

DO-IT-YOURSELF ENERGY AUDIT

Preparation. Before starting an energy audit, it is helpful to review your usage history month-by-month to look for trends. Login to our website or gather old utility bills to retrieve this information. Spikes in energy consumption during specific times of the day or year can offer clues about what solutions might be best for you.



Heating and Cooling. Keeping your home at a comfortable temperature accounts for about 48% of energy consumption in a typical home. The Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78° or higher in the summer and 68° or lower in the winter. Replace filters every 60 days and have the entire system inspected bi-annually by a professional. Make sure all duct work is properly insulated and sealed, and rinse off outdoor coils before each summer cooling season.

Insulation. Heat loss from your home can be very large if insulation levels are not adequate. The thickness of insulation in your attic should be at least 9 ½ inches. Keep attics cooler and properly ventilated with ridge vents or roof turbines. Locate and plug air leaks around doors, windows, pipes, and outlets. Close fireplace dampers when not in use. Crawl spaces should also have insulation under the floor of living areas.



Lighting. Lighting accounts for about 10% of the electric bill in most homes. Use newer compact fluorescent and LED bulbs, which produce the same amount of light as traditional bulbs but at much lower wattages. Turn off lights when leaving a room. Open curtains to utilize natural light during the winter, but close curtains in the summer to reduce unwanted heat gain.

Appliances. Shopping for a new appliance? Make sure you examine the EnergyGuide label, the yellow tag you'll find attached to most appliances. It tells how much energy an appliance uses and makes it easier to compare the energy use of similar models. The more energy efficient an appliance is, the less it costs to run, and the lower your utility bills might be. Natural gas clothes dryers, stoves, and hot water heaters can be significantly cheaper to operate than their electric counterparts.

