



Beat the Heat and

With warm weather upon us, we find ourselves searching for ways to stay cool. The Michigan Public Service Commission offers the following steps for homeowners and businesses to reduce energy consumption, stay cool, and save on energy bills.

Use Air Conditioning Efficiently

- If you use air-conditioning, set the room thermostat as high as possible. Believe it or not, 78 degrees is often considered a comfortable indoor temperature.
- When leaving a home or building for more than five hours, raise the thermostat five to ten degrees, or use a programmable thermostat.
- When possible, install a window air-conditioner, or the compressor unit of a central air-conditioner, on a side of a home or building that is shaded. (Direct sunlight falling on an air-conditioning unit increases its workload.)
- Keep the compressor unit of a central air-conditioner free from leaves and other debris that can clog vents.
- Keep the cooling system well tuned with periodic maintenance by service professionals. Clean or replace the air filter once a month or as needed.
- Shut the vents or close off unoccupied rooms. Doing so can save 5-10% on your cooling costs.

Did You Know?

spotlight

- The closer the indoor temperature is to the outdoor temperature, the lower your overall cooling costs will be.
- Each degree you raise the thermostat can save up to 3-5% on cooling costs.
- Many of the same techniques that save energy in the winter also help in the summer. For example, insulating, caulking, and weather-stripping help keep the heat out in summer and the heat in during winter months.

Cooling Tips

- When the temperature is moderate, turn off the air conditioner, open windows, and use fans.
- Close curtains and shades on windows during the day to keep the heat from the sun outside rather than inside.
- Consider using a dehumidifier instead of an air-conditioner.
- Get rid of the hot air. For example, use an exhaust fan to blow hot air out of the kitchen while cooking.
- Avoid activities that add heat or humidity to your home during the hottest parts of the day. For example, use your dishwasher during the cooler part of the day and/or simply let dishes air dry instead of using the dishwasher's heater.

Other Electricity Saving Measures

- Use electric ovens, dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers, and other large appliances or office equipment in the early morning or late evening hours whenever possible. These are big electricity users and shifting the time of use will reduce the potential stress to Michigan's electric system at peak times.
- If possible, replace older, inefficient appliances with updated models. If purchasing a new appliance or air-conditioner, look for the "Energy Star" logo, which indicates a high efficiency product.

Around Your Home or Business

- To block solar heat in the summer but let much of it in during the winter, plant deciduous trees on the south and west sides of a home or building.
- Shrubs and groundcover plants can shade the ground and pavement around a home or building, reducing the surrounding air temperature.
- A hedge can be planted to shade a sidewalk or driveway and keep solar heat from being absorbed by the concrete.
- Climbing vines on a lattice or trellis can also be used to shade areas around a home or building – while admitting cooling breezes to the shaded area.

Some Additional tips for Business include:

- Set fax machines and printers for sleep mode when not in use. Also, network one printer for several users.
- Make sure the power management feature is enabled on computers and set to the shortest acceptable time for your operation. Also, use laptops in lieu of other personal computers.
- Turn off copiers and computers (or at least monitors) at night and during the weekends.

To Learn More

Additional information can be found online at:

energysavers.gov