

## Energy Conservation At Home

The reduction of energy usage and minimising wastage can go a long way in helping to control expenditure on electricity.

The application of energy conservation practices is far easier than you think and generally does not require making drastic changes. Small changes in habits can have a cumulative impact on the amount of energy you use.

The simplest of these changes has to do with how we use household appliances. Many people leave their appliances on all day regardless of whether they are in use or not. Once an appliance is plugged in it draws electricity through a process known as '**energy leaking**'. Major culprits of energy leaking are step down transformers used for powering 110 voltage appliances and adaptors. Once these remain plugged in and on they constantly draw electricity. Turning off transformers, in particular, and other appliances at the outlet when they are not in use will minimise energy wastage.

Another potential area of energy wastage is lighting. On average, lighting accounts for 80 per cent of your electricity bill and the easiest way to conserve energy is to turn off a light once you have left a room. Replacing traditional incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), also known as 'energy saving' light bulbs, can realise significant reductions in energy usage. CFLs use a quarter of the energy of regular bulbs while providing the same level of lighting, and last ten times as long. (A 60 watt traditional incandescent bulb provides the same light as a 15 watt CFL bulb. This means that a traditional 60 watt bulb uses the same amount of electricity in ONE hour as the 15 watt CFL bulb does in FOUR hours!) CFL bulbs cost a little more than the traditional bulbs but they pay for themselves over their lifetime. Make the switch now or whenever your old light bulbs need replacing.

There are a variety of ways to ensure that appliances such as refrigerators which need to be on all day are not wasting energy. Avoid constantly opening and closing the fridge door by getting everything you need in one go. This allows the fridge to keep its internal temperature constant. Allow cooked food to cool to room temperature before covering and placing it in the fridge for storage. Uncovered and warm food produces moisture which raises the temperature inside the fridge forcing it to work harder (and use more electricity) to cool. Making sure that the refrigerator door closes properly is very important as well. A simple test will help you to determine if your fridge door seals are working and not leaking cool air. Place a five dollar bill between the seal (rubber on the door) and the fridge and close the door. If the bill remains up then the seal is intact; if it slides down then it's time to change the seals.

All household appliances should be serviced regularly to ensure that they are running at their optimum. Many people buy appliances and never have them serviced until the appliances fail, especially refrigerators, air conditioning units, washing machines and even fans. Anything which takes away from the original condition of the appliance contributes to energy wastage and cost. Regular servicing will help keep appliances more

energy efficient.

Some other ways you can manage your energy consumption include:

- Replacing your electric water heater with a solar water heater as soon as possible. The expense on the solar water heater (up to \$6,500) is tax deductible and you will realise significant reductions in energy consumption.
- Where possible, use a fan instead of an air-condition unit to keep cool. Fans use a lot less energy and they keep the mosquitoes off you as well!
- If you use an electric kettle to boil water, store the remainder in a thermal flask for later so you do not have to keep turning on your electric kettle more often than necessary.
- Iron as many clothes as you can in one batch instead of ironing one item each time.

Finally, ensure that your family is on the same page as you are. Let children get involved in applying energy saving practices as well.

For more energy saving tips visit our website at [www.lucelec.com](http://www.lucelec.com) [1].

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[1] <http://www.lucelec.com>