



NEWS ARTICLE

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**ARIZONA HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY NEWS:
10 TIPS TO BEAT THE HEAT & SAVE MONEY**

The last week of May marks the last week of school for students across Arizona. As kids are eagerly running for the pools and 100-degree temperatures blanket the state, many families are not going to like what they see on their summer energy bills.

It is not uncommon for families' energy bills to double – even triple – during the summer months. But there are some great ways to beat the heat and keep energy bills in check.

The Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP) recommends 10 energy-saving tips along with a list of rebates and incentives available to help residents pay for home energy improvements.

1. **Install a High-Efficiency Pool Pump:** Traditional single-speed pool pumps are one of the biggest energy wasters in your home*, on average costing more than \$500 annually to operate. You can reduce this cost by more than half with a new two-speed or variable speed pool pump. These offer a quick return on your investment, save you money on energy, and operate significantly quieter and last longer. Then use the pool to keep cool.
**An Arizona law, which took effect this year, requires more efficient two-speed or variable-speed motors for new and replacement pumps.*
2. **Upgrade lights and appliances:** Incandescent light bulbs add heat to your home and use far more electricity. Swapping them out for CFLs or LEDs can significantly reduce your energy use and costs and has one of the fastest payback times of any energy improvement you can make.
3. **Adjust Thermostat:** Each degree you increase your thermostat above 75 degrees reduces cooling costs by about 3%, according to ENERGY STAR. Try setting your thermostat at 78 this summer.
4. **Shade Windows:** Windows are one of the main conduits for heat entering your home. Help keep this heat out by closing curtains on the sunny side of your home or adding shade screens to your windows. According to the Electric League of Arizona, shade screens can reduce heat from the sun by about 50%.
5. **Get a home energy assessment:** Homeowners won't know which energy improvement projects are the most cost-effective if they don't know how well or poorly their home uses energy. Home energy assessments help pinpoint energy leaks and malfunctioning systems, and provide cost-benefit analyses for various energy-saving fixes. Typically,

assessments can find up to 35% in energy bill savings.

6. **Seal energy leaks:** One of the least expensive and easiest things homeowners can do to improve their home's energy efficiency is to make sure windows and doors are properly sealed. Buy some caulk, spray foam and get to work!
7. **Have a heating and air conditioning professional inspect your system's duct work for leakage and proper air flow.** ENERGY STAR tells us that a proper duct system can save up to 25% of heating and air conditioning costs.
8. **Update Cooling Systems:** In the summer, the majority of Arizonans' energy dollars go to cooling homes. Most AC systems last about 10 years and lose efficiency over time . Older units tend to burn out when they are working the hardest – in the summer. Newer equipment can use up to 60% less energy than older equipment.
9. **Fix or add insulation:** In hot climates, having a well-insulated attic is of utmost importance. This means insulation should have an “R” value (efficiency rating) of at least 30 or higher. Some homes in Arizona don't have any attic insulation at all or it's been improperly installed. It's a good idea to pop your head into your attic and see what's up there. Oftentimes, simply tacking down existing insulation so it is in direct contact with the attic floor and walls can greatly improve its performance.
10. **Recycle the Old Refrigerator in your Garage:** A typical model from the 1980s consumes up to three times as much electricity as ENERGY STAR models sold today. Getting rid of an inefficient refrigerator can save you up to \$100 per year on your electricity bill. Some utilities will pay you \$30 for your old fridge and haul it away to be taken apart and disposed of safely.

Rebates & Incentives:

Why pay full price for that new pool pump or air conditioner? There are a number of rebates and other financial incentives available to Arizonans that can help pay for energy-saving products and upgrades to homes.

Arizona Public Service

- APS offers a number of rebates and incentives for CFL lights, pool pumps, cooling equipment, refrigerator recycling and more: <http://www.aps.com/main/services/default.html>
- APS offers discounted energy assessments for residential customers through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program: www.azhomeperformance.com. A Home Energy Check Up comes with a free energy savings kit.

Salt River Project

- SRP also has a ton of rebates and incentive programs for a wide range of home energy improvement measures, including shade screens: <http://www.savewithsrp.com/SaveWithSRP.aspx>
- SRP offers discounted energy assessments for residential customers through the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program: www.azhomeperformance.com. A Home Energy Check Up comes with a free energy savings package, which includes 10 CFL

bulbs, one low flow showerhead and Kill-a-Watt meter.

Southwest Gas

- Southwest Gas offers rebates on the purchase of high-efficiency gas-powered appliances and heating systems such as dryers, and hot water heaters, as well as offers free weatherization services to low-income households:
<http://www.swgas.com/efficiency/az/index.php>

Tucson Electric Power

- TEP offers a number of rebates for home energy efficiency improvements. Some programs are currently on hold. Sign up for more information: <https://www.tep.com/Efficiency/#>

More Pool and Spa Tips

- Association of Pool and Spa Professionals: <http://www.apsp.org>

Energize Phoenix

- Energize Phoenix offers cash incentives to help pay for home energy-efficiency improvement projects: <http://www.energizephx.com/>

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