

**This conservation message is brought to you by the West Greeley Conservation District (WGCD).
WGCD is located in Weld County and covers more than 1.6 million acres.**

**West Greeley Conservation District
4302 W. 9th St. Rd
Greeley, CO 80634
970-356-8097 x3
www.wgcd.org**

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We go about our daily lives and often don't think about everyday things we could do to save energy. It's important to make an effort to practice energy saving techniques due to rising energy costs and growing concerns about the environment and the sustainability of our resources. There are numerous ways to conserve energy in your home, but the following are just a few easy things you can do around your house to reduce your energy consumption.

Probably the most obvious and easiest method of saving energy is to turn off your lights when not in use and replace incandescent light bulbs with compact florescent lamps (CFLs). CFLs last longer, use less energy, and produce less heat for the same amount of light. However, it is important to remember that CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, therefore you shouldn't throw away spent light bulbs, but rather used bulbs should be recycled. Most places that sell CFLs will also collect the spent bulbs for recycling.

Another simple method is to simply turn off appliances, such as your television and computer, when not in use and use a switchable power strip to prevent appliances from drawing electricity even when not turned on. Keep the temperature of your refrigerator between 35-40°F and the freezer compartment at 0-5°F. When it's time to replace old appliances, be sure to purchase Energy Star rated appliances.

Purchase a cold water laundry detergent. Washing with cold water can save a substantial amount of energy as water heating accounts for approximately 90% of the energy used by washing machines. It is also a huge energy savings to wash full loads whenever possible. Again when it's time to replace your washer and dryer, purchase Energy Star rated appliances.

It is also beneficial to clean or replace your furnace filter. A dirty air filter can greatly affect a furnace's ability to provide heat and wastes energy. Disposable filters are not meant to be reused, throw them away. Your furnace filter should be cleaned or replaced every 1-3 months during the heating season. Controlling your thermostat will also save energy while saving you money. It is recommended that your thermostat be set at 68°F during the day and 60°F when you are sleeping or away from the house during the heating season. You can save approximately 1% for every degree you lower your thermostat. That being said, don't lower your thermostat to the point where your pipes are at risk of freezing.

There are countless other ways to reduce your energy costs. But the most important thing is to just be aware of the amount of energy you are using on a day to day basis. This will help you determine the effectiveness of your energy consumption.

Source: Tremblay, Jr., K.R. 2009. Easy and Inexpensive Home Energy Ideas. No. 10.619.
<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/consumer/10619.html>.