



Play it cool and save big this summer with some simple tips to reduce your energy use

With many Ontarians looking forward to another hot summer at the cottage relaxing by the lake, GreenSaver wants to remind homeowners that summer time doesn't mean you should take a holiday from energy conservation. Before departing, there are a number of things you can do to make your home 'energy secure' and ensure you avoid large energy bills.

Every summer, Ontarians use record amounts of energy to keep their homes, offices and businesses cool. In fact, last summer Ontario set a new record for electricity use by squeezing out over 27,000 MW of electricity! A large part of that demand comes from air conditioning cranked up throughout the day while people are not at home.

If your home has a programmable thermostat, make sure to set it at 25.5 degrees Celsius (78 degrees F) when out. It will save you about 15% or more on cooling costs. When you're at home, set it no lower than 23 degrees Celsius (73 degrees F). This helps reduce system demand and the amount of carbon expelled in the production of electricity.

You can also sign up for Peaksaver™, a program that automatically reduces your demand on the power grid during peak use. You won't notice the difference, and you don't have to do a thing. Details can be found at www.peaksaver.com.

If you haven't got programmable thermostat, there are other things you can do to moderate energy use in your home. Start by closing your window coverings during the day to keep the sun and heat out. At night, pull them back to allow cooler evening air into the house through open windows.

Similarly, draft proofing your home can also provide significant savings in the summer time. It can help keep your air conditioner working more efficiently by lessening the amount of hours it needs to operate. Remember - a properly sealed home will keep your cooled air where it belongs—inside!

Proper insulation is another big contributor that goes a long way to keeping your house cool and can help keep it cool without the constant operation of an air conditioning unit. When looking to purchase insulation, make sure to get as high an R value (the thermal resistance rating) as possible and to insulate your attic and crawlspaces.

Six sizzling tips

Turn off the dry cycle of your dishwasher and let your dishes air dry instead.

Shade your air conditioner—if possible, install it on the north side away from direct sun. A hot air conditioning unit has to work harder to keep you cool.

Run your dishwasher and washing machine in the evenings when it's cooler.

If replacing your air conditioning unit, choose the right size for your house—a smaller unit saves you more money—and with higher SEER rating (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) of 14.5 to 20.

If using a window air conditioning unit, it may be worthwhile to invest in a new EnergyStar® unit, but make sure whatever unit is installed, that it fits your window and is properly sealed.

Use smaller appliances for cooking that don't generate as much heat.

Finally, summer is typically the time for renovations, and so for those who might be considering renovating, an EcoENERGY audit would be very valuable. You can qualify for up to \$10,000 in federal and provincial grants for insulation, air conditioning, windows and more.

For more tips on how to make your home more energy efficient, or a quote on GreenSaver's Intelligent Draft Proofing and Insulation Services or an ecoENERGY energy assessment, visit www.greensaver.org or call (416) 203-3106.

For further information, please contact:

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GreenSaver is an independent non-profit corporation dedicated to environmental energy efficiency. They have pioneered Ontario residential energy conservation for 25 years with economically viable and environmentally friendly measures to help individuals and organizations with their energy need (www.greensaver.org).