

Teaching Children to be “Energy-Wise”

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Heating and cooling are the most expensive energy uses in the home. Home appliances, computers, and home entertainment equipment add to the bill as well. If you have children, they also increase energy use in many ways like taking long showers or standing in front of an open refrigerator door. Let’s teach our children to conserve energy, help the family budget, and the environment, as well.

Here are a few tips to pass on to the children, especially if they are helping out around the house:

- Turn off lights when you leave the room.
- Turn off ceiling fans when you leave the room.
- Our utility companies advise us to set thermostats at 68 degrees in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer.
- Vents and warm air outlets should be free of blockages such as furniture, curtains, toys, etc. If the air cannot circulate, it does no good and the unit will run more.
- During the winter, open curtains and drapes so the sun can help heat the home.
- During the summer, use methods to prevent the sun from heating rooms – drapes, window tints, etc.
- Pets do not need to watch TV or listen to the radio when no one is home! Also, these need to be turned off when no one is in the room.
- Use energy efficient compact-fluorescent bulbs.
- Wash and dry full loads of clothing.
- Wash full loads of dishes and let them air dry.
- Clean the lint screen in the dryer with every load.
- Shower quickly – standing under running hot water may feel good but is expensive.
- Watch and listen for leaky faucets and toilets, especially in spare bathrooms.
- All vents and filters should be cleaned regularly.
- Don’t leave door and windows open when the heating/cooling unit is on.
- Try to make food decisions with the refrigerator door closed.
- If appliances are not working properly, they could use extra energy.

You will probably find that your children are quite knowledgeable and concerned about our energy use and saving the environment for them and their children. Ask for their help and work as a family to create a more pleasant environment in and around your home.

