

# Energy Habits

Simple actions can have big results!



## TOP TEN **FREE** THINGS YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE ENERGY COSTS

- 1. TURN OFF YOUR COMPUTER WHEN YOU LEAVE:** It only takes a few seconds to turn off your computer. Did you know that electricity for a 156-watt PC costs more than \$93 a year if it's left on all the time?(assuming an electricity rate is 7¢ per kilowatt-hour) If the computer is only on 40 hours a week, electricity only costs \$22. If your office has 60 computers, that's a \$4,260 savings in a year if everybody turns their computers off at night, on weekends, and when they're on vacation. It doesn't shorten the life of a computer built after 1995 to be turned off each night and on each morning - it actually extends the computer's life. You can save even more if you set your computer to go into standby or hibernate mode when you're away from your desk for an extended time. Look on the control panel for "power options" or a similar feature, and set it to match your habits. For more detailed set-up instructions, go to [www.acns.colostate.edu/asp/~/www.acns/bulls/energy\\_saving.html](http://www.acns.colostate.edu/asp/~/www.acns/bulls/energy_saving.html)
- 2. USE ENERGY STAR APPLIANCES:** Make sure that all new copiers, faxes, printers, and other equipment that are purchased have the ENERGY STAR® label. Verify that the Energy Star features are activated on copiers, faxes, and printers. The manuals will explain how to activate these.
- 3. DON'T USE SPACE HEATERS:** While it may be cool on winter mornings after an overnight HVAC shutdown, the use of space heaters is strongly discouraged. Standard electric space heaters consume 1500 watts at their typical highest setting; that's essentially the energy footprint of 10 desktop computers with monitors.
- 4. TURN THE THERMOSTAT DOWN (or UP!):** Adjusting the temperature just one degree (higher for cooling and lower for heating) can reduce heating and cooling costs one percent. You can save even more by replacing your thermostats with programmable models. Programmable thermostats can be set to reduce the heating and air conditioning when not needed - like at night and on weekends or other times when a building is unoccupied. You can get thermostats with override switches so that employees working outside standard hours can have full heating and cooling while they are in the building. These inexpensive devices (\$50 to \$150 depending on features, plus installation costs) can pay for themselves in as little as one month in reduced heating and cooling costs.
- 5. ALWAYS COPY DOUBLE SIDED:** If you don't know how to set up your computer to do this, ask a co-worker! Better yet, think twice about printing each document. Try to read it on the computer and then file it electronically instead.

6. **USE GOOS PAPER:** GOOS paper means paper that it is “good on one side”. Use this type of paper for taking notes, etc. to reduce the amount of new paper that is used. Also discard GOOS paper to this stockpile when you are finished with documents that are printed on one side.
7. **TURN DOWN THE TEMPERATURE ON THE WATER HEATER:** Water heating energy savings can be from 3% to 5% for every 10 degrees that the temperature is lowered. Water heater temperature can be adjusted by turning the control on the water heater's thermostat. Most thermostats are on the front of the tank, but some are behind an access plate. If your water heater doesn't feel cold when you touch it, you can save even more by adding an insulating blanket around your water heater. Choose one with an insulating value of at least R-8. Pre-cut water heater insulation costs around \$10 to \$20 and will pay for itself in about a year. Some utilities offer rebates or install insulation at low or no cost. Be careful not to cover the controls. Keep combustible insulation at least 8 inches from gas water heater flues. If you have an electric hot water heater add a timer, which will turn off the water heater at times when it is not needed.
8. **TURN OFF THE LIGHTS IN A ROOM WHEN YOU EXIT:** Lighting accounts for 5 to 10 percent of total energy use; when multiplied by the number of users, the potential for waste is enormous. Use task lighting rather than general lighting, use fluorescent lighting when possible and turn off unnecessary lights. Turn off incandescent lights whenever they are not needed, and turn off fluorescent lights if they will not be needed for 10 minutes or longer (turning a light back on does not use more electricity than leaving it on, but fluorescent fixture life is decreased if switching is too frequent). If bi-level switching or dimmers are available, use the lowest setting that meets your need. Reduce overhead lighting levels by “de-lamping” fluorescent lighting where possible. Many areas have light provided by a 3-4 lamp fluorescent fixture. Lighting levels can be reduced by “de-lamping” or removing 1 or 2 lamps while maintaining sufficient lighting levels for the task. If additional light is needed perhaps task lighting is a better option than overhead lighting.
9. **DRESS FOR THE WEATHER:** Wear clothing appropriate to the season and weather – lightweight clothing in summer and warmer clothes in winter. Wear layers so you can adapt to varying conditions in your workspace and still be comfortable.
10. **IF YOU ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE A WINDOW:** In winter, drapes or blinds should be open when windows are in direct sunlight or you are using the daylight, and closed otherwise. During summer, close drapes or blinds to prevent direct sunlight from entering the room. Try not to use windows for temperature control. If you have to open a window, make sure you close it before you leave!