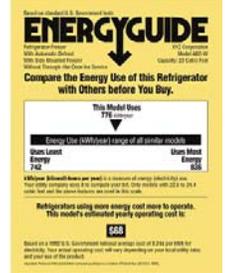


With energy prices on the rise, it's getting more expensive for Fairmont residents to power their homes

These labels help you select energy efficient appliances.

When purchasing new appliances, select energy-efficient equipment. Look for the EnergyStar® and Energy Guide labels. These labels provide useful information on the energy performance. The EnergyStar logo identifies exceptional products that save energy, water, the environment and money. The Energy Guide label lists the appliances' estimated energy use and the estimated operating cost per year based on national average electricity costs. If purchasing a new appliance is not on your agenda or in your budget, you can still conserve energy and save money by following the tips outlined below.



Winter Heating

Turning up the heat is necessary in the winter to keep out the cold Minnesota weather. Here are a few simple tips to make sure your home is efficiently keeping the warm air in and the cold out.

- Keep the thermostat set to 68 degrees, and set it back even more when you are away from home. Purchase a programmable thermostat to automatically turn the heat down at night and when you are not home.
- Make sure there is adequate insulation in your attic, walls, basement, crawl spaces and floors. Make sure the accesses to your attic are insulated and weather-stripped.
- Check your furnace filter monthly and change it when needed. Keep the space around your furnace clean to ensure it is operating efficiently.
- Install storm windows and doors, and replace any damaged weather-stripping or caulking.
- Remove window air conditioning units from your windows during the winter months, or fill the cracks with weather-stripping. Seal drafty windows with plastic.
- Use a portable electric space heater to add warmth to the room you are in. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe use.
- Close the fireplace damper and shut doors and heat vents in rooms that are not used.

Summer Cooling

During the summer months, keeping the house cool and comfortable can be a difficult and costly task. Keep these tips in mind to get the most out of cool air.

- During the day, block the heat from the sun by closing windows, doors and curtains.
- Turn down the thermostat to 80 degrees or higher when you are sleeping or away from home. Raising the temperature 5 degrees for 8 hours can reduce cooling costs by 3-5 percent.
- Avoid creating unnecessary heat and humidity in the house. Plan to do heat and moisture creating activities, such as washing dishes and cooking, before noon or after 8 p.m.
- Limit the amount of time you run kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans. Only run them for as long as it takes to get rid of any odors to minimize losing cool air.
- If you use a window air conditioning unit, make sure it fits correctly into the window to reduce the amount of cool air lost.
- Consider using a window fan, which requires as little as 1/10 the amount of energy needed to run an air conditioner.
- Clean dirt and leaves off of air conditioning coils on outside units to improve air flow.
- Make sure that ceiling fan blades are rotating counter-clockwise for a cooling effect. To make sure they are moving in the right direction, stand under the fan. If you are not feeling the downdraft, reverse the direction.

Everyday Tips To Save Energy

These no-cost or low-cost tips are easy ways to save energy and money all year round.

- Replace standard light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs and save 75% on lighting costs.
- Turn off lights and unplug appliances when not in use. Electronics still use energy even when they are turned off, which accounts for 40% of residential energy use, according to EnergyStar.
- Air-dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Use a microwave oven instead of a conventional electric range or oven.
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater; 115° is comfortable for most uses.
- Wash only full loads of laundry and use cold water. Cold water not only reduces your energy bill, but also prevents shrinking and fading.
- Keep your freezer stocked. Food retains cold temperatures, meaning that a full freezer will be more efficient than an empty one.