money

- Don't waste drinking water from the tap on irrigation.
- Upgrade to more efficient Energy Star® appliances.
- Install motion sensors and/or an automated system to monitor and control the temperature and lighting systems in your school or business. Why heat and light a room when no one is in it?
- Ask your electric cooperative about load management and other conservation programs for farms and businesses.
- Make saving energy a priority if and when you get the chance to build.
- If every American home replaced just one light bulb with an ENERGY STAR, we would save more than \$600 million in annual energy costs.
- Provide shading for your air conditioning condenser. Your central air conditioner's condenser works more efficiently in a cooler environment. Provide shade around your air conditioner to reduce your cooling costs by nearly 3 percent.
- Plant trees for shade. Deciduous trees — those that produce leaves in the spring and lose them in the fall — shade your house from the sun during warmer days and let the sun warm your house on cooler days. Shading your home could save up to 8 percent on cooling costs.
- Use ceiling fans to cool your house. The most efficient ceiling fans cost as little as 30 cents a month if used eight hours a day. A window air conditioner can cost 50 times as much as a fan. Ceiling fans will keep the air moving and allow you to keep the thermostat setting higher because moving air feels cooler.
- Turn off lights when you leave a room. Every time you turn off lights when they're not needed, you're saving energy and money. Keeping one 75-watt bulb off for one hour a day can save \$2.15 a year.
- Seal household window drafts. Older homes, in particular, can benefit during winter from covering windows with plastic film. Home improvement stores carry easy-to-install window-sealing kits. You'll block out drafts and could save more than \$40 on your energy bill in one heating season.
- Set your refrigerator at the right temperature. Your refrigerator temperature should be set between 34 and 37 degrees and your freezer at 5 degrees. Not only are these the safest temperatures for food storage, but most refrigerators are manufactured to operate most efficiently at these settings.
- Defrost food before cooking and pre-heat only for baking. Save 30 to 50 percent on cooking costs by defrosting your food before cooking. Your food will cook faster. Pre-heating is important for baking, but if you're reheating a casserole or cooking a roast, pre-heating isn't necessary.
- Choose a high-efficiency dishwasher. High-efficiency dishwashers, such as those with internal water heaters and load sensors, use 25 percent less energy than conventional models. You can save up to \$30 a year by replacing a 10 year-old dishwasher with a high-efficiency model.
- Wash clothes in the coolest water possible. About 80 percent of the cost to run your washer is used for heating the water. Except for all-white loads, there is little benefit to washing in hot water.
- Use a rain barrel to capture water for your garden and landscaping.