



Invasive Species  
Council of BC

HOW TO TAKE ACTION

# Be Energy Smart!



## HOW DOES ENERGY AFFECT CLIMATE CHANGE?

Energy production and consumption is one of the largest contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions. By monitoring and better managing our energy usage, we can reduce the impacts of climate change that are going to be felt across the globe.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Any home, no matter when it was built, can be energy efficient. Newly constructed homes have a head start as they are built with stricter energy efficiency standards. However, older homes can easily be upgraded to improve their energy efficiency. By making your home more energy efficient, you will help contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases and your energy bill!

Although this resource is great to determine the small, quick fixes to improve your home's energy efficiency, this resource should not replace seeking a professional's advice.

## WHAT CHANGES CAN YOU MAKE TO BECOME MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT?

Follow this guide for simple ideas to become more energy efficient around your house!

### Kitchen

- » Microwave. Use less energy by reheating food in a microwave instead of the oven or stovetop.
- » Scrape unwanted leftovers into the compost instead of rinsing them and let the dishwasher do the dirty work!
- » Dishwasher. Assess each dishwasher load and use the appropriate setting to best clean your dishes. Also, give "air dry" a try!
- » Fridge. Make sure you don't overfill your fridge and allow air to flow. Make sure to also keep your fridge away from heat sources like your vent, stove, or even the sun.

### Bathroom

- » Shower. Did you know that you can save water and reduce your heating bill by taking a shower instead of taking a bath? You may want to consider purchasing a water-saving shower head to use even less hot water and make this change more effective!
- » Toilet. To save water, use a low-flow toilet that uses 4.8 litres per flush.
- » Fan. Install a timer switch for your ceiling fan to ensure it is on for the appropriate amount of time.

### Living Room

- » Lights. Switch your bulbs to LED bulbs to save energy. LED bulbs can last up to 15 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs.
- » Use a "power smart" strip to cut power to devices that are not in use.

### Dining Room

- » Sunlight. Block out unwanted sunlight and heat by installing curtains, drapes, blinds, or awnings.
- » Set the mood. Install dimmer switches and LED bulbs to reduce light use.

### Office

- » Computers. Enable the low power setting to save energy and have your battery last longer.
- » Use a "smart" power strip. Reduce unnecessary energy usage when laptops, printers or other equipment is in standby mode by using a "smart" power strip.
- » Seal air leakages. Ensure the areas around the windows, doors, electrical outlets and vents are properly sealed to prevent air leakages.

## Bedrooms

- » Windows. When selecting windows, choose windows with triple glazing on the east and north sides of your house to minimize heating and cooling waste.
- » Ceiling fan. Set your ceiling fan to run in a counterclockwise motion in the summertime for maximum comfort.
- » Seal cracks in walls, ceilings and floors. By sealing all cracks, you can prevent air escaping out of the bedroom.

## Laundry Room

### WASHER

- » Sorting your clothes. Try sorting your clothes by thickness rather than by colour. This reduces the energy needed to wash your clothes. This same principle can be applied for filling your dryer!
- » Filling the washer. Try to do full loads of laundry (less likely particles of clothing will end up in our oceans!) but do not overfill your washer, washers operate more efficiently when full.
- » Washer settings. Choose a high-speed or “extended spin” setting while washing your clothes to reduce drying time.
- » Washer temperature. Try washing your clothes in warm or cold water to save energy.

### DRYER

- » Clean the dryer lint trap. Clean the lint trap after every load. This increases the air flow and minimizes the energy needed to dry your clothes.
- » Avoid over-drying. Try using the sensor setting on your dryer or keep track how long it takes to dry your clothes, so you don't have the dryer running longer than you need.
- » Don't overfill. Like your washer, you also don't want to overfill your dryer. By overfilling your dryer, you are reducing air flow and increasing the strain on the motor.
- » Try air drying. During the warm summer months, try air drying your clothes! Not only will this help keep your house cool, but it will also save energy and protect your delicates and silks!

## Hallway

- » Lights. Turn off lights when not in use.
- » Weatherstripping. Apply weatherstripping around older exterior doors to waste less cooled air.

## Basement/Mechanical Room

- » Boiler. Insulate hot water pipes to save on heating costs.
- » Furnace. Change or clean filters every 3 months or as they become dirty and always make sure your furnace is serviced regularly.

## Outdoors

- » Weatherstrips. Weatherstrip doors to keep cool air inside.
- » Awnings. Use awnings or strategically positioned trees to help keep direct sunlight from overheating your home in the summer.
- » Use caulking. Seal joints of window casings with flexible caulking if you suspect air is leaking.
- » Insulation. Upgrading insulation and air sealing your home are some of the most cost-effective home improvements.
- » Solar panels. Consider installing solar panels on your roof to generate your own energy.

## Garage

- » Lights. Consider installing a motion sensor to use less energy.
- » Live close to work? Consider walking or biking to get some steps in and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- » Thinking of getting a new car? If your budget allows, consider buying a fuel-efficient vehicle.

## TAKE THIS ACTIVITY ONE STEP FURTHER!

You have read this guide and implemented some changes around your house – great work! Did you know that by sharing your experience by either posting about it on social media or talking about it with friends and family, you can inspire someone to make a change in their lives? Try it out and see who you inspire!

