

Green Solutions Cut Stress over Skyrocketing Energy Costs

If your blood pressure climbs whenever you face your monthly utility bills, here's the simplest, most cost-effective, stress-reducing solution you'll find anywhere: go green.

Why? When you're using less electricity and fossil fuel, you aren't just generating fewer greenhouse gases...you're also saving utility dollars.

To help you get started, a new breed of consultants has emerged who can help you to strategically target simple, affordable eco-options that fit your needs and budget, while they make an immediate difference to the planet and your utility costs. When you start seeing your savings, you'll build confidence, and want to do more!

Here are just two examples of the savings you can achieve right now:

Green Your Lighting

Lighting represents about 25% of home energy costs, and a small change here can make a big difference. Replacing just one incandescent light bulb with an Energy Star compact fluorescent (CFL) bulb, for example, can yield savings anywhere from \$30 to more than \$50 over the 10,000-hour life of one CFL.

Not only does a CFL use just one quarter of the energy an incandescent bulb requires, but it also eliminates frequent replacements: one CFL can outlast approximately 10 incandescents. So, if you change all your bulbs to CFLs, your annual return on investment can exceed 100%.

Green Your Heating and Cooling

With heating and cooling taking up to 50% of your home's energy use, cutting these expenses involves a two-step process: 1) Stopping warm or cold air from escaping your home; and 2) Boosting the efficiency of your HVAC system.

Even with insulation, your home can leak energy in many places – not just windows and doors! Your eco-consultant can help you find and fix less obvious leaks, and refer you to local energy auditors to identify hidden problems. How much will this help? The energy savings just from sealing leaky ductwork, for example, will pay back about 68% of your investment in the first year.

To boost efficiency, a programmable thermostat can set your HVAC system to deliver peak heating or cooling for the hours when your home is occupied, cutting back when everybody is out or asleep. Costing from \$30 to \$100 or more, programmable thermostats can return your investment by more than 100% in the first year.

Simple Solutions, Lower Bills, Less Stress!

Don't get overwhelmed by a marketplace full of pricey greentech options: it doesn't take a big expense to achieve a big impact for the planet, or for your budget. You can start simple, smart, and easy -- and watch your energy costs shrink!

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