

# Checklist for Saving Energy

## Why Save Energy?

When you save energy, you save money. You also diminish the use of fossil fuels, which create air pollution, toxic spills, water contamination, and the greenhouse gases that are rapidly changing the climate.

The top uses of home energy are heating/cooling, water heating, kitchen appliances, lighting, clothes washer and dryer, and screens (TV, cable, computers). On average, a third of the energy your home uses is wasted.

Energy **conservation** is the vital first step to a clean energy future. We start by cutting down on energy waste and choosing energy-efficient alternatives. **Electrification** is the second step: we move away from gas-powered appliances and shift to electrical appliances. The last step is **opting up to clean power**. East Bay Community Energy (ebce.org) is Alameda County's local electricity supplier. When we opt up to a higher level of service, 100% of our home energy is supplied from clean, renewable sources like sun and wind.

## Free, Easy Ways to Save Energy

- Minimizing heating and cooling is the single most effective way to save energy. Put on a sweater and socks when you're cold. Open a window when you're hot.
- Turn down the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees, or 140 degrees if you use a dishwasher.
- Turn up the thermostats on your refrigerator and freezer.
- Wait until you have a full load before running the dishwasher. Skip the heated drying cycle and open the door to air-dry your dishes instead.
- Wash your clothes in cold whenever possible. Make sure it's a full load. Dry them on a clothesline or drying rack.
- When you save water, you also save energy. Take shorter showers and turn off the tap while brushing your teeth.
- "Vampire electronics" suck power even when they are turned off. These include DVRs, laptops, printers, DVD players, routers, modems, phones, gaming consoles, TVs, and microwaves. When not in use, unplug. Or, use a power strip that you turn off.
- Use a microwave to reheat food.
- Roll up a towel and push it against a door or window sill that doesn't close tightly to keep air from leaking in or out.
- Get a free Green House Call from Rising Sun's trained youth Energy Specialists. They'll give you personalized recommendations for energy savings and install equipment like lights and aerators. (510) 665-1501 x300
- Share this fact sheet with your landlord to spur conversation about upgrades that might save them money. Or share these tips with fellow tenants.

saving energy



# Checklist for Saving Energy (continued)

## Small Investments, Big Results

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs, which use 75% less electricity and last 25 times longer. Dimmer switches and timers help you use light only when you really need it.
- Caulk and weather-strip around doors and windows.
- If you have an old water heater that is warm to the touch, wrap it in an insulating blanket, which you can purchase at a hardware store.
- Buy an electric kettle or induction hot plate for all the times when you need to boil water. Fast and energy efficient!
- Purchase a programmable thermostat so you can program lower temperatures at night and other times when people are at work or away.
- Save water and energy by installing low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators, planting drought-tolerant plants in your yard, and keeping a mulch cover on the ground to prevent water from evaporating quickly.
- Change the air filter on your heating system every three months to keep it running efficiently. Clean the coils and filter on your refrigerator as well.

## Bigger Investments for More Energy Savings

- Replace old kitchen appliances with energy efficient models. A new refrigerator will make a big difference if your current model is 10+ years old. Choose models that are Energy Star rated.
- If you're still using an old CRT computer monitor or TV, replace it with an energy-efficient flat screen model. Choose Energy Star rated models.
- Replace a conventional water heater with a tankless heater – or better yet, an all-electric heat pump, which does not rely on fossil fuels.
- Install ceiling fans to use on hot days instead of turning on air conditioning.
- Seal up the air leaks in your house – around doors, pipe cut-outs, lighting cut-outs, inside

cupboards, and all the cracks and holes where cold or hot air may come in.

- Insulate your attic for a big boost in cost savings and effectiveness in keeping your home a pleasant temperature year-round. Wrap heater ducts and water pipes with insulation, too.
- Replace leaky windows with energy-efficient models. It is expensive up front, but the energy savings repay your investment in the long run.
- Replace your gas range with an induction range, an energy efficient alternative with the responsiveness of a gas range. Affordable, safe, easy to clean, and great for cooking.
- Install a greywater and/or a rainwater catchment system to dramatically lower the amount of water used for your landscaping. See the Ecology Center's greywater fact sheet more information.

## Resources

### EnergyStar Website

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

Provides energy efficiency ratings for appliances by model, and vendor listings to help you locate a local store. Very helpful when comparing appliances.

### PG&E's Website

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

PG&E's website contains a section called "Save Energy and Money," which contains useful info on rebate programs and tips on energy-saving solutions.

### Low-Income Weatherization Program


[csd.ca.gov/liwp.aspx](http://csd.ca.gov/liwp.aspx)

California's Low-Income Weatherization Program (LIWP) provides low-income households with rooftop solar systems and energy efficiency upgrades at no cost to residents.

### Pacific Energy Center

[www.pge.com/pec](http://www.pge.com/pec) or (415) 973-2277

Provides builders and individuals with classes and advanced information on energy-efficient building design, lighting, HVAC, and more.

 Printed on 55% recycled content, 30% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine-free paper by  greenerprinter.com