



Beat the heat and save

With warm weather here, it is smart to stay cool and save on energy bills. The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) offers the following steps for homeowners and businesses to reduce energy waste, stay cool, and save on energy bills.

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. 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. Use your dishwasher during the cooler part of the day and/or simply let dishes air dry instead of using the dishwasher's heater.

Use air conditioning efficiently

- If you use air-conditioning, set the room thermostat to 78 degrees, a setting most consider comfortable.
- When leaving a home or building for more than five hours, raise the thermostat five to 10 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 to 10 percent on your cooling costs.

Other energy waste reduction 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 appliances 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. When 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 (and let much of it in during the winter), plant leafy 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 businesses include:

- Set printers for sleep mode when not in use.
- 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.
- 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 the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Saver website on saving energy and using renewable energy technologies www.energysavers.gov

The contents of this document are valid at the time of publication and may be subject to change.