Email Templates

Occupancy-Based Strategic Energy Management



As a participant in the Consumers Energy Occupancy-Based Strategic Energy Management (OB SEM), you have access to the following seasonal resources for your employees' residences:

Resource	Season/Release Timeline
Winter Savings Tips	1 st week of December
Water Savings Tips	2 nd week of March
Summer Savings Tips	2 nd week of June
Plug Loads & Appliances Savings Tips	1 st week of October

To separate each page into a separate PDF, you can print each page to PDF. You may also request individual PDFs to be sent directly to you via email by contacting Dillon Ackerman using the information at the bottom of the page.



Learn More! Contact Dillon Ackerman by phone at 612-699-7755 or by email at Dillon.Ackerman@cmsenergy.com

Winter Savings

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Coats, gloves, and hot cocoa; the perfect trio to keep our bodies warm when winter is at its peak! Our houses also have their trios to keep them warm on those cold & gray winter days; heating, insulation, and weatherproofing. These three systems are essential to surviving the winter unscathed! Unfortunately, they often come at a hefty cost. To help you manage those costs, Consumers Energy has put together a list of measures you can take at your home to lower your energy costs in the winter:

- 1- Make sure to **tune your furnace every 2 years, at least**. The efficiencies of poorly maintained furnaces depreciate annually with every hour of operation; leading to higher operating costs (i.e. higher bills), increased mechanical failure rates, and decreased combustion efficiency. The latter leads to carbon monoxide fume release into the home.
- 2- Setback your Smart Thermostat to **energy efficient settings**. For every 1°F of change in heating setpoint, the typical house would <u>save 1%</u> on heating costs every 8 hours. The recommended heating setpoints are 70°F during occupied hours and 60°F, otherwise.
- 3- Schedule your Smart Thermostat to "Away" mode when your house is unoccupied.
- 4- Open your window shades while the sun is shining on your windows. When the sun is shining on your house, it is actively heating your house, therefore, lowering the need for furnace. Just remember to close those shades once the sun is no longer shining on the windows to help insulate your windows.
- 5- Furnace **filters need to be replaced** every 3 months. A dirty filter reduces the amount of air going through the furnace, which lowers efficiency and increases energy bills.
- 6- Ensure an air-tight house by weatherproofing air access points such as doors, windows, and chimneys.
- 7- Insulate your roof, attic, rim joists, and ducts, as well as your main, basement, and crawlspace walls.



Water Savings

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At home, water is used for cooking, bathing, watering plants and gardens, and washing dishes and clothes. Water is an essential part of a functional house! But a drawback to using water, specifically hot water, is that you may pay for that use in two utility bills: municipal water bills, and energy bills for water heating. But there's no need to panic! Below is a list of things you can do at your home to save on your water and water heating bills:

- 1- Install low-flow water fixtures such as showerheads, and kitchen and bath faucet aerators. Low-flow shower heads are ones with 2.0 gallons/min (gpm) or lower. Low-flow kitchen faucet aerators are typically 1.5 gpm or lower. A low-flow bathroom faucet aerator typically has a flow of 1.25 gpm or lower. A 2-bathroom house with an electric resistance water heater can save as much as \$190 per year on hot water heating by installing low-flow water fixtures.
- 2- **Fix leaky water fixtures.** A fixture leaking at a rate of 1 drip per second wastes about \$35 per year.
- 3- Lower hot water heater setpoint to 120°F. Typical energy savings associated with lowering hot water heating setpoint from the default 140°F to 120°F can add up to \$400 per year; ranging between 4%-22% in energy consumption savings.
- 4- **Insulate your hot water tank & pipes** to reduce heat loss through the tank body and transmission pipes.
- 5- Replace your electric resistance hot water heater with an ENERGY STAR® certified water heater or a heat pump water heater. By implementing this measure, you may save up to 50% of your hot water heating energy consumption; accounting for 7-10% of your utility bill.
- 6- Replace your old dishwasher and clothes washer with ENERGY STAR[®] certified appliances. Consumers Energy offers up to a \$50 rebate for ENERGY STAR[®] certified washing machines.



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Summer Savings

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Summer is knocking at the door. While you get ready to have a fun-filled summer, you can start save on your electric bill to add to your vacation fund. Consumers Energy is here to help you with a few tips to realize those bill savings!

- 1- Make sure to tune your air conditioner every 2 years, at least. As with any mechanical technology, with a lack of routine maintenance, performance takes a toll. The annual performance deterioration rate for air conditioners is typically around 5%.
- 2- Setback your Smart Thermostat to energy efficient settings. For every 1°F of change in cooling setpoint, the typical house would <u>save 1%</u> on cooling costs every 8 hours. The recommended cooling setpoints are 75°F during occupied hours and 80°F, otherwise.
- 3- Schedule your Smart Thermostat to "Away" mode when your house is unoccupied.
- 4- Pre-cool your home at night. Electricity rates are higher during peak hours (typically between 11 am-3 pm) due to high demands. Pre-cooling your home at night would have you reach your desired temperature setpoint <u>at a lower cost</u>. Additionally, you would be helping in lowering electricity demand during peak hours, which would, in turn, improve transmission reliability. Consumers Energy offers various rates and incentives for customers enrolled in <u>Home Services programs</u> to help in those high-demand times.
- 5- **Close your window shades** while the sun is shining on your windows. When the sun is shining on your house, it is actively heating your house. Blocking that heat from coming into the house will help maintain your cooling setpoints, and, therefore, saving you money.
- 6- Air conditioner **filters need to be replaced** every 3 months. A dirty filter reduces the amount of air going through the air conditioner, which lowers air conditioner efficiency by 5%-15%.



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Plug Loads & Appliances

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Ghosts, zombies, and vampires; Halloween is full of monsters. But did you know that your home is full of phantoms and vampires? Energy consuming devices such as TVs, phone chargers, appliances, etc., are often referred to in the energy industry as Phantom Loads or Energy Vampires. These devices constantly drain energy while plugged in despite being unused. Therefore, that energy loss can go unchecked.

But do not fear! There's much you can do to curb those drains. Consumers Energy has put together a list of tools to help you on your hunt:

- 1- Unplug your phone chargers when not in use. While they don't consume as much when they're not in use, phone chargers still consume a small amount of energy via electric resistors
- 2- At minimum, set your computers, laptops, and smart TVs to "Sleep" mode when idle. Ideally, you can connect such devices to Advanced Power Strips that turn off peripheral and auxiliary devices connected to the primary devices such as your TV or computer when they turn off. You can get up to <u>40% off on your Advanced Power</u> <u>Strip</u> purchase from the Consumers Energy marketplace.
- 3- When you're ready for your next home remodeling project, be sure to search for ENERGY STAR[®] appliances. You can receive <u>up to \$75 in rebates</u> for the purchase of an ENERGY STAR[®] appliance. Plus, you can save as much as a \$1,000 annually by switching from a conventional whole house dehumidifier to an ENERGY STAR[®] whole house dehumidifier.
- 4- If you have extra appliances plugged in that you're not using, you can sign up to the <u>Appliance Recycling</u> <u>program</u> to receive as much as \$50 for each qualifying appliance. Recycling unneeded appliances that are plugged in can save you up to \$150 per year.



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