

Purdue University

Purdue e-Pubs

Historical Documents of the Purdue
Cooperative Extension Service

Department of Agricultural Communication

7-1-1980

A Dollar-Saving Checklist

Jean W. Bauer

Susan B. Davis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/agext>

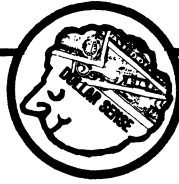
Bauer, Jean W. and Davis, Susan B., "A Dollar-Saving Checklist" (1980). *Historical Documents of the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service*. Paper 1025.

<https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/agext/1025>

For current publications, please contact the Education Store: <https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/>

This document is provided for historical reference purposes only and should not be considered to be a practical reference or to contain information reflective of current understanding. For additional information, please contact the Department of Agricultural Communication at Purdue University, College of Agriculture: <http://www.ag.purdue.edu/agcomm>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.



Energy,

A DOLLAR-SAVING CHECKLIST

by
Jean W. Bauer,
 Family Resource Management Extension Specialist
 and **Susan G. Davis**
 Dollar Sense Project Assistant

Not all homes are created equal, especially if you compare their energy efficiency! The amount of energy required to maintain a comfortable temperature, feed, clothe and keep a family clean depends upon your home and your family. Whether you live in a ranch style house, a high rise apartment, a Victorian mansion or a mobile home, there are some basic features to consider in energy use.

Use this survey to evaluate your family's energy efficiency rating. You may find that you've made some wise decisions and formed some very good habits OR you may find some areas for improvement. Remember as energy costs continue to increase, a change to conserve energy can be considered an investment. The payoff will be lower energy bills.

CONSIDER MODIFYING YOUR HOME

Is the home shaded on the south and west sides?

Large deciduous (leafy) shade trees are ideal because they provide summer shade during hot weather and allow winter sun to help heat the house.

Are the north and west sides of the home protected from the wind by low evergreen shrubs or a slatted fence? They can create "dead air space" which is an effective means of insulation.

Are your refrigerator and freezer located away from heat sources (range, heat register, sunny window)? Heat makes them run more often.

Is the water heater located close to the area where you use the hot water?

Is the water heater located in a heated space?

Do you have an insulated blanket on your water heater?

Are the hot water pipes wrapped with insulation?

Does the home have insulated glass or storm windows to reduce heat loss? Double-pane insulated glass will reduce half of the heat loss from the window. Even inexpensive plastic storm windows produce a significant reduction in energy loss.

Are there storm doors on each door? Use of storm doors will reduce heat loss nearly a third from door areas.

Is there weather stripping around the door jambs and windows? It keeps cold air out in the winter and hot air out during the air conditioning season.

Is the caulking around the windows and door frames in good condition? After a few years, caulking dries up, shrinks, and chips out. It should be replaced.

Is insulation wrapped around the heating ducts where they pass through unheated areas? If the air conditioning system uses the same ducts, the insulation will also reduce summer cooling costs.

Is there insulation above your ceiling? See the Energy Fact sheet on types and thicknesses of insulation to evaluate the adequacy of the insulation. (HE-74)

Are the attic and gable areas of the home adequately ventilated? At least 1 sq. ft. of eave inlet for each 150 sq. ft. of ceiling area is recommended.

If the home has a vaulted ceiling, is there a ceiling fan to keep the warm air circulating through the home?

Are the ventilator and fan in the kitchen, bath, and laundry weatherstripped and do they close tightly?

Does the ventilator fan have a time control which automatically switches off the fan in case you forget?

If the crawl space has an earthen floor, is it covered with a plastic moisture barrier, and sand or earth scattered on top?

If there is an unheated crawl space, is there insulation under the floor? Insulation will prevent the heat from the house from flowing into the crawl space.

If you live in a mobile home, is there skirting around your home? Full, properly installed skirting acts as added insulation and helps to reduce energy use.

EVALUATE YOUR RENTAL ALTERNATIVES

Are there drafts around windows and doors? Contact the owner about weatherstripping and caulking windows and doors.

Are the windows and doors protected with storm windows and doors? Check with the owner about having storm windows and doors installed. Plastic sheeting or storm window kits are inexpensive but effective alternatives.

Are some areas of the building heated unnecessarily? Ultimately you are paying the costs for heating basements and storage areas. Remember, however, heating ducts and water pipes servicing other parts of the building will need to be insulated if the area is no longer heated.

If you are choosing an apartment, remember that apartments with smaller amounts of wall space exposed to the outside are less expensive to heat. A middle unit shares walls with surrounding apartments and costs less to heat than an end unit.

If you are selecting an apartment, consider the energy efficiency aspects of glass patio doors, fireplaces, vaulted ceilings or a single outside door entrance, as opposed to a common or sheltered vestibule entrance. Each of these features can add dollars to your fuel bill.



CHECK YOUR HABITS

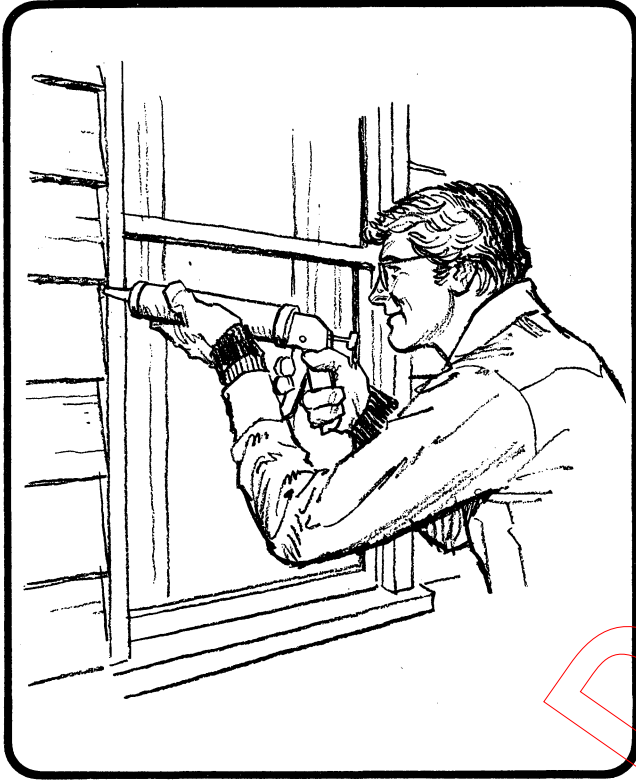
Do you use shades or curtains to regulate heat? On hot summer days, blocking the sun can reduce inside room temperature; sunlight in the winter can increase inside room temperature and reduce heating expenses.

Do you keep the winter thermostat turned down to 65 degrees or lower when you are not at home?

Do you keep unused areas closed off? Heating and air conditioning costs can be reduced if a smaller area is kept in the 'comfort zone.'

Do you have a fireplace? Close the damper when you're not using it and place a glass screen in front of the opening.

Are there entrances that are infrequently used? Make them airtight.



Do you maintain a humidity level in your home of 30 to 40 percent? By using a humidifier in the winter and a dehumidifier in the summer, the air feels more comfortable at lower temperatures.

Do you check your furnace filters monthly? Replace dirty filters for greater efficiency.

Do you keep vines and shrubs clipped away from the air conditioner condenser? They reduce the flow of air and reduce energy efficiency.

Do you remove the window air conditioner at the end of the season? If you do not remove it, do you cover, weatherstrip, and caulk to seal out cold air?

Do you know the temperature setting of your hot water heater? A thermostat setting of 110 to 120 degrees F. is sufficient (a dishwasher may require a setting of 140 degrees; check the dishwasher instruction manual).

Do you regularly drain water from the tap at the bottom of your water heater? This helps remove sediment which blocks the heat transfer to the water.

Your water heater will last longer and cost less to operate.

Do you normally turn down or off the thermostat of your water heater when you plan to be away from home for an extended period of time?

Can you reduce hot water usage? Every time you use cold water instead of hot, you save energy and dollars.

Do you take quick showers rather than baths? This reduces hot water usage.

Do you have flow restrictors on your faucets? This reduces the amount of water used per minute. You can usually purchase them from your local utility company.

Do you keep your freezer compartments free from frost buildup? More than 1/4 inch of frost uses extra energy.

Do you keep your freezer nearly full? A full freezer uses less energy.

Do you plan ahead to prepare several items while the oven is hot? Using the oven to prepare an entire meal is more efficient than heating the oven for a few potatoes.

If you must bake several items, do you bake them consecutively to eliminate unnecessary oven heating?

Do you 'peek' while you are baking? Don't, it wastes energy.

Do you periodically check and clean the gasket around the oven door? A worn seal allows heat to escape.

When you use your dryer, do you dry several consecutive loads to take advantage of the warmth left from the previous load?

Do you use permanent press fabrics? They absorb less water than conventional fabrics and therefore require less drying time. Permanent press fabrics require no ironing, reducing even more energy expense.

If you use a dishwasher, do you turn off the unit after the rinse cycle, open the door, and allow the dishes to air dry? The heat from the rinse cycle is sufficient to dry the dishes.

DECORATE TO SAVE DOLLARS

Are your floor coverings, walls and furnishings a medium to light color? Light reflecting from the floor will save on the amount of artificial light needed.

Do you make use of fluorescent lighting whenever possible? Since fluorescent lighting is energy efficient, it is good to use it over working surfaces, under cabinets or in ceiling fixtures.

Do you have overhead lights in general living areas? They provide good overall light for less total wattage than several lamps; lamps can then be used for task lighting of area as needed.

Are your drapes lined? Lined drapes reduce the flow of cold air from windows.

Is there a cornice over the top of your drapes? A cornice will prevent a draft tunnel effect.

Have you used light tints on your interior walls and ceilings to reflect rather than absorb light?

Do you think about air flow when you arrange furniture? Avoid blocking registers or cold air returns. Partitioning a space with tall bookcases, screens, or dividers disrupts air flow patterns and this makes it more difficult to maintain an even temperature throughout the room.

How did you rate? Had you considered these features as part of your energy use? Are there areas in which you can save energy? If you would like more information on HOW to change for conservation, ask your Extension Home Economist for copies of the "Energy Fact Sheets" and other publications related to wise energy use. These are provided by the Indiana Cooperative Extension Service.



REFERENCES:

Energy Facts: Button-Up Tighten-Up for Winter. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-70, 1978.

Energy Facts: Build and Remodel for Energy Efficiency. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-71, 1978.

Energy Facts: The Value of Storm Windows and Doors. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-73, 1978.

Energy Facts: Water Heating: Use and Conservation. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-79, 1978.

Energy Facts: Efficient Lighting and Small Appliances. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-81, 1978.

Energy Facts: Energy Efficiency at Mealttime. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-82, 1978.

Energy Facts: Conserve Energy in Your Mobile Home. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-85, 1978.

Energy Facts: Conserve Energy in Your Apartment. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-86, 1978.

Energy Facts: Landscape to Save Energy. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-88, 1978.

Energy Facts: Cool Your Home the Energy Efficient Way. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-89, 1978.

First Things First. Indiana Cooperative Extension Service: West Lafayette, HE-102, 1979.

NEW 7/80

The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in part by the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.