

Tips and Trends



Simple ways to save energy

Reducing energy usage is a good way to help the environment and save money along the way. Saving energy can be done in a variety of ways, many of which do not require significant effort can lead to significant savings.

* Stop using the dishwasher to dry the dishes. A dishwasher is a modern convenience few people feel they can live without. While you don't need to give up the dishwasher entirely to save money, it's important to note that many dishwashers use more energy to dry the dishes than to wash them. If your dishwasher does not automatically dry the dishes, turn the knob to the off position once the dishes have been cleaned and open the door to allow the dishes to air dry.

* Go with a more traditional refrigerator-freezer combination. Side-by-side refrigerator and freezer may be combinations may be more fashionable, but such units can use as much as 20 percent more energy than their traditional counterparts. If you must purchase a side-by-side unit, be sure to buy only those with an Energy Star label.

* Do laundry less frequently. Whether you live in an apartment or a home, having an in-unit washer and dryer is a great convenience. But frequently doing small loads can be wasteful, as it takes roughly the same amount of energy to clean a small load of laundry as it does a full load. Limit yourself to only full loads of laundry as much as possible.

* Do your drying all at once. When using the dryer, try to dry one batch of clothes right after another. Many dryers require a significant amount of energy to heat up, but drying consecutive loads won't require as much energy to get the dryer up to operating temperature as the dryer will need if you allow a significant amount of time to pass between loads.

* Don't go to extreme temperatures. Arriving home to a house that's especially cold or warm inspires many people to turn their thermostats way up or down in an effort to heat or a cool the home more quickly. This forces the unit to work harder and use more energy. Instead of taking such an extreme approach, invest in a heating or cooling system that allows you to set the temperature in advance so the temperature inside your home is pleasant when you walk through the door.

Protect Skin From the Worst Weather Has To Offer

Regardless of what season it is, skin seems to bear the brunt of weather's wrath. Whether it's the sun beating down in the dog days of summer or the wind whipping around and causing skin to crack when the weather starts to turn cold, skin is never fully safe from the elements. Each season poses its own unique challenges to skin, and this year figures to be no different. With winter upon us, it's important for men and women to practice proper skin care in an effort to protect themselves from dry skin, which can be irritating and unsightly. Though an extra layer of clothing might hide dry, flakey skin from view, it won't do much to relieve the irritation and damage that result from severely dry skin. This winter, consider the following tips to help the skin survive the woes of winter.

* Take quick, temperate showers. It might feel good to get in from the cold and take a hot bath or shower, but this actually breaks down lipid barriers in the skin, potentially robbing the skin of moisture. In lieu of a long, steamy bath or shower, take a quick shower in warm water.

* Moisturize every day. Look for creams that contain water and glycerin that will help to draw moisture into the skin and stimulate the body's natural repair process.

Moisturizers that are non-greasy, non-oil based and fragrance free tend to work the best to repair dry skin. Oil-based creams will actually repel water that would otherwise hydrate the skin causing further damage.

Men and women should also make moisturizing a part of their nightly routine before going to bed. Skin temperatures rise during sleep, resulting in increased circulation and healing, so be sure to moisturize each night before going to bed.

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