

Saving Electricity at Home



 Seattle City Light

Tips for Renters

www.seattle.gov/light/conserv

Conservation has been Seattle City Light's favorite energy resource since 1977. The energy savings realized from our nationally recognized programs prove it's a wise choice. For the past 25 years we've seen it in our bottom line, and you can see it in yours.

Conservation is also one of the most effective ways we can reduce carbon emissions which are the primary cause of accelerated global warming. While Seattle City Light gets most of its power from clean, renewable hydro, some power comes from fossil fuel sources, major contributors to carbon emissions. By conserving, we reduce global warming impacts locally by needing less supplemental fossil fuel-generated power in winter, and regionally by selling our surplus hydro power in the summer to reduce another utility's need for fossil fuel-generated power.

You may be surprised to know that there are many low-cost and no-cost ways to reduce energy costs in your apartment without sacrificing your comfort.

Look for these symbols:



No-cost



Low-cost



Contact your building manager or landlord before attempting this fix.



Keep Your Body Warm in Winter

-  Dressing warmer when the days get colder is less expensive and more efficient than turning up your thermostat.
-  Wear layers of lightweight and loose-fitting clothes. It's usually warmer than wearing one heavy, bulky jacket.
-  Keep a lap blanket or quilt on the couch to stay warm while reading or watching TV.
-  Before turning up the thermostat, turn on the kettle. Drinking something hot really does help warm you up.





Keep Yourself Cozy on Cold Winter Nights

- \$** Using an electric mattress pad or blanket is cheaper than heating your entire bedroom – be sure to follow the manufacturer’s precautions. Sometimes it’s enough to just preheat your bed before you get in it.
- \$** Use flannel sheets, a down comforter, or a plump fiberfill comforter.
- \$** Sheepskin mattress pads keep you warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.
- \$** A hot water bottle can also be used to warm your bed before you get in it.
- \$** For late-night reading, wear a warm sweater or bed-jacket.

Make Your Electric Heat Go Further

- \$** If you have electric heat, it accounts for about half your electric bill during the heating season. The best way to save is to turn down your thermostat.
- \$** For every degree you turn down your thermostat, your bill will drop 2-5%. Set your thermostat at 65-68° F when you are home, and 55° F (or off) at night or when you’re not home. If you’re used to high temperatures, try turning down your thermostat by just 2 degrees. It’s easier to get used to than a 5- or 10-degree change.
- \$** If you have zone heating (baseboards, wall-fans or wood stoves), heat only the room you are in. Keep doors closed or put a blanket across openings that have no doors.
- \$** Turning your thermostat all the way up does NOT heat your home faster. It just wastes energy when you finally get too hot.





- 💰 Put a thermometer next to your thermostat. Don't rely on the "Comfort Zone" setting to establish temperature; it could be as much as 10 degrees too hot or too cold.
- 🔧 Older baseboard heater thermostats create very high swings in temperature and are notoriously inaccurate. Ask your landlord to purchase more accurate automatic set-back thermostats made especially for line-voltage systems (i.e., baseboard and wall-fan heaters).
- 💰 For baseboard heaters under windows, use approved deflectors to steer heat into the room and away from the windows.
- 💰 Vacuum dust and debris from baseboard heater fins before each heating season.

- 💰 Remove covers from wall fan heaters and vacuum dust and debris from the heating units.
- 💰 Portable heaters can save you money *only* if you use them to heat small areas for *short periods* of time in place of your furnace. For example, using a portable heater to heat your breakfast nook may be cheaper than heating the whole house or apartment before you go to work. Be sure to turn it off when you no longer need it.
- 💰 Do not use your oven to heat your home. It is inefficient and costly. But if baking on a cool day, it's fine to leave the oven door open after the food is cooked and the oven has been turned off.

- **Caution: Never use kerosene heaters in unventilated areas.**
- **Caution: Never use portable heaters near curtains, drapes, clothes, electric cords, furniture or wet areas such as sinks or bathrooms.**

- **Caution: Keep all children away from portable heaters!**
- **Caution: It is not a good idea to completely close off a room to heat by shutting heat ducts. You could encourage mold and mildew growth. Instead, keep ducts partially open.**



Cool Your Hot Water Costs

- 💧 Install an energy-efficient showerhead. It will reduce flow without cutting water pressure.
- 💧 Fix dripping faucets immediately.
- 💰 Reduce shower time. Even a couple minutes per shower really add up.
- 💧 Set both thermostats on your water heater to no more than 120° F.

Avoid Mold and Mildew

- 💰 If moisture is condensing on your windows, clean off immediately! Open your blinds or curtains to allow air to circulate thereby warming and drying the windows.
- 💰 Always use your exhaust fan when taking a shower. Keep the fan on with the door closed for 10 minutes after showering to vent out all moisture. If you have no bathroom exhaust fan, open window slightly while showering and keep it open with the door closed for 10 minutes after showering.
- 💰 Always use your exhaust fan while cooking, especially steaming, boiling or frying. Cover all pots and pans when cooking to reduce moisture.
- 💰 If your window frames have built in air vents, your landlord has invested in a passive ventilation system for fresh air. Keep these vents OPEN. The openings are not large enough to cause drafts or raise your heating bills.

Cook Up Some Savings

- 💰 Use a toaster or small toaster oven (not the oven) to toast bread.
- 💰 Cover pots tightly to reduce cooking time.
- 💰 Match the pot size to the burner size of your range.
- 💰 Don't open oven door unless necessary. The temperature can drop by as much as 25° F.
- 💰 Preheat the oven only when called for. It's not necessary for most baking or cooking.
- 💰 A microwave oven uses half as much electricity as a standard oven.
- 💰 Keep the fan grease-free for the most efficient operation.





Savings with a Twist

\$ Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They last 10 times longer and use 2/3 less energy than regular bulbs. (A 15-watt CFL gives about the same light as a 60-watt regular bulb.) CFLs are best used in hard-to-reach areas, porch fixtures and lights that are on for more than 3 hours per day.

\$ Look for CFLs that have the ENERGY STAR® label for your assurance of quality.

Find discounted ENERGY STAR® CFLs at participating retailers near you. Check out our web site at www.seattle.gov/twistandsave for a list of stores, products and prices.



Clean Up on Energy Savings

- \$** Run full loads when using your dishwasher.
- \$** If you must pre-rinse your dishes, use cold water.
- \$** Select the air-dry option on your dishwasher.
- \$** Use cold water to run your garbage disposal.
- \$** For clothes washing, select the cold water setting for both the wash and rinse cycles. Most clothes will get clean in cold water, especially if you use a detergent made for cold water washing.
- \$** Run your dryer with a full load. For most efficient operation, clean the lint trap before each use.

It's Cool to Save Energy

- \$** Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator before cooking.
- \$** Let hot foods cool down before refrigerating.
- ⚡** Replace loose or torn refrigerator gaskets.
- \$** A freezer is more efficient when it's packed full.
- \$** Defrost the freezer whenever more than 1/4" of ice builds up.





Other Conservation Resources

- For a list of conservation recommendations customized to your home, you can fill out our free Home Resource Profile survey at www.seattle.gov/consERVE/homeprofile. In seconds, you'll get back a profile of how your home uses electricity and water, how your resource use compares with other homes, and areas where you can save. (You need your Seattle City Light or Seattle Public Utilities account number, and at least 10 months at the same address.)
- If you are interested in a comprehensive guide to saving energy at home plus lists of efficient appliances and technical information, you can purchase for \$8.95 a 223-page book called Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings published by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. They can be ordered from **(202) 429-8873** or www.aceee.org



Imagine
what we can **save** together

City Light Programs & Information



Payment Assistance

Discounted Utility Rates

(206) 684-0268

For low to moderate income Seattle City Light customers including seniors and disabled.

Federal Energy Assistance

Eligibility based on income. Customers who live:

Seattle City Limits **(206) 348-7144**

North of Seattle **(425) 869-6027**

South of Seattle **1-800-348-7144**

Emergency Low-Income Energy Assistance (ELIA)

(206) 684-3688

One-time emergency bill payment assistance.

Project Share

(206) 684-3000 or **1-800-862-1181**

Emergency bill payment assistance for low income customers.

Payment Options

Budget Billing Plan

(206) 684-3345

(Formerly the Average Payment Plan) Spreads your electricity charges equally throughout a 12-month period. No income guidelines or extra charges.

Automatic Bank Payment

(206) 733-9100

Automatically deducts your utility bill amount from your bank account.

Payment Arrangements

(206) 684-3000

Call us if you are unable to pay the full amount of your bill by the due date. Do not wait for an electricity shut-off notice and avoid late fees and penalties. We will work with you to set up a payment plan.



CITY LIGHT

Seattle City Light's Conservation Publications:

- Air Quality in the Home
- Compact Fluorescent Lighting
- Do-It-Yourself Home Energy Audit
- Energy Conservation Services
- Energy Saving Tips for Small Business Customers
- Getting the Most from Your Electric Heat
- Guide to Efficient Home Lighting
- Purchasing a Heat Pump
- Resource Conservation Services for Multifamily Owners
- Saving Electricity at Home for Owners
- Saving Electricity at Home for Renters
- Why Is My Electric Bill So High?
- Your Electric Appliances

These publications and more conservation information can be found on our web site:

seattle.gov/light/conserves/resident



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Seattle Climate Action



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www.seattle.gov/light/conserves