

Make Your Neighbors Green With Envy When They See Your Utility Bill



Kermit was wrong — being “green” is easy! And while going “green” might not sound inviting to you, the money you could save probably does. You wouldn’t just be saving the world, you’d be saving money!

Making simple changes in what you do or purchase for your home can lead to big savings down the road. From a refrigerator that will pay for itself or an incentive for planting a tree, you may be surprised at the outcome. But even the smallest changes can come with big savings! Adjusting your ceiling fan to the season or merely refraining from baking at the heat of a summer day will make your home more comfortable.

Peace of mind is waiting for you. Learn how to stop your home from losing energy at the right, or check on the back for tips on more ways to save.



If you replaced your refrigerator from 1999 with an energy-efficient model, it could save you \$50 dollars a year. If you had it for ten years, well within the life span of a fridge, it could save you \$500, and possibly pay for itself!



Remember, what you do matters. While energy-efficient appliances can save you money, the steps you take to save energy have even a greater impact. The more conscious you are of your energy conservation, the more conscious you’ll be of the money you save.



A slow dripping faucet sends about 170 gallons of water down the drain annually.



50% of HDTV and game console users leave them on all the time. The energy lost could light the city of San Diego for a year. But if you turned yours off, you’d use a tenth as much energy as those who left them on.

Home Energy Audits

Heating and cooling costs can account for a large part of your monthly housing budget. Making some energy improvements can save you money and help you to be more comfortable in your home. The first step is an energy audit, which can be done by yourself or a professional. Whichever method you chose, a home energy audit should look at:

Air Leaks: Look at windows, doors, crack in walls or foundation, and outlets.

Insulation: Make sure there is proper insulation. The three major places to scout and fix are: 1. The Attic, 2. Rim joists, 3. Walls.

Heating/Cooling Appliances: Check that it is working as efficiently as possible. Replace old units with energy efficient models, which may be more expensive but will pay for themselves in time.

Lighting: Replace high-wattage bulbs with lower wattage or use fluorescent lighting (CFL bulbs) in areas where lights are on for hours at a time.

Environmental Concerns to be on the look-out for:

Lead: *In Water:* EPA estimates that drinking water accounts for 10 to 20 percent of human exposure to lead. Infants may be put at increased risk from lead in drinking water when contaminated tap water is used to make baby formula.

In Paint: Most children with elevated lead levels are poisoned in their own homes by peeling lead-based paint and the lead dust it generates. Most commonly, children are poisoned by lead dust from deteriorated paint in poorly maintained older housing (1978 and older). Others are caused by repainting and remodeling projects that disrupt old painted surfaces without proper safeguards.

Ventilation: High indoor humidity can spur mold growth. High humidity may result from poor construction or rehabilitation, site design that does not properly manage water, and/or inadequate air exchange. A reasonable target for relative humidity is 30-60 percent. Incomplete combustion and poor ventilation of some appliances can contribute to indoor contaminants and need to be properly ventilated.

For more information about these and other hazards, visit the National Center for Healthy Housing website at: <http://www.nchh.org/Home.aspx>

Tips and Tricks to Save You Money:

- Turn out lights when you leave a room.
- Do not let the water run when you wash dishes, brush your teeth, or do other chores.
- Install low-flow shower heads and faucets.
- Do not leave doors and windows open when the heat or A/C are running.
- Close the refrigerator door completely.
- Close your blinds during the day in summer and night in winter. Also horizontal slats can be angled inside up in summer to block the direct rays and angled inside edge down in winter to allow the heat and light in.
- Clean and adjust ceiling fans seasonally. In the summer, use the ceiling fan in the counterclockwise direction. In the winter, reverse the motor and operate the ceiling fan at low speed in the clockwise direction.
- Do not use major appliances or bake during the heat of the day when you are trying to keep the house cool.
- Do not keep the thermostat too high in the winter or low in the summer. Energy experts recommend 78 degrees in summer and 68 in winter.
- Clean or replace filters every three months. Have your heat pump or furnace serviced once a year.
- Install caulking or weather-stripping around windows and doors. This will reduce energy loss and moisture damage.
- Install storm windows and storm doors with screens for spring and summer use.
- Put a special insulated "blanket" around your water heater and set the temperature at 120 degrees.
- Cover central air conditioners or remove window air conditioners during cold months to prevent heat loss.
- If you need to buy new appliances, get the most energy efficient ones you can afford.
- Add attic insulation. Installing insulation to attic floors, ceilings, and walls can help prevent energy loss.
- Monitor your heating and cooling systems. Keep vents free of dust, dirt, and other blockages. If you have rooms that are not used often, keep the registers and doors closed.

Local Utility Services

City Utilities of Richland Center

450 S. Main St. (City Hall Building)
Richland Center WI 53581
608-647-3844
www.cityutilitiesofrc.com

- Check out the Home Energy Calculator on the website!
- Partners with Focus On EnergySM, offering programs such as cash-back rewards and free energy-saving products and installation

Xcel

Call 800-895-4999 for information on residential services and updated energy programs in WI

<http://www.xcelenergy.com/>

- Various incentives and cash-back programs
- Several helpful links and rate options

Ferrellgas

1211 Hwy 14 E
Richland Center, WI 53581
888-437-6642

<http://www.ferrellgas.com/Index.htm>

Richland Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 439
1027 N. Jefferson
Richland Center, WI 53581
(608) 647-3173 or
(608) 647-4265

<http://www.rec.coop/index.html>

- Offers the EvergreenSM Renewable Energy Program
- A member of Touchstone Energy Cooperative, with home energy tips and the Touchstone Energy[®] Home Program (just follow the homeowner links)

Alliant Energy

4902 N. Biltmore Lane, Suite 1000
Madison, WI 53718-2148
1-800-255-4268

<http://www.alliantenergy.com/index.htm>

- Offers tips, home energy assessments, and Focus on EnergySM savings
- Also offers options like Second Nature (a renewable energy program) and Customer-Owned Generation (to sell power back)

Neighborhood Housing Services of Richland County

125 E. Seminary St.
Tel: 608-647-4949
Fax: 608-647-8293
www.nhsrcwi.org



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Focus on Energy: www.focusonenergy.com

- * Incentives and Rebates for energy improvements
- * List of participating utility companies and approved products
- * List of Energy Audit Providers

Southwest CAP Weatherization: www.swcap.org

- * To be eligible, you must first apply for energy assistance through Health and Human Services (608-647-6611 for Richland County)

US Department of Energy: www.energy.gov

- * Information on Home Energy Audits, ways to save energy

** You can recycle used CFL and fluorescent bulbs at Walsh's Ace Hardware **