



resources

Household Appliances & Electronics

Although appliances only make up ten per cent of household energy use, they are the single largest electricity user in the home. Most appliances have become much more efficient over the past decade, and replacing old energy-hungry appliances with smaller, energy efficient ones can make your home much more efficient, saving energy and money.



Energy Star

The Energy Star symbol is a simple way for consumers to choose products that are among the most energy-efficient on the market. Choosing an Energy Star-labelled product over a standard model could save you hundreds of dollars a year in energy costs. For more information visit:

<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/energystar/english/consumers/index.cfm>.

THE CHECKLIST

<p>Are you aware that up to 10% of your electricity bill may be from appliances that are presumably off?</p>	<p>Phantom loads, (aka vampire draws) are created when many appliances are turned off or put into standby mode. Many appliances will draw between 2 and 20 watts when they are turned “off”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unplug appliances when they are not being used or put them on a power bar to ensure they are not drawing power while resting (note: the power bar must be turned off to cut the power draw from appliances). •Borrow a Kill-a-Watt meter from the Calgary Public Library to determine phantom loads or to evaluate whether it is time to replace ancient, power-hungry electronic devices with energy efficient models.
<p>Could you use a clothes line or indoor drying rack instead of a dryer?</p>	<p>Non-dryer options can save homeowners more than \$100 a year in electricity savings, while adding moisture to dry indoor air. They also make clothes last longer and smell naturally fresh.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Make or buy an indoor drying rack or string up a laundry line. Indoor dryer racks allow year round drying, while outdoor lines provide unmatched UV disinfection.
<p>What is the temperature of your fridge/freezer?</p>	<p>A fridge that is too cold will freeze items, leading to unnecessary food waste.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Have a look at the temperature. The optimal temperature in the fridge is between 1.7 and 3.3 degrees. Freezers should be around -18 degrees.
<p>Are you using cold water to wash your clothes?</p>	<p>By washing in cold water, energy use is reduced by 80%. Washing in cold can save another \$100/year in hot water savings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Make the switch to cold water for clothes washing. Care labels offer suggestions but most clothes do better when they are washed in cold.

Are you looking to replace any appliances or electronic devices?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace inefficient appliances and electronics with Energy Star rated ones. The EnerGuide label, based on Canadian Standards Association test data, indicates how much energy an appliance consumes in a year of normal service. Seek appliances that have high levels of efficiency relative to other models.
Are the coils clean on your fridge?	Cleaning the coils on the back of your fridge will improve efficiency, reducing the amount of electricity consumed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacuum your fridge coils periodically to maximize energy efficiency.
Have you inspected the seals on your fridge and freezer lately?	Seals should be clean and in good shape. They should be tight enough to hold a piece of paper snugly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test the seals on your fridge and freezer. • Clean or replace worn seals to maximize energy efficiency.

QUICK APPLIANCE GUIDE (ADAPTED FROM NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC GREEN GUIDE)

Refrigerators

- Dump it: pre-1994 models
- Donate: models from 1994 to 2000
- Keep it: if it was manufactured after 2001

Dishwashers

- Dump it: if it uses 8 to 15 gallons (31 to 58 litres) per load
- Keep it: if it uses less than 8 gallons (31 litres) per load

Washing Machines

- Dump it: if it's a top loader
- Keep it: if it's a front loader

Dryers

- Dump it: if it doesn't work
- Keep it: if it works

The key to long-term energy savings is to match the appliance with the need. If your refrigerator or freezer is half-full most of the time, consider downsizing them. A household with only one or two people can usually get away with the most compact models.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Fridge and Freezer

- Allow hot foods to cool before putting in fridge or freezer;
- Chest freezers are more efficient than upright models, as the cold stays in the bottom;
- Look for an Energy Star rated model if upgrading.

Dishwasher

- Wash full loads;
- Select the setting best suited for dirtiness of dishes;
- Air dry instead of using heat dryer function on dishwasher;
- Use the energy or water saving feature if there is one;
- Clean the dishwasher filter regularly;
- Scrape dishes instead of rinsing them to save water
- Look for an Energy Star rated model if upgrading.

Clothes washer

- Wash full loads;
- Use cold water;
- Choose right load size for the clothes you are washing;
- Choose shorter wash cycles for clothes that aren't very dirty;
- Use the pre-soak cycle for very dirty clothes instead of using hot water;
- Look for an Energy Star rated model if upgrading.

Fact

The average family of four can save up to \$150 a year, 33,000 litres of water and reduce GHG emissions by one tonne annually by upgrading to Energy Star rated washing machine

Dryers

- Use a clothes line/drying rack instead of a dryer;
- Dry full but not overfull loads;
- Clean filter after every load, as a dirty filter can increase energy use by up to 30%;
- Make sure the vent to the outside is unobstructed to increase efficiency and indoor air quality;
- Use the automatic shut off feature to prevent the over drying of clothes.

Range/Oven

- Choose the right size of element for the pot you are using;
- The oven seal should be clean and in good shape. It should be tight enough to hold a piece of paper snugly;
- Check on food using window and light instead of opening door.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Consumer Reports Greener Choices (www.greenerchoices.org): a website helping consumers make greener choices. The site has a good section comparing EnerGuide rated appliances.

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