



Everyday Environmental Stewardship

Getting Started

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Key Issue

Where do I start?

Stewardship Opportunity

5 Fast Fixes

Low Cost, Little Time, Few Skills

Significantly Reduce Energy Use and Cost

Both at home and around your house of worship, there are many modest, low cost actions you can take to decrease your energy consumption. Not only is this good for the planet, but it saves you money. Massachusetts has some of the highest energy costs and rates in the country.

Here are 5 actions you can take for little or no money -- and without hiring a professional. Each one of these actions saves a little bit on some of the biggest energy users in your home or house of worship. With just a few minutes of effort you may reduce your energy consumption by 10% or more.

#1 — Heat (and cool) ‘em where you are. Heating and cooling are typically half of the energy you consume. Just as it doesn’t make sense to leave your car running when you are not in it, it doesn’t make sense to heat or cool rooms when you aren’t using them. Programmable thermostats automatically adjust the temperature according to a schedule you set. They are available at hardware and home improvement stores and usually are very easy to install. While you are at it, lower the temperature a degree or two in the winter and set it a degree or two higher in the summer than you are used to – you probably won’t notice the difference!

For more information, download and read *MIP&L’s* EES brief on programmable thermostats:

http://www.mipandl.org/ees/EES_Thermostats.pdf

Buy them at **ShopIPL**. Part of your purchase supports our mission:

<http://www.energyfederation.org/ipl/default.php/cPath/38>

#2 — Dip a toe into your hot water. Water heating is typically the second largest energy user in your home. First, set the temperature on your water heater no higher than 120 degrees, or at the lowest standard setting if you see no numbers. This is a simple adjustment that takes, at

most, a screwdriver. If the tank feels even slightly warm to the touch, you can save more money by installing an insulation blanket over it. Next, make sure the hot water pipes are also insulated – insulating sleeves are easy to slip on with no tools. But how you use hot water can also make a big difference: don't leave the water running any longer than necessary when bathing or washing up, keep showers short, and wash clothes in cold water whenever possible.

For more information, download and read *MIP&L's* EES brief on showering:

http://www.mipandl.org/ees/EES_Showering.pdf

ShopIPL has all the supplies you'll need at

<http://www.energyfederation.org/ipl/default.php/cPath/3499>

#3 — See the light. According to EnergyStar.gov, lighting accounts for about 20% of the typical home's electricity. CFLs use about 25% the electricity of incandescents, saving you 75% every time you turn on the light! Plus the quality of light produced has improved dramatically in the last couple of years. Look for *warm white* which will provide the most desired light quality.

For more information on CFLs, read *MIP&L's* EES brief:

http://www.mipandl.org/ees/EES_CFLs.pdf

ShopIPL has an excellent selection of different sizes and shapes of bulbs for all uses:

<http://www.energyfederation.org/ipl/default.php/cPath/25>

#4 — Power to the people, not to unused electronics. TVs, video games, computers and other electronic devices consume about 15% of your electricity. Even when they are “off”, they often consume power in standby mode. This “*phantom*” load is estimated to use 2% of all the electricity in the country. Plug these devices into power strips, then shut off the power strip over night or when you are away. To make it easier, you can buy a power strip with a timer and program it to shut off over night and turn on again in the morning. The latest “smart” power strips will even automatically detect when the device is not in use and shut off automatically.

ShopIPL has “smart” power strips as well as models with timers at

http://www.energyfederation.org/ipl/default.php/cPath/39_3042

#5 — Get an Energy Star for new appliances and electronics. When you are replacing these items, make energy efficiency a key criterion in addition to other features you shop for. www.EnergyStar.gov has great tools to compare different makes and models. PS. If your refrigerator or hot water heater are more than 10 years old, it may quickly pay back to replace them before they wear out. Energy Star's [Refrigerator Retirement Savings Calculator](#) will tell you how much you might save with a new fridge.

Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light has even more Everyday Environmental Stewardship ideas, plus lots of other information, and guidance at...

<http://www.mipandl.org/ees.html>