

Tenant Tips

An occasional newsletter to help

Together, these are not wimpy. Share with us other effective ideas you have.

GASOLINE

GASOLINE - CARS: remove unnecessary weight from daily traveling. Using a motor oil grade different from that recommended by its manufacturer can cost 2% of mileage! Properly inflated and aligned tires can save 3.3% of mileage! Clogged air filters can cost 10% of mileage and are very very simple to replace!! Of course, regular "tune-ups" helps too. Have you noticed how Costco and discount places are far less per gallon?

WATER

KITCHEN SAVINGS:

Dishwashing in the sink rather than the dishwasher can save as much as a 5 minute shower, but I don't recommend it.

Micro waving costs less than oven-heating but only for small amounts.

Refrigerators which allow you to "easily" remove a dollar bill from between the door and frame probably leak; *Storage Refrigerators* waste unless that are full.

OUTDOOR PLANTS: timers set to water shortly before dawn and after sunset deeply 3 times in summer and 2 times per week in spring and fall and none in winter helps. Pay attention to their timing cycle & EXPERIMENT.

MAYBE NOT PAINLESS to save, but showers/baths take far more than any other inside energy use. Shorter showers save as much as using water restrictors - but bah!

ELECTRICITY

CEILING FANS: do reduce our feeling of need for cooling and heating, by more quickly evaporating sweat and pushing hot air from the ceiling down. So, turn them on before you try heating or cooling. They work!

LIGHT BUYS: The compact fluorescent light bulbs do use only about 1/4 of the electricity than regular light bulbs. However, they take a while to warm up plus their light is not what we want. They are OK for garages and porches, but not for reading and room use. Break them and thousands to clean up the toxic mercury in them!

BE ALERT ESPECIALLY IN SUMMER: Some electricity companies charge more in summer, when it costs them more and pushes your to save more, and in winter less. See if yours does and cooperate as it will save you. Kick-back
Fixtures: Some electricity companies pay for installing fluorescent fixtures and other changes. Do yours? Check.

SECRET SUCKERS: Always-on computers, fast turn-on TVs, radios, stereos, electric blankets and lights & even most appliances on a timer or a surge protector to save costs, actually cost you when they and even modems are not in use. Turn off the strip when you leave to stop as small draws on current when you are gone from home. So, try plugging them into power strips and turn the strips off overnight.

Laws change with time & states & individual situations. So consult your financial advisors and others before you rely on this as there is wisdom in many counselors Prov. 11:14.

GAS FOR HEATING

YOU CAN'T HEAT THE GREAT OUTDOORS! So, be sure to close the fireplace vent. Hold a ribbon of Kleenex by each door and window to detect any draft. Closing curtains and blinds on cold days saves more than you expect. Use reflective film in the summer inside of south-facing windows & deciduous trees on the south-side of the house. Dirty filters clog heaters/coolers and cost 10% of heating /cooling costs. Replace monthly or at least quarterly. Volunteer to install attic insulation - helps you too.

TIMING IS THE SECRET: Surprisingly, when you turn down the thermostat so that the indoor temperature is closer to the outdoor temperature, the furnace runs less and you lose less heat and save energy. Utilities are becoming a significant/exorbitant cost. Of course, you can turn it off or down when leaving or during sleep. Reducing heating by 3 degrees can save \$74 per season says www.mge.com. So, the more you set back, the more you save. The "experts" recommend 68 degrees in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer. Kids are just like adults. If they kick off their covers, they are too warm. But, none of us want to get up to a cold house or return from work to a hot house. **Many of us WRONGLY believe that it costs more to heat it up or cool it down after saving on the heating/cooling. It doesn't.** Since most furnaces deliver heat at the same rate regardless of what it is set to, in the morning, your furnace will run a little longer to bring the house back to comfortable temperature. However, the nighttime energy savings is much greater than the energy needed to re-heat your home in the morning as you awake. **Solution** - a programmable thermostat saves by never forgetting to reduce heating or cooling, and can save over \$70 or about 10% of your heating bill per year.

MORE HINTS

Check out www.energysavers.gov & www.eere.energy.gov/cnsumer/tips/

SECRET CREDIT REPORTS

AnnualCreditReport.Com is free, BUT there are many scores such as for car credit, home buying credit, to buy furniture, to get a credit card etc. and Experian, Transunion and Equifax have different numbers and names for each as each credit reporting agency collects from different reporters as those reporters have to pay Experian etc. for each record each month. Then, there are the secret agencies which tell banks whether they should let you open an account due to your bounced checks etc. at prior banks, and agencies which tell insurance companies whether you have made claims to other insurance companies for property damage, car accidents or medical claims. Get & study your consumer report and score every 6 months to stop identity thieves from using and damaging your credit. MAKE WRITTEN complaints for **every** little wrong detail as it takes many months to get them corrected in time for your next need as to buy a car, computer, furniture, rental or home!