

# Home Energy **SAVINGS GUIDE**



Easy Tips to Help You  
Save Energy  
&  
**Save Money**

**SHAKOPEE PUBLIC UTILITIES**  
“Lighting the Way – Yesterday, Today and Beyond”

# What's Your Home Efficiency Score?



Discover your home efficiency score and learn steps you can take to reduce energy consumption and save money.

- 1 The energy used in your home can be responsible for how much more pollution than your car?
  - a. Twice as much
  - b. Only half as much
  - c. My house causes pollution?
  
- 2 Rate the comfort of your home
  - a. My home is comfortable with no drafts
  - b. Minor drafts – mostly around doors
  - c. Major drafts around windows, drafty rooms and/or cold floors; moisture on windows
  
- 3 Rate your heating system:
  - a. High-efficiency system less than 5-years-old
  - b. 5 to 10 years old
  - c. 10+ years old
  
- 4 What type of thermostat do you have?
  - a. Programmable. I use it with the proper settings to automatically adjust my home's temperature setting when I'm asleep or not at home
  - b. Programmable, but I override the settings when I get home, or wake up to change my home's temperature quickly
  - c. Manual thermostat. When I remember, I set it back before I leave the house for a long period of time

- 5 What is the most important thing you can do yourself to maintain your heating and cooling equipment?
- a. Replace or clean air filters and vents
  - b. Make sure heating vents, baseboard heaters and radiators are not blocked by furniture.
  - c. Turn the thermostat way up to heat my home quickly in the winter; lower the thermostat drastically to cool off quickly in the summer
- 6 Heating and cooling systems should be checked by a licensed contractor:
- a. Seasonally
  - b. Annually
  - c. When equipment is inefficient or no longer works properly
- 7 What is the temperature setting on your hot water heater?
- a. 120 degrees
  - b. 140 degrees
  - c. 160 degrees
- 8 When is the best time to use a ceiling fan?
- a. Both summer and winter
  - b. In summer
  - c. In winter, when warm air needs to circulate the house
- 9 Do you use compact fluorescent light bulbs in your home? If so, how many?
- a. 5 or more
  - b. 1 to 5
  - c. I thought fluorescent lights were only for office buildings
- 10 What initial steps should you take to help reduce energy costs?
- a. Locate and seal drafts around doors, windows, and baseboards with weatherstripping or caulk
  - b. Add insulation to the attic and basement, such as open wall tops and ducts
  - c. Turn off heating and air conditioning system when away from home

**Totals** a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_

# YOU HAVE THE POWER to Control Energy Costs

1. Assess how your family uses energy in your home.

The first step in reducing your SPU energy bill is to review your previous year's bills. The chart below indicates how energy is used in a typical American household. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the average U.S. household spends \$1900 each year for home energy:

- \$1045 for heating and cooling
- \$494 for appliances and other electronic devices
- \$209 for lighting
- \$152 for refrigeration



By making energy-efficient choices and taking simple steps to trim unnecessary energy usage, you could save up to 30% on home energy costs.

## In the Kitchen

Refrigerators and freezers use more electricity than any other single household appliance —consuming about one-sixth of electricity used in a typical U.S. home

2. Set the refrigerator temperature to 35°-38° F. Set the freezer temperature to 0° F.
3. If your refrigerator has a power-saver mode, switch it to "ON."
4. Check the refrigerator and freezer door seals to make sure they're air tight.

**HINT** . . . . .

To test your refrigerator and freezer door seals, close the door on a dollar bill, and try to pull it out. If the dollar slides out easily, you're wasting energy and money.

5. Clean refrigerator coils annually. Brushing or vacuuming the coils can improve your refrigerator's efficiency by as much as 30%.
6. Make sure air can circulate around the refrigerator's condenser coils. Leave a space between the wall or cabinets
7. When boiling water on the stove, use a covered pot or pan.
8. Match the size of the pot or pan to the heating element on your stove.
9. Allow hot foods to cool before placing them in the refrigerator or freezer.
10. Whenever possible use your microwave or toaster oven for small meals. A toaster oven uses one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven.
11. Refrigerator and freezers are more energy-efficient when they are full, but not so full that air can't circulate. If your refrigerator is nearly empty, store water-filled containers inside.
12. If you have an old, inefficient, energy-hogging refrigerator in your garage, get rid of it. Please dispose of it properly. (SPU offers rebates when you recycle that old refrigerator.)
13. Only run your dishwasher when it's full.
14. Instead of using the dishwasher's drying cycle, allow the dishes to air dry.

## Lighting

With the flip of a switch—a light switch—you can take control of your lighting expenses.

15. Turn off any unnecessary lighting.
16. For outdoor security lighting, install a photocell and/or a motion sensor.



17. For landscape lighting, use solar-powered (photovoltaic) lights.
18. Replace any light bulb that burns more than one hour each day with energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).



CFLs should be disposed of properly with other household hazardous waste products. Recycle CFLs at the following locations:

**Scott County HHW Facility**

588 Country Trail East • Jordan, MN 55352  
952.496.8652 • [www.co.scott.mn.us](http://www.co.scott.mn.us)  
(Scott County residents only - call for hours)

**Arrow Ace Hardware**

485 Marschall Road • Shakopee, MN 55379

**HINT.** . . . . .  
• Take advantage of SPU's CFL rebate program. •  
. . . . .

## Heating & Air Conditioning

Typically, 43% of your utility bill is for heating and cooling your home.

19. Install a programmable thermostat. Set back the temperature 10° - 15° for eight hours every night during the winter months, and you'll lower your heating bills by 5% - 15% each year.

20. If you have a standard thermostat, you can still save money. In the winter months, set the thermostat at 68° while you're awake, and turn it down while you sleep or while you're away from home. During the summer months, set the thermostat to 78°, but only when you are at home and need cooling.
21. Change furnace filters monthly — even in the summer — making sure the new filter is installed correctly. (Look for the arrow on the side of the filter.)
22. Regularly clean your air filters, supply vents and return air registers.
23. Do not close supply air registers.
24. Make sure your heating/cooling registers and return air registers are not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapery,
25. Insulate the access door to your attic. Also, ensure the attic access door closes tightly.
26. Check the insulation in your attic; ensure it does not block soffit vents.
27. Seal air leaks. Warm air leaking into your home in the summer and out of your home during the winter can waste energy dollars.
  - Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows that leak air.
  - Caulk and seal where plumbing, ductwork or electrical wiring penetrates through walls and ceilings.



28. Insulate electric outlets and wall switches with foam pads — especially those on the exterior walls of your home.
29. Make sure your entry doors, including storm doors, close with a tight seal.
30. During summer months, keep draperies and shades closed during the day to prevent solar heat gain.
31. During winter months, keep your draperies and shades on the south-facing windows open during the day to allow sunlight to enter your home. Close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.



32. Run ceiling fans to help circulate air. Run the ceiling fan on medium, blowing down in the summer, and run it on low, pulling air up in the winter.
33. When the fireplace is not in use, keep the flue damper tightly closed.
34. Keep your garage door closed. A warmer garage in the winter and cooler garage in the summer saves energy.
35. Always run your central air conditioner system fan on auto. If you have a forced air system, do not close off unused rooms.
36. If you'll be away for four hours or more, turn your air conditioner off. It costs more to maintain your home's temperature than to re-cool it.



37. Plant trees for energy conservation. Avoid planting trees on the south side of your home. In summer, when the sun is high, the shadow of a tree falls directly under the tree, entirely missing the home to its north.

## Water Heating

Water heating is the third largest energy expense in your home — typically accounting for about 12% of your utility bill.

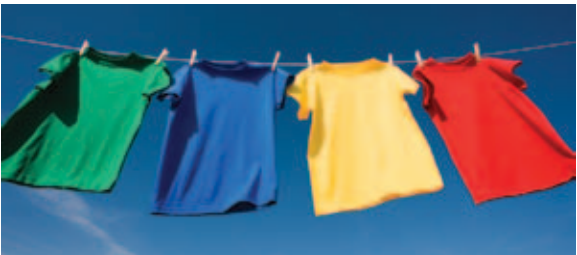


38. Lower your water heater temperature to 120° F. If your household has one to two members, setting the water heater at 115° F may work. For each 10° F reduction in water temperature, you can save between 3%- 5% in energy costs.
39. Insulate all accessible hot water pipes, especially those within three feet of the water heater.
40. Unless your water heater's storage tank already has a high R-value of insulation (at least R-24), you could save 4%-9% in water heating costs by installing a water heater insulation wrap.
41. Install low-flow showerheads, especially if your fixtures were installed before 1992, or if it takes less than 20 seconds to reach a one-gallon mark on a bucket placed under the showerhead while it is running at the pressure you normally use.
42. Replace faucet aerators — the screw-on tip of the faucet — with aerators that restrict flow rates. In the kitchen, install an aerator that restricts flow to 2.2 gallons per minute (gpm).
43. Fix dripping faucets and showerheads. One drip per second could be costing you up to \$1 each month.

## Laundry

Approximately 90% of the energy used for washing clothes in a conventional top-loading washing machine is for heating the water.

44. Only wash and dry full loads of laundry. If you must wash smaller loads, use the appropriate water level setting.
45. Wash clothes in cold water, using cold-water detergents whenever possible. Always use cold water for the rinse cycle.
46. Clean your dryer's lint trap before each load.
47. Don't overdry your clothes. If your dryer has a moisture sensor, use it.
48. Use the "cool down" cycle to allow clothes to finish drying using the residual heat in the dryer.
49. Inspect your dryer vent; make sure it isn't blocked. Also make sure the dryer vent is securely connected to the inside wall fitting.
50. Consider air-drying clothes on clothes lines or drying racks.



## Home Electronics

Slay energy vampires. Each year, Americans spend more money to power home audio and DVD products when turned off than when actually in use.

51. Plug electronics, such as VCRs, DVD players, computers and monitors, into a power strip. Use the switch on the power strip to cut all power to the item when it's not in use.

52. Use your computer's power-saving sleep mode. It not only saves energy but helps equipment run cooler and last longer.
53. Turn off your computer monitor when not in use.
54. Turn off your radios and TVs when they're not in use.



55. Turn off your coffee maker when it's not in use.
56. Unplug battery chargers when the battery is fully charged, or when the charger is not in use.
57. Turn off and unplug curling irons and hot rollers when not in use.

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## What's Your Home Efficiency Score?

### How Did You Do?

#### Mostly "a"s. You are ENERGY SAVVY

Great job! You're taking steps to save energy and maintain lower utility bills.

#### Mostly "a"s and "b"s. You are ON THE RIGHT TRACK

You know some ways to help your home be more energy-efficient, but you may be unsure of other steps to take.

#### If you scored mostly "c"s, HELP IS HERE

You have probably noticed some real energy "drains" on your home but don't know how easy it can be to improve your home's overall energy performance and save money on utility bills. This guide will get you started... even small steps can make a big difference in energy savings and comfort.

Source: EPA ENERGY STAR® Program

To learn more energy saving ideas, visit the following websites, where you'll learn easy ways to save energy and money.



- [shakoeeutilities.com](http://shakoeeutilities.com)
- [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)
- [eere.energy.gov](http://eere.energy.gov)
- [energysavers.gov](http://energysavers.gov)
- [energy.mn.gov](http://energy.mn.gov)
- [ase.org](http://ase.org)
- [aceee.org](http://aceee.org)



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