



ENERGY CONSERVATION AT HOME: TIPS FROM THE CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER

Right now California is experiencing energy shortages, and energy costs are going up. We sometimes take energy for granted, but our decisions about how we use it at home are important. Energy costs money, and generating it can pollute.

You and your family can help the energy shortage situation, help protect the environment, and save money on utility bills! Here are some places to start:

Turn off your lights. Turn off lights when you're not in the room. Consider trading incandescent light bulbs for compact fluorescent (CF) bulbs. CFs provide attractive light, use 75% less energy and last 10 times longer!

Hit the switch. If you see something electrical that's not being used, turn it off. This might seem obvious, but it can really add up.

Use your dishwasher and washer/dryer wisely. Only wash full loads. Let dishes air dry. Avoid washing during peak hours (noon to 6 weekdays).

Dust your refrigerator. Vacuum the dust off the refrigerator coils (found in the back or underneath the unit) every 3 months—it takes less energy to cool that way. Turn on the energy saver switch if you have one. Check the gaskets around the door and make sure it shuts tight.

Monitor your home's temperature. During winter, keep your thermostat no higher than 68°F during the day, and 55°F at night. During summer, set the thermostat no lower than 75°F. Move shades and curtains to help heat or cool the house. Seal window and door leaks with caulk and weather-stripping.

Keep your water heater cozy. Wrap your water heater in an insulating blanket to improve efficiency. Turn its thermostat down to 120°F (140°F if you have a dishwasher without a booster heater). This saves energy and helps prevent hot water burns.

Consider these investments for long-term savings and efficiency:

- Replace old appliances with energy-efficient ones. Refrigerators built since 1993 are 40% more energy-efficient than models built 10 years prior! Look for models with the Energy Star label, and keep an eye out for rebates sponsored by your utility company or the Electric and Gas Industries Association (EGIA).
- Plant shade trees near your house to keep cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
- Add insulation to your attic and walls.
- Consider installing window coatings or double-paned windows.
- Contact your utility company for more information on home energy efficiency.

Kids: Here's what you can do at home and school...

Choose a class energy monitor who will make sure energy is being properly used. You can pick a new monitor each week! The energy monitor will turn off lights when no one is in the room—such as during recess and after class.

Make "Turn It Off" signs for the light switches at school and at home.

Be a detective—help your parents find leaks and drafts in windows and doors by making a map of your house. Label all the doors, windows and vents. Then take a ribbon and hold it next to the edges of doors and windows. If it flutters, you've found a leak! Give your map to your parents and have them seal any leaks.

The following websites have additional information on home energy savings:

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power: www.ladwp.com

Southern California Edison: www.sce.com

Pacific Gas and Electric: www.pge.com

Power Scorecard: www.powerscorecard.org

HomeEnergySaver: www.HomeEnergySaver.lbl.gov

Alliance to Save Energy: www.ase.org