

## 31.4 Some Ways to Conserve Energy

The following list is by no means complete. The percentages in parentheses after the suggestions are approximate potential energy (and therefore money) savings for that use.

### All Appliances and Other Energy Users

- Carefully consider whether you really need the appliance.
- When purchasing appliances, select the most energy-efficient model. (5–25%)
- Keep all appliances in good working order and make them last as long as possible.
- Be concerned about saving energy elsewhere. Recycle, reduce consumption, and look for other ways to save energy.
- Even when on "sleep" mode, appliances, such as computers, TVs, DVD players, use some energy. Turn them off *completely* when not in use.

### Lighting

- Turn off lights whenever they are not in use. Open curtains and blinds if it is not too cold.
- Switch to fluorescent lights whenever possible. (30–38%)
- Use dimmer switches and/or timers. (7–10%)
- When you purchase bulbs, buy ones with the needed amount of lumens, not watts.

### Refrigeration

- Operate the refrigerator at normal settings.
- Keep the condenser coils clean of dust.
- Check the door gasket for a tight seal.
- Decide what you want before opening the refrigerator door. Open the door as infrequently as possible.

### Television, DVD Player, Electronic Games, and Computer Use

- Turn them off when they aren't being used.
- Cut back on use. There are thousands of other things to do. (How many can you name?)

### Cooking and Dish Cleaning

- Except when baking, don't preheat ovens. Turn the oven off before the dish is completely cooked.
- Use a microwave or toaster oven when possible.
- Cook complete meals of several dishes at once. Make enough for leftovers.
- When food needs to be thawed prior to cooking, let it thaw on the counter or in the refrigerator, rather than heating it.
- Cook on range top burners when possible, rather than in the oven.
- Use the air-dry setting on the dishwasher, rather than using heat to dry dishes.
- Wash dishes by hand, using plastic pans for soap and rinse water.

### Audio Systems

- Turn them off when they are not in use.
- Find some other entertainment.
- Take good care of them so that they last longer.

### Water Heating

- Wrap your water heater in a water heater blanket. (6–10%)
- Set the water heater thermostat to 120°F or 140°F if you have a dishwasher. (7–11%)
- Insulate water-heater pipes.
- Install low-flow shower heads and flow restrictors or aerators on faucets. (5–10%)
- Take short showers or baths with less water.
- Don't let the hot water run while shaving or rinsing dishes.
- Operate dishwashers and clothes washers only with full loads.
- Use a solar pool cover or thermal blanket.
- Investigate a solar hot-water system.

### Space (Air) Heating and Air Conditioning

- Insulate. (25% of heating costs)
- Rather than turning heaters and air conditioners on, adjust your clothing appropriately.
- Adjust the thermostat. (Lower the heater and raise the air-conditioner thermostats.) (5–20%)

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- Weather-strip doors and windows and caulk other air leaks around pipes and other openings.
- Install storm or thermal windows.
- Turn off thermostats or close vents in unused rooms. (up to 10%)
- Install clock thermostats or set back thermostats.
- Keep the furnace and filter in good repair. (up to 5%)
- Use passive solar energy on sunny days and close curtains on cold days. (8–10%)
- Open windows and doors and use fans for circulating air.
- Turn the gas furnace pilot light off in the warm seasons. (3–9%)
- Avoid using major appliances between noon and 6 PM.
- Provide shading for air-conditioning condenser. (5–11%)
- Install thermal curtains.

#### Clothes Washing and Drying

- Operate clothes washers and dryers only with full loads.
- Use a clothesline instead of a dryer.
- Use cold or cool water washes and rinses when possible.
- Be sure the lint filter is clean.

#### Grooming

- Don't leave hot or cold water running while brushing teeth or shaving.
- Wear a hair style that doesn't require blow drying or hair sprays.
- Don't use electric toothbrushes or other unnecessary appliances.

#### Transportation

- Walk, ride a bike, carpool, take public transportation. Do whatever you can to reduce the use of the private car with only one person in it.
- Avoid unnecessary trips. Plan your trips so that you do several errands on one trip.
- Keep your car tuned properly.
- Keep your tires properly inflated.
- Don't carry unnecessary weight in the trunk.
- Make good mileage a high priority when purchasing a car.