

Energy Savings You Can Make

Most of us can find ways to reduce our energy costs that are easy and don't have a great impact on our lifestyle. To help you, we have put together some costs that would be indicative for a typical household but you may find that you use more or less than these amounts.

The main consumers of energy in a household are water heating, and space heating and cooling. Gas hot water heating generally costs around \$900 per year if your heater has a four star rating – it will be higher if the rating is lower – whereas electric water heating is generally around 50% higher than this. Reverse cycle air conditioning in Perth, where we use heating for around four months each year and cooling for around four months, will cost around \$3,000 to \$3,500 if you use a single split system. A whole-of-house ducted system would cost substantially more to run.

Many people use gas for space heating and this will cost around \$500 to \$1,000 per year for a single heater depending on its size.

These costs can be reduced by some simple steps:

- Consider using cold water in your washing machine
- Don't set the thermostat too high for either water or space heating
- Keep your shower times down
- Consider using fans in hot weather rather than air-conditioning
- Put on a jumper when it's cold rather than the heater
- Close off any rooms you are not using

Another large user of energy is the fridge because it is always switched on. Depending on its size, a fridge will cost around \$75 to \$150 per year. Some older fridges will cost much more, especially if the door seals are not tight, so think carefully before hanging onto an old unit that you don't really need.

Washing machines and dishwashers both consume around \$80 worth of electricity each year under typical usage but if you set the washing machine to use warm water this will raise the cost significantly. Be aware, however, that some very efficient washing machines have extended running cycle times that may not suite your lifestyle.

Some of the other ways to save energy are really just a matter of common sense:

- Turn off the lights which you don't need
- Don't leave the door open for the dog
- Turn off the TV and computer when you are not using them
- Don't fill the kettle to the top every time you go to use it
- But do fill up the washing machine or dishwasher – that will save you water as well.



More Information

Many appliances now come with a mandatory star rating that provides information on how much energy these consume under typical usage. This will be useful if you are planning to buy or replace an appliance. You may find that the savings are enough to justify replacing an older appliance even if it is still working.

The Government has two websites that provide more information on the running costs of various household appliances. You can use the information from these to work out where most of your energy costs are going and compare different appliances to decide which is likely to be the most economical for your circumstances.

These websites are:

www.yourenergysavings.gov.au

www.energyrating.gov.au