

WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

The following tips came from Appalachian Power

1. Switch your Christmas light bulbs to LEDs. ENERGY STAR-certified LED decorative light strings use 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent lights and last up to 10 times longer. While you're at it, change those old bulbs around your house to high-efficiency LEDs.

2. Make sure to turn off your dazzling light display late at night or when you're not at home. It's safer, and you'll avoid wasting energy. Add convenience by installing a timer to automatically turn lights on at dusk and off at whatever time you set.

3. Cook efficiently.

- Bake several dishes at once; it takes the same amount of energy to operate a full oven as it does a nearly empty one.
- Keep lids on pots; food cooks faster and uses less energy.
- Use the lowest temperature setting possible.
- Preheat the oven to the exact temperature required. Preheating is not necessary for foods that cook for several hours.
- Limit the number of times the oven door is opened; opening the door lowers the temperature as much as 25°F.
- Glass and ceramic baking dishes retain heat better than metal. Cooking with them allows you to reduce the oven temperature 25°F.
- Turn the oven off 15 minutes before the cooking time is complete. Food will continue cooking at the set temperature as long as the door remains closed.
- For rangetops, match the size of the pot to the size of the burner. A 6-inch pot on an 8-inch burner wastes more than 40 percent of the burner's heat.
- Turn off the burner on your electric range a few minutes before cooking is complete; the heating elements will stay hot enough to continue cooking after the electricity is turned off.
- A well-maintained oven cooks more efficiently. Make sure your oven and rangetop remain clean at all times.
- Energy-saving kitchen appliances include slow cookers, electric skillets and toaster ovens, and microwave ovens.
- Looking for new appliances? Purchase ENERGY STAR-certified models that use less energy than standard products. Appalachian Power offers rebates on ENERGY STAR-certified appliances like refrigerators and freezers.

4. Clean up

- Newer dishwashers clean heavily soiled dishes to a shine, eliminating the need for pre-rinsing. If you must pre-rinse, use cold water.

- If your dishwasher has a booster heater, set the temperature of your hot water heater to 120°F.
- Don't run the dishwasher until you have a full load.
- Use the air-dry feature whenever possible.

5. Turn down the thermostat when holiday guests arrive as extra bodies in the house mean extra heat at no cost to you.

Save energy all year long by installing and using a programmable thermostat. Smart thermostat models include advanced features, such as self-programming and remote control.

6. Leave your home energy efficient when you go out, especially when traveling for the holidays.

- Turn off all lights before you leave, and set the timer if you still want to show off your outdoor lighting display at night.
- Adjust the thermostat to a lower temperature to save energy. If you have a programmable unit, set it to 'vacation' mode.
- Lower the temperature setting on your water heater tank to reduce standby heat loss.