

Top 10 Spring Cleaning Tips to Reduce Energy Costs

BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Spring cleaning is an annual ritual for many homeowners. It is a time to deep clean the home and to get rid of any unnecessary clutter. This is also a great time to clean or replace items in the home that may be causing your energy bill to be higher than it should be.

Here are the 'Top 10' spring cleaning tips that will help you to reduce your energy costs:

1. Check for air leakage by examining the weather-stripping around windows and doors and replace if damaged or cracked. 30% of the average house's energy load is wasted by air leakage. Also, check to see that your fireplace damper, if you have one, is closed tightly.
2. Clean or replace your air conditioner's filter every month to trim your cooling costs and help your unit run more efficiently. If you have a HVAC system, change your furnace filters monthly.
3. Clean inside and outside coils on your HVAC system; coils should be kept clean and free of debris.
4. Inspect appliances for upgrades and repairs; a 10-year-old air conditioner is only half as efficient as a new one. You may be able to save money by upgrading appliances.
5. Adjust your thermostat. For every degree you change your thermostat, you'll save up to 5% on heating costs. Turning off the thermostat while away from home or asleep can save between 5% and 20% of your heating costs.
6. Set your hot water heater between 115 and 120 degrees. You can save between 7% and 11% on water heating costs.
7. Clean your dryer's inside lint filter before each drying cycle; then clean the dryer's outside vent so the vent closes tightly. Use the auto sensor function on your dryer, if you have one, to avoid over-drying your clothes.
8. Clean your refrigerator's exterior coils; dirty coils make the compressor work harder.
9. Unplug devices that are used only occasionally. Many appliances, such as microwaves, computers, battery chargers, TVs and VCRs, are constantly drawing power to run clocks and sensors -- more than 50 watts in a typical home.
10. When dusting, don't forget to wipe light bulbs for maximum illumination. And, when replacing old, burnt-out bulbs, consider switching to high-efficiency compact fluorescent lights.

For addition energy saving tips, visit our website at www.mbpi.org/housing.

