

Energy-Wise Checklist



>> Using energy wisely can increase the comfort of your home, help the environment and reduce your energy costs. Test your energy smarts with our quiz and learn some energy use tips along the way.

Energy IQ Test

WHAT IS YOUR THERMOSTAT SETTING?

- In winter, during the day, if your setting is:
 - 68° or less, score 6 points
 - 69°, score 5 points
 - 70°, score 4 points
 - 71°, score 3 points
 - 72°, score 2 points
 - 73°, score 1 point
 - 74° or more, score 0 pointsSCORE _____
- On winter nights, if your setting is:
 - 60° or less, score 10 points
 - 61°, score 9 points
 - 62°, score 8 points
 - 63°, score 7 points
 - 64°, score 6 points
 - 65°, score 5 points
 - 66° or more, score 0 pointsSCORE _____
- In the summer, if you use an air conditioner, if your setting is:
 - 80°, score 6 points
 - 79°, score 5 points
 - 78°, score 4 points
 - 77° or lower, score 3 points
 - Score 6 points if you do not use air conditioning.SCORE _____

IS YOUR HOUSE DRAFTY?

To check drafts, hold a tissue where windows and doors meet their frames.

- If the tissue doesn't move, there is no draft around your windows, score 10 points. SCORE _____
- If there is no draft around your doors, score 5 points. SCORE _____
- If you keep your fireplace or woodstove damper closed to block the air flow when it's not in use, score 6 points. (Score 6 points if you have no fireplace.) SCORE _____
- If you have storm windows or high-efficiency insulating windows, score 10 points. SCORE _____
- If you have storm doors or a vestibule, score 5 points. SCORE _____

IS YOUR HOUSE INSULATED?

- If you have 6 inches of insulation or more in your attic, score 20 points. If you have 2 to 4 inches of insulation, score 10 points. SCORE _____
- If all exterior walls are insulated, score 10 points. SCORE _____

IS YOUR FLOOR INSULATED?

- If there is an unheated space under your house and your floor is insulated, score 10 points. If you have a heated basement and the basement walls are insulated, score 10 points. SCORE _____

SPACE AND WATER HEATING

- Depending on your heating system, score 6 points if your heating system was serviced since last winter or you regularly change filters on your forced air system or you clean baseboard units on your baseboard heating system. SCORE _____
- If the water heater temperature setting is 120° or lower, score 6 points. If above 120°, score 0 points. SCORE _____

► NOW ADD LINES 1 – 13 TO GET YOUR TOTAL SCORE: _____

What Your Score Means

90 or above: Congratulations! You're making energy-wise decisions. To further control costs, look at the age and ENERGY STAR® rating of your appliances.

76 to 89 points: Review the areas where your score was lower.

75 or under: There's room for improvement. The areas you scored the fewest points may be the best places to start. Read on for energy wise tips.



No matter your score, there are always ways to save energy. Learn more and earn rewards for saving energy with our Energy Saver program at nyseg.com and rge.com.



Energy Action List

There are many no cost or low-cost methods to improve your score. Here are few you might want to consider:

Heating and Cooling Systems

Heating

- Set thermostats at 65° to 70° during the winter and at 58° when away from home. Keep the thermostat higher if an infant, ill or elderly person lives in your home.
- Install programmable thermostats to turn down temperature automatically.
- Have your heating and cooling systems inspected annually by a professional. Inefficient heating and cooling systems can increase fuel consumption.
- Hire a qualified specialist to inspect your chimney, flues and vents to ensure they are clear and working properly.
- Check for and eliminate leaks in duct work. Leaks can usually be repaired easily and inexpensively with duct tape available at most hardware stores.
- Insulate ducts and pipes that run through unheated areas.
- Replace or clean furnace and air conditioner filters when they get dirty or once every month.
- Warm air rises, so use registers to direct warm air flow across the floor.



Cooling

- Consider using window fans.
- If you buy an air conditioner, check energy efficiency ratios (EER) of models on the market. The higher the EER rating, the more efficient the unit and the less it costs to run.
- Be sure your outside air conditioning condenser is shaded from the sun. If it's not installed in a shady area, create shade with a tree or fence. Avoid using bushes that may block the flow of air around the cooling unit.

Lights and Appliances

- Turn off unused lights, stereos, televisions, computers, etc.
- During the day, use as few lights as necessary. Let daylight do the work.
- Paint walls and ceilings light colors which reflect rather than absorb light, reducing the need for extra lighting.
- Keep light bulbs and shades dust-free. Dust absorbs light.
- Use three-way bulbs where possible and choose the wattage or amount of light for your needs.
- Use a concentrated light for tasks like reading, sewing or cooking.
- Consider replacing incandescent bulbs with light emitting diode (LED) bulbs or compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).
- Use fluorescent, rather than incandescent, fixtures and bulbs where possible. Fluorescent lights are three to four times more energy efficient than incandescent lights.
- With incandescent lighting, use one high-wattage bulb rather than several low-wattage bulbs. Replace on-off switches with solid-state dimmer switches to better control lighting and efficiency.



The Kitchen

Refrigerator

- Locate your refrigerator in a cool spot with good air circulation and away from heat sources like direct sunlight, your kitchen range and heat vents.
- Open and close the refrigerator door quickly and infrequently.
- Carefully select a refrigerator/freezer with energy-saving features. Units with the ENERGY STAR label are among the most efficient. Be aware that manual-defrost freezers use up to 30% less energy than units that defrost automatically.
- If you have a manual-defrost freezer, be sure to defrost regularly. You should not allow a build-up of more than 1/4" of ice. Check your owner's manual for specific instructions.
- Avoid putting hot foods in the refrigerator.
- Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils regularly.
- Use your refrigerator optimally. A full but not tightly-packed refrigerator is most efficient. Conversely, a full freezer will be more efficient.
- Inspect the seals on your refrigerator, freezer and oven doors to ensure that they fit tightly. Simply place a lighted flashlight inside the appliance. If you see light around the gasket after the door is closed, replace the gasket.

Range

- When cooking small meals, use only small electric appliances.
- When necessary, pre-heat your oven for no more than 10 minutes.
- Carefully plan your use of the oven. When possible, avoid using range burners that are less efficient than a closed oven. A complete meal can be cooked in the oven as economically as one food item.
- Resist peeking into the oven. Every time you open the door, you lose heat.
- Check all range burners. If the flame on your natural gas stove burns with a yellow rather than a clear blue flame, improper combustion is occurring. Something may be clogging the burner outlets air inlets. Turn off the natural gas, remove the burner and clean these areas with a wire pipe cleaner and vacuum cleaner. If the flame color does not change, call a qualified specialist.
- Use flat-bottomed pans with covers and match the size of the pots and pans to the size of your burners. Also, minimize the amount of water in pans and use the lowest heat setting needed.



Other Ideas

- Use the dishwasher only when full. In addition, let clean dishes air dry.
- Install a water flow restrictor in the kitchen sink faucet to reduce the use of hot water.
- Use cold water rather than hot when operating your food disposal.



The Bath

- Take showers rather than baths. A typical shower requires only half as much hot water as an average bath.
- Use your exhaust fans sparingly. In just one hour they can remove a houseful of warmed or cooled air.
- Repair all leaky faucets. One drop per second can waste as much as 10 gallons of water in a week. If the water is hot, you are losing the energy used to heat the water.
- Install water flow restrictors on your shower heads and faucets to reduce your water use.



The Laundry

- Wash clothes in hot water only when necessary. Always use cold water for rinsing.
- Operate washers and dryers with full loads to make best use of warm water or warm air. Check your owner's manual to determine the maximum load.
- Clean the lint screen on your dryer after each use to keep it running efficiently. Also check the dryer exhaust vent periodically to be sure it is not blocked.
- Don't over dry clothes in the dryer.
- Hang your laundry outdoors to dry. The fewer times you use your clothes dryer, the less energy you'll use.
- Turn your iron off a few minutes before you've finished ironing. Residual heat will finish the job.



The Water Heater

- Periodically remove sediment from the bottom of your water heater. Draining water until it appears clear removes sediment and improves efficiency. Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Insulate your electric water heater. If it feels warm to the touch, you may not have enough insulation. You can wrap the sides with an insulation blanket to reduce heat loss. This insulation could reduce energy use by 5% to 8%. Check your owner's manual for specific instructions.

- Set the temperature on low (120°) and use warm instead of hot water for washing clothes and dishes. However, temperatures lower than 120° may result in increased detergent use. (Note: Dishwashers without booster heaters may require a water temperature of 140°. Check your owner's manual for specific instructions.)
- Ensure maximum efficiency of your oil-fired water heater. Have a qualified specialist inspect the flame, damper and stack temperature.
- If you'll be away from home for an extended period of time, turn off your water heater. For an electric water heater, turn off the circuit breaker or remove the fuse. If you have a natural gas water heater, turn the setting to "pilot."

The Attic

- Insulate your attic. Homes heated by natural gas and oil should have at least six inches (R-19) of insulation and homes heated by electricity should have at least 12 inches (R-36).
- Insulate and weather strip your attic door.
- Install a vapor barrier in your attic to reduce the flow of moisture from inside your home through the insulation. This reduces condensation that can lower insulation efficiency. When installing vapor barriers, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Vent your attic appropriately. When adding insulation, you may have to add ventilation as well. As a general rule, you need one square foot of free ventilating area for each 150 square feet of attic floor area. Keep attic vents clear of debris such as insulation, tree limbs, bird nests, etc.



The Basement

- Caulk or seal all cracks in masonry walls.
- Insulate basement walls, especially those portions above the ground, and the rim joist where the basement ceiling joists meet the foundation wall.
- Insulate between floor joists over unheated areas.
- Insulate crawl spaces under heated areas.
- In your workshop, use hand tools whenever possible. Maintain power tools in top operating condition.

Important Contact Information



Natural gas odors or emergencies:
1.800.572.1121 (24 hours a day, every day)
or call **911**

Electricity interruptions or emergencies:
nyseg.com or **1.800.572.1131**
(24 hours a day, every day)

Customer relations center: 1.800.572.1111

Hearing- and speech-impaired:
Dial **711** (New York Relay Service)

nyseg.com



Natural gas odors or emergencies:
1.800.743.1702 (24 hours a day, every day)
or call **911**

Electricity interruptions or emergencies:
rge.com or **1.800.743.1701**
(24 hours a day, every day)

Customer relations center: 1.800.743.2110

Hearing- and speech-impaired: Dial **711**
(New York Relay Service) or **1.800.962.3293**

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