

## From Smart Home Spring 2005

### **Eight Great Ways to Keep Your Cool And Save Money**

When temperatures rise, follow these simple steps to help cut your energy costs:

#### **Schedule annual checks**

One step to control energy costs is to schedule annual maintenance checks to make sure your home comfort equipment is running efficiently. Operating dirty home comfort equipment can result in an unnecessary loss of efficiency and can damage the units. You play a vital role in making sure your system continues to operate at peak performance.

Take the following simple steps to ensure your system is running efficiently:

- Trim brush and shrubbery near outdoor units to prevent airflow obstruction.
- Remove grass clippings, leaves and other debris from the outdoor coil.
- Replace filters as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Reduce clutter around your indoor unit to maintain proper ventilation and efficiency.

#### **Replace your old system**

If you're in the market for a new unit, consider purchasing a high-efficiency model. It can help reduce your energy costs as well as conserve our natural resources.

When selecting an air conditioner or heat pump, pay close attention to the SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio). This is a system for rating the efficiency of cooling equipment. The higher the SEER, the less your unit will cost to operate. The minimum SEER rating will be 13 in 2006. And did you know that some units can have a SEER rating higher than 19?

It's also important to look for Energy Star® products.

This means the product meets the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) standards by using less energy, which reduces pollution. Energy Star products reduce energy use by 20 percent to 40 percent.

#### **Install a programmable thermostat**

Programmable thermostats can make a big difference in energy consumption. These thermostats deliver maximum comfort, efficiency



and energy savings. Programmable thermostats are used to achieve the temperatures you want throughout your home based on occupancy. For example, if you're going to be away, you can set the whole house at an energy-saving temperature to avoid cooling or heating an empty house until you return. If you have programmable thermostats, you can program them to have your living areas comfortable when you arrive home.

Zoning provides consistent comfort throughout your home and can drastically lower your cooling costs. Zoning divides your home into separate comfort areas, which are heated or cooled based on your needs. You won't have to cool the whole house just to make one room comfortable.

Your contractor can help you select the best equipment for your home and help you determine potential energy savings.

These tips are provided by Lennox Industries, a leader in home comfort. Lennox® markets its air conditioning, heating and indoor air quality products through a network of more than 7,000 North American dealers.

The Alliance to Save Energy and the Do It Yourself Network offer these additional tips to cool your home and bid farewell to that shockingly expensive energy bill. Read on, and then, in the coolness of your energy-efficient home, grab the family and a pitcher of strawberry lemonade and create some summer memories together.

### **Keep TVs and lamps away from the thermostat**



Heat generated from appliances and electronics can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

### **Delay heat-producing activities**

Try to shift energy-intensive tasks, such as dishwashing and laundry, to evening hours as opposed to the heat of the day when your cooling system relies most on electricity. Do full loads of laundry or dishes as opposed to half loads, and wash clothes in cold water when possible.

### **Use proper ventilation**

If it's not too hot, ventilate your home at night by opening windows or using fans. Close the doors to corresponding room vents so there's less space to cool or heat in unused rooms.



## **Shade east and west windows**

The sun is a natural source of heat. Block its rays by closing curtains during the day, installing awnings, or planting shade trees or vines near windows.

For more information on energy conservation, check out the Alliance to Save Energy at [www.ase.org](http://www.ase.org). For more summer recipes, visit **[www.DIYnetwork.com](http://www.DIYnetwork.com)**.