



Conservation – Always in Style

During the 70's, Americans felt the pain of an energy crisis. The high prices and shortages of gasoline and home heating fuels like oil and gas, forced us to think differently and change our behavior. We bought more fuel-efficient cars. We adjusted our thermostats to save money. Manufacturers of cars and appliances had to produce more energy efficient products. As we drifted through the 80's and 90's, the trend toward conservation ebbed and flowed with our economic prosperity, yet we continued to rely on the same fossil fuels for our cars and homes. And many of us bought bigger cars and larger homes. So where does that leave us today?

Make no mistake about it. We should always conserve. Without a near-term replacement for fossil fuel, we will continue to rely on natural gas, oil and coal for our needs. These are all limited in supply, unstable in price, and create pollution when burned. Conservation starts with increasing our energy efficiency – doing more things with less energy. It may be easier than you think – let's look at your home.

Air conditioners use the most energy. According to Energy Star, they use one-sixth of all the electricity generated in the US today. Whether you use room air conditioners, or central air, keeping your home at 78 degrees rather than 72 degrees can save about 20% on your energy bill. The diagram on page 2 shows you more ways to conserve at home.

What is **Energy Star**?



Energy Star was introduced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1992. Its major function is to provide a consistent labeling program for products that meet energy efficient standards. You may have purchased an appliance such as a washing machine with the now-familiar star symbol.

More recently, the Energy Star program applies to certain new homes deeming them 30% more energy efficient than a prior building code standard. If you're planning on replacing an old appliance, look for the Energy Star symbol to save money and conserve energy.



TEST YOUR ENERGY EFFICIENCY KNOWLEDGE

1. Which appliance uses the most energy?
 Refrigerator Air conditioner
 Clothes dryer Computer
2. About how thick is R-30 batt insulation?
 30 inches 15 inches
 9 inches 3 inches
3. If every US household replaced 4 incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents it would save the same amount of energy as removing how many cars from the road?
 7 million 1 million
 100,000 50,000

**source: Alliance to Save Energy*

Answers: Air conditioner, 9 inches, 7 million

CONSERVING AT HOME

LIGHTING [7% of total energy costs]

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs: save 20% on lighting costs, and bulbs last 10 times longer!
- Use dimmers on incandescent bulbs



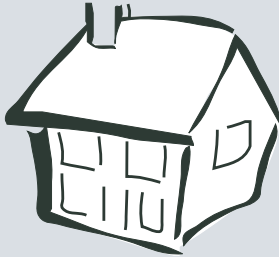
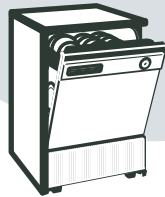
LAUNDRY [10%]

- Wash in cold: most energy used is to heat the water
- Wash full loads
- Line dry when you can, clean the dryer filter



DISHES [2%]

- Turn off heat dry cycle, opt for air dry
- Wash full loads
- Wash pots and other large dishes by hand



SWIMMING POOLS

- Use a solar blanket, or solar heating system
- Run your filter only a few hours each day

HOME

- Insulate properly – R30+ in the attic, R13 for wall, R19 in the floor
- Replace old windows
- Check for cracks around windows and doors, seal with weather stripping or caulking

AIR CONDITIONING

- [20 to 25% of your total energy costs]
- Set for 78°, 85° when you're not home
- Use a programmable thermostat for central air
- Make sure your home is well insulated
- Conduct regular maintenance, change the filter
- Install and close shades on southern facing windows during the day
- Install ceiling fans to create more even air distribution
- If your system is over 15 years old, consider upgrading to a more energy efficient unit

* Always consider your health first. If you suffer any conditions that are complicated by heat, make sure you are adequately cooled.

Conservation **Beyond Your Door**

If you could drive a hydrogen fuel car today – perhaps you would. If you could power your entire home with clean energy without any increase in price – you'd likely sign up. But you know that today, these alternatives do not exist. Will they exist in 5 years? 10 years? Or will we still be searching for more places to drill for oil and gas?

Recent energy legislation passed by the House and the Senate weighs in on this with tax breaks. For example, there is 14 billion dollars available in tax breaks with more than half of it earmarked for the fossil fuel industry. Less than half of the money is available for renewable energy and energy efficiency provisions. If we are trying to change our reliance on fossil fuel, this does not seem to be the kind of incentive to make that happen. If we want to motivate industry to develop alternative fuels, while improving our energy efficiency, it seems that we need to reflect that in funding. We can all do our share conserving energy, but to build our future, we need to ensure that lawmakers support legislation that helps us conserve more, and change to clean, renewable energy sooner.



Here to Serve You

Visit a special link on our web site for more information about energy issues:
www.norwichpublicutilities.com/communitymatters

Please call, fax or email us your questions, comments and suggestions.

Norwich Public Utilities, 173 North Main Street Norwich CT 06360

Tel: 860-887-2555

Fax: 860-823-4172

Email: communitymatters@npumail.com

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