



## Fact Sheet 10 / Energy Efficiency – Handy Hints rev (1)

# Energy Efficiency – Handy Hints Fact sheet

"Fuel efficiency is everyone's concern. It is not simply a case of reducing your heating bills, but also minimising the harm to the environment. Energy - gas and electricity - used in the home is responsible for 25% of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions. This gas is a major contributor to "global warming."

There are five simple measures you can take to reduce energy bills and help protect the environment:

- draw curtains at night
- switch off lights and appliances after use
- turning down your central heating thermostat 1°C could cut your heating bill by 10%
- make sure your roof space is adequately insulated
- fit energy efficient light bulbs.

### Further ways to improve fuel efficiency

#### Cooking

Cooking uses a lot of energy because the oven, grill and rings operate at very high temperatures. So, before you cook the next family meal consider some of these useful tips:

- Use a small ring or low flame for small pans
- Keep lids on pans
- Instead of ordinary pans, try using a steamer, pressure cooker or slow cooker
- Set the oven to the temperature you need and no higher
- Don't overfill pans or kettles - you waste energy heating the extra water
- For toast, use a toaster instead of the grill
- Once the pan is boiling, turn the ring or flame down to simmer
- If you have a small top oven, use it for smaller items instead of the main one
- Avoid opening the door of the oven whilst cooking
- Replace damaged seals around the oven door
- Boil water in an electric kettle instead of in a pan
- Use your microwave if you have one, they use 70% to 90% less energy than ovens
- Fan ovens use around 20% less energy than conventional ovens.

## **Fridges and Freezers**

Fridges and freezers don't use much electricity an hour, but because they are on all the time the cost of running them over the year can be high. Fridges and freezers use energy to remove heat getting in through the appliance casing, to remove heat getting in when the door is opened and of course to cool food from room temperature.

To save power here are some useful ideas:

- Make sure there is plenty of ventilation space at the back and top of the freezer
- Keep the cooling fins at the back of the appliance clean
- Site your fridge/freezer in a cool place, away from direct sunlight and cookers and boilers
- Keep the door shut
- Replace damaged door seals - they let heat in
- Defrost regularly - the more ice, the more power used.

## **Insulation**

If your home is not insulated then you are simply losing money through your walls and roof. Insulation can be easy to do yourself and cost effective.

Think of these handy ideas for your home:

- Loft insulation is the easiest way to start. The ideal thickness is 270mm or 10" so if your existing insulation is less, give it a top up
- Insulate your hot water cylinder using a ready made jacket from your local DIY store
- Find the draughts around your home - that is where heat is escaping
- Don't forget to provide proper ventilation around your home - essential if you have solid fuel fires, gas fires or open flue boilers
- If you have walls around 10.5" inches thick you probably have cavity walls. Professionally installed insulation can be very cost effective - 35% of heat can be lost through your walls
- Don't forget your floors. Insulating under the ground floor boards will make your room feel warmer and sealing the gap between your skirting boards and floor boards will save more money
- Up to 23% of heat is lost through your windows, double glazing can reduce this by over half
- Conservatories are hard to heat in the colder months, try and leave them cold in the winter.

## **Heating Your Home**

Many people can cut their fuel bills by up to 40%. By controlling your heating system, the average household could save up to £200 a year. We rarely think of our heating system, as long as it does it's job we are happy. But heating and hot water account for over half the average fuel bill in the majority of homes.

Consider the following tips and maximise your fuel efficiency:

- If you wish to heat every room in your home then central heating is more efficient
- Fit separate Thermostatic Radiator Valves to your radiators for greater control
- Timeswitches and programmers can help you save money by turning on and off automatically your heating system at times you decide
- If you have a Hot Water Cylinder thermostat then check it isn't too high. If your hot water is too hot and you regularly need to add cold it may be set incorrectly - wasting you money
- A Condensing Boiler is the most energy efficient type of boiler
- If your boiler is more than 15 years old you will certainly save money by installing a more modern model.

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