

**Lower  
Your  
Energy  
Costs**

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## Introduction

Are you ready to find out if in fact your home is as energy efficient as it can be?

Most of us have some big and some small things that they can do to better the cost efficiency of home. Whether you just want to drop a few dollars off of your gas bill or you are looking for a better way to fuel your home altogether, doing just a few things can make a tremendous amount of difference in your home.

Why bother with cost efficiency? You can afford the bills so why bother? Many people will be shocked to learn that they can lose up to 25% or more of the energy in their home without the need to. You literally could be flushing your money down the drain.

The good news is that making your home energy efficient does not have to be overly challenging. It also does not have to be overly costly either. There are some changes that will cost a decent amount of money to implement into a home. These are usually the things that need to be taken into consideration if you plan to save a great deal of money.

As you will see in this e-book, there are plenty of things that you can do to better your home's ability to use energy more wisely from just about every aspect you can imagine. But, in our first chapters, we need to take the time to really analyze if in fact making the change is worth it.

There are some products and some companies that do promise that you will save a great deal of money and you wind up investing a great deal to wind up not saving anything.

The best thing for anyone that is looking to improve their home's ability to use energy wisely is to take a good look at what the product or need is, how it is used, the cost of the product and the cost of the installation and then determine if in fact it has the potential of making up those funds through energy savings. Some won't. Others will.

Throughout this e-book you will learn things that you can do right away to improve the energy efficiency of your home. You will also learn different ways to save money on everyday needs that you have. You will find yourself saving money and living in a more efficient and environmentally friendly home.

## Chapter 1: Determining Current Costs

One of the first things that you should do when looking at your ability to make your home more cost efficient is to know just what you are currently paying.

By taking the time to determine what you are currently spending on energy, you can better determine which areas you have the potential to save with. In each area of the country, there are different rates, different co ops and a wide range of different types of fuel to take into consideration.

It is up to you to find out what you are paying based on your monthly bill payments. Look at those payments and notice two things.

- What is the amount that you pay per unit that you use of that fuel type?
- What is the amount of that fuel type that you use per month in units?

Your goal, then, is to notice how you can change these.

### Can You Lower The Cost Per Unit?

The first way to determine if you can lower your costs with your fuel usage is to determine if you have the most cost effective provider of that fuel.

In many areas of the country, there are several providers of each type of fuel that you need. For example, you may have a choice in which gas company you use or which electric company that you use. If that is the case, then you should determine which is capable of providing you with the lowest rate per unit of fuel used.

To find out if you have an option in this service, simply contact your local government. They can easily tell you which providers are available as well as provide contact information to you.

Then, give each provider a call and ask them if they do in fact provide to your home. If so, then ask what their rates per unit are, as well as any transfer or account set up fees that they may have. Do this for all of the providers in your area until you find the most affordable choice.

By doing this, you can instantly save money without having to worry about investing anything but a few minutes of your time.

### Can You Lower The Number of Units?

The next step in this process is to determine if you can lower the number of units that you use of your fuel type. Now, the most simplistic of ways to do this is through simply turning off more power or fuel to your home.

One thing that people do not realize is just how much it matters that you turn off and unplug the appliances and other tools for your home.

Throughout the next pages of this e-book, you will learn not only how to improve the efficiency of your home, but also how to simply use less energy altogether. When you do this, you are better able to find lower costs.

For now, start off by investing a few minutes right now. Get up and walk from room to room in your home. Turn off any light, any fan, any appliance that is on. Don't forget to unplug those units that leave LED lights on even when they are turned off. These units can save you a great deal of money. Go ahead; see how much you can already save just by doing this.

## **Chapter 2: Cost over Savings Analysis**

Before we get into saving you money with methods to lower the number of units that you spend on your fuel each month, we do need to show you the benefits of energy savings by smart investment.

Because the world is in a fuel crisis and the cost of gas and other energy means continues to rise, there are those not so nice guys out there that are promoting products that are anything but a way to save money. These products may work, but probably do not.

The trick is that you need to know before you purchase them if in fact they are something that is cost effective or if they are something that will be a waste of your hard earned money.

We can help you with a few good tips about purchasing any item that may be presented to you as a way to save energy on your home's fuel usage. Take some time to really think about what you are investing in before you do so. This alone can save you money.

### **Tips for Analyzing Benefit**

Take these tips to heart:

- What is the product promising to do for you? Any product that is promising amazing results is probably not providing them. If there was a miracle product out there, wouldn't we all have it by now?
- What is the cost of this product in the first place? How much will it cost you to purchase, install and then use this product?

- Does this cost actually figure any savings to you within the first days of use? In other words, it should be able to immediately help you to save money on your energy needs.
- Finally, how long will it take you to make up the difference in the cost of the product over the amount of money you have invested in it? If you can not get your costs back quick enough, it too may not be the right choice for your needs.

When you take these things into consideration, you will find yourself better able to understand the true benefit of any supposed energy savings gadget that is out there. Now, there are sure to be those things that do actually work too. But, you need to find them first.

### **Know Before You Buy**

There are several things that you should know about before you invest in these energy savings products as well. Now, mind you, if you are talking about a ten dollar investment, it does not take all of this research. But, if you are talking about replacing or amending any of your major energy producing systems in your home, such as your furnace, then it pays to pay attention to the details.

One thing to find out is who the company that is offering this product actually is. For example, who is marketing this product to you? If you can take a few minutes to find this out, you can log into the Better Business Bureau's website and find out if in fact they have had any claims put in against the company or person that may in fact have to do with this product.

You can also search for reviews of the product by using your favorite search engine and the name of the product followed by the word review. When you do this, you may find several different websites all providing a different look at what this product can or possibly will not do for you.

Take the time to determine if there are good or just bad points to this product.



Also beneficial is to take some time to learn about the way that the product's manufacturer backs up their claim. If you find that the product does not work as effectively as it has promised, can you send it back to them? If so, before you even purchase it, you should know where you can return it to get your funds back.

Doing these things is almost a must when you are purchasing from a company that you have not heard about in the past. What's more is that protecting yourself is something you have to do.

### **Is It Worth The Cost?**

There are plenty of traps out there that can really cut into any potential that you have in gaining anything from a product. But, the bottom line is that the product that you are purchasing to help you to save money must be able to actually do that.

To do it, the cost of the product must be able to be made up quickly by the product saving you the money.

You should also take some time to determine if this product fits a need that you have. If you are investing in a \$2000 new furnace for a home you do not use, it may not be all that beneficial to you. But, if you use that furnace each day, then this money can come back to you ten fold quickly, if the product is worth the investment of course.

Finally, although we have said quite a few negative things here regarding products on the market that may not be beneficial to your home's energy efficient needs, it is important to note that there are plenty of great companies and services out there that actually are capable of providing the highest quality service as well as lowering your costs for fuel.

In fact, if you think about it, solar panels wouldn't be around if someone hadn't thought to use the sun's powers to heat us.

You also would not have plenty of the other things that we use each and every day to if someone hadn't thought that this was a great idea and then made it happen.

Therefore, it does make good sense to insure that you do take the time to consider what the product is and what it is promising. While there are scams out there, there are also quite a few beneficial products on the market that can better your ability to save money on your home's fuel needs too.

## **Chapter 3: Getting Started By Finding Your Biggest Needs**

Now that you have an idea of how to go about considering any and all products that you will put into your home, you should be considering what your biggest potential need for your attention is.

As you found out just how much you are spending each month on your energy needs, you should be able to see which your largest consumer is. For most people, this is gas.

### **Gas**

Gas is quite expensive and there is no doubt that in the coming years the prices of it will continue to rise. But, there is more to consider than just that. Think about the fact that within the next sixty years, most scientists believe that we will have exhausted all of our crude oil supplies around the world, leaving all of us to face the fact that there may not be any gas left to use.

As the supply of a product dwindles, the costs of it go up. To make matters worse, we continue to use more and more gas each and every year.

In addition to that, gas is not the world's healthiest fuel choice to burn. It does not help the environment when we burn it daily in our cars and to heat our homes. Simply, depleting the vast resources we have as well as hurting the environment while we use it are two reasons to stay away from gas usage.

So, what does this mean? It means that now is the time to look at how you can save gas costs within your home. The prices are going to continue to rise and there is no doubt your bills will continue to rise as well. Yet, this does not have to mean that you can keep losing a great deal of money either.

There are plenty of ways to save on gas, as you will see throughout this e-book. If it is your biggest cost in fuel usage in your home, this is where you want to start.

## **Others to Think About**

Of course, gas is not the only type of fuel that you use in your home. In fact, electricity can be another potential money saver if you learn to use it wisely. In fact, all you need to do is to invest your time in finding out where you use these fuel sources and how you can save in doing so.

## **What Do I Do Now?**

Once you have found out what your fuel costs are and where your largest money saver is, you can begin to look for answers to your specific needs in energy savings. But, there are some other things to think about too.

Making the big changes can be costly. Therefore, you will want to do all of our little changes first so that you can go back later and make larger ones with the funds that you save. Here's what we mean.

If you take the time to install some added insulation in your home, you will begin to reap the benefits of needing less fuel to cool or to heat your home. Now, take this savings and consider stockpiling it, so to speak. When you can, down the road consider purchasing solar panels for your roof so that you can begin using literally free power instead.

There is no doubt that some changes are going to be costly, but if you can find them beneficial in the long run, they may be well worth it.

## **Chapter 4: Start Small For Big Savings**

Throughout the next chapters in our e-book, you will find many, many different tips and tricks to helping you to save money on your home's energy needs.

But, as we mentioned, it is smart, even most beneficial to start small and work up to larger changes in your home. Now, that does not mean that you can not do both, but we will begin talking about some of the small, inexpensive ways that you can begin to see energy efficiency in your home.

In the next pages, we will list some pretty simple things you can do right now to get started at saving your hard earned money.

### **Insulate Your Water Heater**

There are several things that you can improve with your water heater to see benefits in energy savings.

First off, do you realize that you are heating water to a certain temperature for your shower or your washing machine only to bring that temperature down by mixing it with cold water so that it is usable? Most people can not use straight hot water and that's where some savings can come in. Lower the hot water temperature to the lowest comfortable setting for your needs.

If you have an energy efficient hot water heater, you can save a great deal of money just not heating the water as hot as you normally would. Most hot water heaters have dials that you can use.

You can lower it just a bit or a good amount, just do not drop it below 120 F, as this is an unsafe level for bacteria and sanitation reasons. This is especially helpful if you have an electric heater.

Another thing to consider doing is to install a timer on your water heater. What is the sense of warming water over and over during the day if you are not home or do not use it during the day? Have the water heater timer kick on before you come home from work so that hot water is ready and waiting for you.

Even better is insuring that the timer keeps the heater off during the night when you know you won't be using it. You can again set the temperature on your hot water heater to aid in getting it right.

Probably one of the largest benefits in regards to your water heater is to have it insulated. Most of the time, your water heater will already be insulated, you just need to take it to the next step. By adding insulation around the outside of your water heater, you are keeping the heat inside the water heater and therefore reducing the need for the heater to turn on and heat, using fuel to do so.

This is a large benefit to anyone that is perhaps housing their water heater in the basement or in another area of their home that is not heated.

There are two solutions here. First, you can purchase prepaid hot water heaters to easily apply to your hot water heater. These fit snugly over it and take just minutes to install.

Another option is to consider making your own with strips of insulation cut the size of the circumference of the water heater. Use duct tape to keep it in place. Just be careful not to cover the areas where gas or piping are located otherwise the water heater will not function properly for you.

## **Your Piping**

The next big yet easy energy saving solution for you to consider is to insulate your home's piping. Piping carries hot water to and from the various faucets in your home. The route that it takes is important to consider.

In addition, it is important to insure that while the hot water is traveling to its destination it is staying as hot as possible. If not, you will be tempted to just up the temperature on your hot water tank.

Yet, all you will need to do is to insulate the pipes to insure that the water temperature does not drop when traveling from the hot water heater to the actual place where you will use it.

This can be very beneficial to those that have piping that runs through areas of your home that are not heated, such as the basement or even outside. When this happens, the temperature of those pipes can become very cold, especially in winter months, drastically lowering the temperature of the hot water you need.

To remedy this, just purchase and install insulation for your hot water pipes. You will find very easy to use pre-made foam pipe insulation available to use.

To do so, just cut down one side of the insulation with a sharp knife so that you can insert it over the top of the piping. Make sure to measure for a snug fit too. Snap it onto the piping. When you come to a corner, joint or other angle, all you need to do is to bend the foaming to form fit over the piping. Most of the time, this is easy to do. Then, use duct tape to cover any of the slits you have made and the joints.

It also pays to do this with cold pipes as well. These pipes often sweat and then drip onto the other hot pipes, again, lowering the temperature in them. In addition, insulating them can help to protect them from freezing and or breaking during winter months.

### **You're Furnace**

Your furnace is probably one of the largest consumers of energy in your home. It makes sense that you should want to take into consideration any and all different types of ways to keep those costs lower.

One of the simplest yet most effective methods to keeping your furnace running efficient is to simply change the furnace filters often. Both your air conditioning units and your heating units have filters that allow air to pass through them.

When your filters are clogged with dust and other stuff, it makes it harder for the air to get into your unit and therefore makes the unit work harder.

The harder that it works, the more energy it needs to have. In fact, if they are overly clogged up, you can cause your entire unit to become overheated and then find problems such as your compressor going.

See, the problem here is not the costs though. Your filters are likely to cost just a few dollars and they are even easy to replace. Yet, people just do not get to their furnace and take care of it as often as they should. You should check your furnace filters each month.

There are two different types of filters you can use. The first is the standard type and these are very inexpensive to purchase and are disposable. Many people dispose of these each month just to make it easier on themselves instead of having to bother with checking them.

If you purchase other type, which is a more expensive, allergen and small particle filter, you may not want to dispose of it each month. Rather, put it up to the light to see if in fact light can make it through. If not, then it is time to replace them which is likely to be one time every three or so months.

You may also have a self charging electrostatic filter. These filters still need your attention at least each month. Here, you will want to clean them monthly by rinsing them from the clean side. These usually need to be replaced one time every several years.

Another benefit that you can get from your furnace is to insure that you have it checked and cleaned each year. You should do this as it can help to improve the overall efficiency of the unit. Most heating and cooling experts say that having the unit checked each month can help you to save throughout the year and keep you from having to replace the unit too soon.

## **Ceiling Fans**

Another aspect of your home that you can save some money on is the ceiling fan. Most homes have these installed throughout them. If you do not, consider adding them. Most of the time, they are not too costly, and can even be found quite inexpensively.



You can save a great deal of money with ceiling fans if they are used right.

In the summer, use your ceiling fan in a counterclockwise direction. Allowing it to spin this way will keep air moving. Moving air feels cooler and therefore you will not need to use your air conditioning as much. In addition, it will help to keep the air moving and keep the thermostat set higher. The air conditioning units in homes will use a great deal more energy than that of a ceiling fan.

But, in the winter, you should use them as well. In this case, have them spin at their lowest setting and in reverse (clockwise) so as to push the hot air that rises from the ceiling down onto the working area of your home.

At the lowest setting, it will not cause a breeze in your home either but will keep the furnace from having to be set too low during the winter months.

In the coming chapters, we will talk more about other elements in your home that need to be taken into consideration when it comes to energy efficiency.

There is no doubt that you may be thinking that covering your pipes and keeping your hot water tank insulated are going to cost you some money. That is true. In fact, you may find yourself spending a couple of dollars and investing some time in making sure that those things are happening.

Yet, the benefits of doing these things with these units in your home are definite. There is no doubt that you can keep your energy costs down by investing a little money in these projects.

## **Chapter 5: You're Window Savings**

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