

Everyday Energy Saving Tips

Reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions is good for your household budget and good for the environment. There are many practical ideas that are easy to implement, are low cost or, in many cases, no cost (just little changes in the way we do things) and have an immediate impact on your wallet and the environment. These include:



1. Switching to energy efficient compact fluorescent lights

Lighting accounts for around 5% of household greenhouse gas emissions, and compact fluorescent light bulbs use 75% less energy than an equivalent incandescent bulb. Although the bulbs cost more up-front, you will actually save money through the energy saved and extended life of the bulb

2. Switching off appliances that are on standby and turning off anything that doesn't need to be on

Appliances on standby consume up to 10% of your electricity bill. Turn them off at the wall when not in use.

3. Diverting garden and food wastes from landfill to composting

Food and garden wastes create greenhouse gases when they break down in landfill due to the lack of fresh air when decomposing. Composting is a great way to reduce your household's greenhouse gas emissions as it allows organic waste to break down naturally. For every kilogram of organic waste you compost, you will save approximately one kilogram of greenhouse gas (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).



4. Insulate ceilings, walls and floors

An uninsulated home can lose up to 35% of heat from the ceiling, up to 25% through walls and up to 20% through floors (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007). By insulating your home you will greatly reduce the emissions associated with heating and cooling your home, whilst at the same time saving money and improving comfort year round. For more information on how to receive a rebate for ceiling insulation visit: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/rebates/ccfcir.htm>

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5. Cool your home efficiently

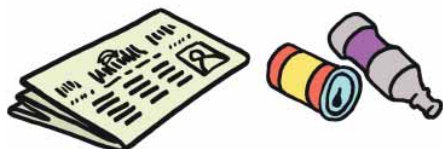
When sunlight enters a room it delivers an enormous amount of heat. It's like having a two bar radiator hanging on the wall. An external blind, pergola or deciduous vine can be used to keep out the sun in summer. Well-designed eaves shade summer sun while allowing winter sun in. It is important to externally shade east and west windows in summer.



6. Cutting hot water usage by installing a 3 star rated showerhead, taking shorter showers.

An average house using electricity for water heating generates about 4 tonnes of greenhouse gas each year (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007). By having shorter showers you will not only reduce the amount of greenhouse gas associated with water heating in your home, you will be saving water as well!

7. Minimising waste of packaging and materials - refuse, reduce, re-use, recycle



- Refuse excess materials and packaging
- Reduce the amount of materials you use by buying in bulk
- Re-use as much as you can before sending items to landfill
- Recycle as much as you can

8. Choose appropriate cooking methods

Gas is generally cheaper and less damaging to the environment than electricity. If you use electricity to cook, use the microwave where practical (some models come with a browning element) and use an electric kettle instead of the stovetop. Fill the kettle with the minimum amount of water needed. Any more just wastes energy.

9. Keep the fridge clean and well ventilated

Fridges and freezers need space at the top, back and sides to shed excess heat. For appliances with exposed rear coils, vacuum or wipe off dust. Ensure door seals are kept clean and seal well. Locate fridges and freezers in cool spots, away from direct sun and other heat sources such as stoves. The recommended operating temperature for a fridge is 3 to 5°C. Below this it costs more to run and can frost up. For freezers, the recommended range is -15 to -18°C. Regularly remove any frost build-up.

Everyday Energy Saving Tips

10. Switching to low greenhouse impact transport options

An average Australian household generates close to 6 tonnes of greenhouse gas and spends around \$8,000 each year on transport, of which \$2,500 is for fuel (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007). By switching to low greenhouse impact options such as bicycle riding for short trips, public transport and car pooling you will not only be saving money but reducing your impact on climate change.

11. Using cold water to wash clothes and the sun to dry them

The energy used to heat the hot water for your washing machine generates greenhouse gases. By using cold water instead of hot water you will save up to 3.5 kilograms of greenhouse gases per wash (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).



Avoid using a clothes dryer they can generate more than 3 kilograms of greenhouse gases per load (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007). Use a clothes line instead. If you have no option but to use a dryer make sure you spin-dry your clothes first to remove as much water as possible. Alternatively you could hang your clothes on a rack to dry before finishing them off in the dryer.

12 Switch to GreenPower

Almost half a kilogram of black coal or 1.5 kilograms of lower quality brown coal is burned to supply conventional electricity users with enough electricity to run a single bar radiator for an hour, a 100 watt light globe for 10 hours or an energy-efficient compact fluorescent lamp for 50 hours (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).

GreenPower is government accredited clean renewable energy sourced from the sun, wind, water and waste. Accredited Greenpower reduces greenhouse gas emissions and is purchased on behalf of your electricity supplier. Visit www.greenpower.gov.au for more information.

Residents can further reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by making the following good decisions:

- **When building, renovating, renting or buying a home, aim for high energy-efficiency and install energy-efficient appliances and lighting.**

All new homes and major renovations in Australia must now meet basic energy performance requirements. To find out how you can make further energy and monetary savings visit: <http://www.yourhome.gov.au/> and <http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/yourhome/buyersguide/index.htm>

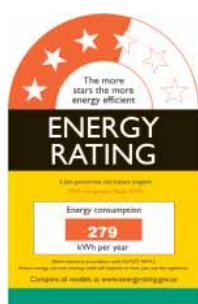


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- **When replacing an electric hot water service install a high efficiency gas or solar unit.**

Hot water accounts for around 40% of household energy consumption. Every 15 litres of hot water used from an electric water heater generates about one kilogram of greenhouse gas (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007). Buying a high efficiency gas or solar unit is a great start to saving greenhouse gases. For information on how to receive a rebate for gas and solar hot water systems visit: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/rebates/ccfhws.htm>

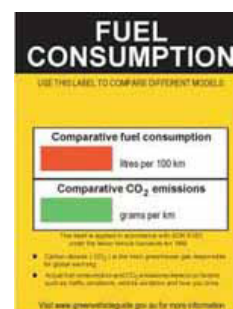
- **Buy energy-efficient appliances with low standby power usage.**



If you are buying new fridge freezer, heater or air conditioner or dishwasher look at the energy or water rating label and choose one with a high star rating. When purchasing home entertainment and office equipment (TV, DVD, VCR, computer) look for the energy star labelled products. These products use minimal power when in standby mode. Most computers are energy star compliant but do not have this feature switched on. To energy star enable your computer go to www.energystar.gov.au/consumers/stepbystep.html

- **When buying a car, buy a fuel-efficient one. Alternatively, consider buying a transport pass or bicycle.**

All new passenger cars, off-road vehicles and light commercial vehicles sold in Australia must display a fuel consumption label as featured here. This is important because the fuel consumption of similar-sized cars can vary by up to 30% (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007). By buying a fuel-efficient car you can save up to 20 tonnes of greenhouse gas and \$10,000 in fuel over its life (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).



Visit <http://www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au/> for comparative information on greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution performance of new cars before visiting a showroom. This website also provides fuel consumption information for some second hand models.

References

Global Warming - Cool It! has been updated by Alan Pears, from the original publication prepared by Alan Pears, Sustainable Solutions Pty Ltd, which was based on the Home Greenhouse Saver published by EPA Victoria.