



Priority actions for energy use...

Everyday things you can do

Switch to Green Power

- It's easy. All you have to do is contact your current electricity supplier and tell them you want to buy your electricity through an approved Green Power program. Or, you can shop around and compare prices from other suppliers.
- Green Power is produced from renewable energy sources including solar, wind, biomass and hydro generation. You can choose Green Power for all your energy, or nominate a percentage of your supply.

Use less power, at home and at work

- Switch appliances off at the power point, instead of leaving them on 'stand-by' when you've finished using them.
- Install energy-efficient lighting, such as compact florescent bulbs, and turn lights off when you leave a room. Consider installing movement or light sensors for outdoor areas or rooms that are not always occupied. Make the most of natural light wherever possible.
- Use less hot water, and turn the hot water system off if it's not needed for an extended period of time. Water heating accounts for 30% of total household energy use and about the same proportion of an average Australian household's greenhouse gas emissions.
- Adjust your hot water thermostat – reduce the temperature to a more efficient level but don't go lower than 60°C as dangerous bacteria could form. A 5°C reduction can save up to 250 kg of greenhouse gas each year.
- Install a solar hot water system (once installed it will produce free hot water) and make energy efficiency a top priority for the booster or back up. Ask your supplier about Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) for solar water heaters – you might be eligible for a discount on the purchase cost.
- Operate the dishwasher only when it's full and choose the most appropriate wash cycle – use economy mode where possible (lowest temperature or shortest running time) and let dishes air-dry.
- Keep the fridge in a cool, well-ventilated spot, away from the oven and the sun. Make sure the coils are clean and well ventilated. Check the fridge and freezer doors close properly and are airtight – replace the seals and adjust the door hinge if necessary. Turn off the fridge or freezer when it's not needed – leave the door slightly ajar.
- Operate the washing machine only when it's full or adjust the cycle and load for a reduced capacity. Wash using cold water – this can save 3kg of greenhouse gases per load compared to a hot wash. Air or sun-dry clothes rather than using a dryer.
- In summer, make sure you're not over cooling at home or at work – 1°C difference in temperature between indoors and outdoors adds 10% to energy costs and greenhouse emissions. Set the room temperature between 23 – 26°C.
- Add extra insulation to walls and ceilings, and keep cooler by using external shading such as eaves, awnings, shutters or trees to reduce heat gain by as much as 80%.





Priority actions for energy use... (cont'd)

- In winter, turn down the heat when you're sleeping or away from home, and put on more clothing before adjusting a thermostat. Set the room temperature between 18 – 21°C.
- Check for air gaps and seal off draughts in doors, windows, fireplaces, air outlets, vents and skirting boards – use an appropriate draught-proofing product.
- Make energy efficiency a top priority when you're purchasing products, appliances and equipment. Do some research. Consider the ongoing running costs over the life of the item, not just the initial purchase and installation cost.

Energy ratings

- Look for the Energy Rating Label with its easy-to-recognise star rating – the more stars the more efficient the appliance, with a six- star rating being the highest level of efficiency.
- The Energy Label has two sections, the star rating – which gives a quick comparative assessment of the model's energy efficiency, and the annual energy consumption – which provides an estimate of the annual energy use of the appliance. An improvement of one star can mean savings of around 10%.
- For products such as computers or fax machines look for the ENERGY STAR logo. ENERGY STAR is an international standard for energy-efficient electronic equipment. Products with the ENERGY STAR logo have a 'stand-by' or 'sleep' mode so energy consumption is lowered when the equipment is not in use.
- You may have an ENERGY STAR compliant product, but check to make sure the energy saving mode is switched on. It's not standard protocol for manufacturers to enable this by default.
- For more substantial purchases and installations, such as household lighting, cooling or heating systems, ask your electrician and design and trade professionals for advice. Through careful planning, design and installation you may be able to generate even greater long-term savings. Check whether building systems and plants can perform more efficiently by being fine-tuned to real demands.

Building and renovating

- If you're renovating or building you have a great opportunity to make your home or workplace comfortable and energy efficient.
- Make energy efficiency the top priority when you're talking to your builder, architect or tradesperson. Carefully consider sunlight, shade, natural light, room layout, ventilation and building materials. Each component has a big impact on the thermal properties and energy demands of a home or workplace.
- Good advice from energy smart designers and suppliers can save you thousands of dollars in ongoing costs, provide a more optimal solution and add long-term value to your investment.

How can I find out more?

Visit www.livingthing.net.au

