

Average home energy usage



Heating and Cooling 44%
Water Heating 17%
Refrigerator 10%
Lighting, Cooking, etc 29%

Increase Your Home's Energy Efficiency

Conduct an Energy Audit

- Check the level of insulation in your exterior walls, ceilings, attic, floors, and crawl spaces.
- Check for holes or cracks around your walls, ceilings, windows, doors, light and plumbing fixtures, switches, and electrical outlets that can leak air into or out of your home.
- Check for open fireplace dampers.
- Make sure your appliances and heating and cooling systems are properly maintained.
- Look for ways to use daylight, reduce the time the lights are on, and replace incandescent bulbs and fixtures with compact fluorescent lamps (CFL's) or standard fluorescent lamps.

No- or Low-Cost Ways to Save Energy

- Air dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Use your microwave instead of a electric range or oven.
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use.
- Plug home electronics, such as TVs and VCRs, into power strips and turn power strips off when equipment is not in use.
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater; 115 is comfortable for most uses.
- Take showers instead of baths to reduce hot water use.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.

Energy-Efficient Windows

Windows can be one of your home's most attractive features. They also provide several functions for your home: daylighting, solar heating, and ventilation. They serve as part of the building envelope, which provides a barrier between your house and the outdoors. Unfortunately, the energy lost through windows can account for as much as 10% to 25% of your heating bill.

Landscaping

Are you looking for cost-effective yet eye-pleasing ways to lower your energy bills? Planting trees, shrubs, vines, grasses, and hedges could be the answer. In fact, landscaping may be your best long-term investment for reducing heating and cooling costs, while also bringing other improvements to your community.

A well-designed landscape will:

- Cut your summer and winter energy costs dramatically
- Protect your home from winter wind and summer sun
- Reduce consumption of water, pesticides, and fuel for landscaping and lawn maintenance
- Help control noise and air pollution.

Landscaping is a natural and beautiful way to shade your home and block the sun. A well-placed tree, bush, or vine can deliver effective shade and add to the aesthetic value of your property. When designing your landscaping, use plants native to your area that can survive with minimal care.