

Home Energy Tips

Carrie Webster - Henrico County Energy Manager –web050@henrico.us



First, benchmark your total annual home energy usage to be your baseline.

1. Add up a year's worth of electricity in kilowatt hours (kWh), from Dominion bills.
2. If you have natural gas, add up a year's worth of gas usage in hundreds of cubic feet (CCF).



Next, conserve energy by using less with the systems you have. For example:



1. Set your thermostat to the EPA recommended settings of 68 for winter and 78 for summer. Or as close as you can get to those!
2. Wash clothes in cold water.
3. Turn off lights that aren't in use.
4. Unplug chargers and seldom used electronics between uses.
5. Use blinds or curtains to control sunlight, blocking heat gain in the summer and using the passive heat in the winter.

Then, consider actions that will improve your home's efficiency.

1. Start with your home's envelope. Weatherize doors and windows, add insulation to your crawlspace and attic if you see deficiencies.
2. Change incandescent or CFL lights to LEDs. They use half the energy and last twice as long. They're durable and the light quality is better. This change will pay you back in savings in less than a year.
3. Have your HVAC system tuned up annually, and change filters at least every 3 months (more often if you have pets and/or allergies).



Lastly, consult a professional if you're considering major upgrades.

1. Get professional advice on home energy upgrades such as replacement windows, foam insulation, new HVAC, or solar power AFTER you've taken the steps above to capture the low-hanging fruit.
2. Richmond Region Energy Alliance is a non-profit that can perform home energy audits and recommend companies such as solar power providers.
3. Don't forget to re-benchmark your total home energy use one year after making improvements to measure your success!

