

Everyday Environmental Stewardship



Energy Efficient Appliances

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Key issue:

Energy-Hog Appliances

Stewardship Opportunity

Energy-Efficient Appliances

Appliances have three price tags: the cost of the actual product, the energy it consumes, and the repair and maintenance costs. *Old* appliances consume large amounts of energy and have high risk for costly repairs and inconvenient failures. The average home spends approximately \$1,866 in annual electricity costs per year and over a quarter of this cost comes from home appliances. *EnergyStar* models use 15-75% less electricity than their conventional counterparts and are equal in performance. *EnergyStar Most Efficient* models use the least electricity, making them even better than standard or *EnergyStar* models. Since 1992, the EnergyStar program has helped save 4 billion metric tons of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere. And if combined with good stewardship practice, (*Less Is More!*) the impact of efficient appliances can be even greater.

Stewardship Opportunity — Replace Old Appliances

Refrigerators and Freezers

Because refrigerators are in operation all the time and consume large amounts of energy, it is important to choose a model that is cost efficient to run and will not waste electricity. A refrigerator can consume as much as 20% of a home's electricity. Many models manufactured before 1999 do not meet current Department of Energy energy efficiency standards. *EnergyStar* refrigerator models use at least 9% less electricity than required by current federal standards. Replacing a refrigerator purchased before 2000 with a new *EnergyStar* qualified model would save enough to pay for itself in a few years.



Go to <https://www.energystar.gov/products/refrigerators> for more information on product

lists, manufacturer lists, purchasing tips, FAQs, rebate finders, and more. For a refrigerator savings calculator, go to

<https://www.energystar.gov/products/refrigerators/flip-your-fridge>

This will calculate your annual savings by replacing your current refrigerator with a comparable *EnergyStar* model. Make sure to have your refrigerator's model year and its size, as well as your price per kWh of electricity, found on your electricity bill.

Here is an example of savings potential: an *EnergyStar Most Efficient* refrigerator consumes 365 kWh annually, while a standard *EnergyStar* model consumes about 450 kWh annually. A comparable model from the 1990s consumes about 960 kWh annually. By switching from a fridge made in the late 1990s to an updated model, you can save \$840 over 5 years. Purchasing a *Most Efficient* fridge model with a top freezer not only saves money in energy costs, but also has a lower original cost. A 2025 Kenmore top freezer refrigerator, rated *EnergyStar Most Efficient*, costs around \$1000, while a bottom freezer GE model of a similar size with a standard Energy Star rating costs around \$2000.

Washing Machines and Dryers

Buying an *EnergyStar* washing machine is especially important because washing machines consume large amounts of both electricity and water. *EnergyStar* qualified clothes washers use about 20% less energy and 30% less water than standard washers. Over their lifetimes, *EnergyStar* washers can save around \$530 in energy costs. *EnergyStar* also certifies certain clothes dryers, including heat pump dryers, which do not require a typical dryer vent and consume around 70% less energy than typical clothes dryers. For washing machines, go to

https://www.energystar.gov/products/clothes_washers,

and for dryers go to

https://www.energystar.gov/products/clothes_dryers

for more information on product lists, manufacture lists, purchasing tips, FAQs, rebate finders, expert advice, and more. And remember: Clothes washing and drying practices offer especially good opportunities for improved stewardship.

Less Is More!

Dishwashers

EnergyStar qualified dishwashers can save 5800 gallons of water over their lifetime, and cost only around \$50 in energy per year. *EnergyStar* dishwashers use improved dishwashing technology to improve efficiency and performance. Using an *EnergyStar* dishwasher instead of handwashing your dishes can decrease your utility bills by about \$220 per year, saving \$3300 over the dishwasher's lifetime, not to mention hours of personal time. Go to <https://www.energystar.gov/products/dishwashers> for more information on product lists, manufacture lists, purchasing tips, FAQs, rebate finders, expert advice, and more. Make sure you buy a dishwasher knowing its utility use (electricity and water) per load. And remember: Dish washing practices also offer especially good opportunities for improved stewardship.

Less Is More!

Dehumidifiers

An *EnergyStar* dehumidifier uses 20% less energy than a comparable conventional model, while still removing the same amount of moisture. *EnergyStar* certifies both portable dehumidifiers, which dehumidify a single room, and whole home dehumidifiers, which need to be installed by a contractor. Go to:

<https://www.energystar.gov/products/dehumidifiers>

for more information on product lists, manufacture lists, purchasing tips, FAQs, rebate finders, expert advice, and more.

Consider, however, that you may not actually need a dehumidifier. Analyze what is prompting the need for a dehumidifier. Often compact storage in air-tight containers with dehumidifying pellets which absorb water can meet the need. (A good example is storage of sheet music for choirs.) Water absorbing pellets can be used for rooms and homes.

You can also follow some simple steps to not need any dehumidifying devices at all. These include improving the drainage around your home to prevent leakage into the basement (extend down spouts away from your home, make sure that soil slopes away from your foundation, avoid over-watering of plants near your foundation); making sure that your clothes dryer is fully ventilated to the outdoors; repairing all leaky faucets; and ensuring that there are no drafts coming from outside (i.e. bulkhead) which can flood the basement with humid air.

Room AC

EnergyStar room air conditioners use variable speed technology to keep your room cool while saving energy and being quieter than conventional room ACs. *EnergyStar* air conditioning units also have better materials and instructions for sealing air leaks around the unit, saving money and making the AC more effective. It is also important to properly size your air conditioning unit for your room. For information on sizing, as well as product lists, manufacture lists, purchasing tips, FAQs, rebate finders, expert advice, and more, go to https://www.energystar.gov/products/room_air_conditioners.

Rebates and Cost/Benefit

Discounts and mail in rebates change rapidly. Go to

<https://www.energystar.gov/homesavings>

for information on energy saving home upgrades. You can also use <https://www.energystar.gov/rebate-finder?s=mega> to find rebates and special offers based on your zip code, and <https://www.energystar.gov/about/federal-tax-credits> to investigate what federal tax incentives you may be eligible for.