

How to Help Your Friends and Neighbors Save Energy

Operation Energy Save was created for individuals and community groups to help friends, family, and neighbors conserve energy by sharing a checklist of tips that have been proven to reduce energy costs.

1. Choose three friends and neighbors you plan to assist:

(Of course you can help as many as you like, but three is a great starting point.)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2. Schedule a quick energy-saving walk-through of their home(s) and use the Lend-A-Hand Checklist.

3. Leave a copy of the “Operation Energy Save: Easy Tips for Everyday Living” tip sheet so they have a list of more ways to save on energy costs every day.

4. Remember, you can always print more copies; the files are at AARP.org/VA.

5. Visit AARP.org/VA to let us know how this project worked for you and offer suggestions for future ideas.

Lend-A-Hand Checklist

As you know, energy costs continue to rise. But you can do something to help others. Operation Energy Save was created for individuals and community groups to help friends, family, and neighbors conserve energy by sharing a checklist of tips that have been proven to reduce energy costs. That way, those you care about can save money and stay warm.

- Close the heat vents and the doors in rooms that aren't being used.
- Make sure all windows are fully closed. Lock double-hung windows to minimize drafts coming through older windows.
- Shut fireplace dampers to prevent heated air from going up the chimney when you're not using the fireplace. Be sure all embers are out.
- Clean registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators, and be sure that they're not blocked by curtains, furniture, or carpeting.
- Lower the temperature on the water heater to 120 degrees. Reducing the temperature by 20 degrees can save you nearly \$50 a year.
- Replace or clean furnace air filters. A clogged, dirty filter forces your furnace to work harder. A clean filter can save you 10 percent on your bill.*
- Remove window air conditioning units when the summer is over to prevent heat from escaping. If the unit can't be moved, cover it to prevent drafts.
- Use expanding foam (available in spray cans) to seal the gaps around pipes that connect to the house from the outside.
- Install weather stripping or caulk around doors and windows and place foam gaskets behind outlet plate covers on exterior walls. If there's a large gap at the bottom of an exterior door, install a door sweep.*
- Seal and insulate ducts and joints with a non-hardening sealant. Ducts running through unfinished spaces (attics, crawl spaces, and garages) that aren't properly sealed and insulated can add 25 percent to your home's heating bill.*

Thank you for helping out and making a difference in your community. Please visit [AARP.org/VA](https://www.aarp.org/VA) to discover more ways AARP can help you give back and to tell us about your experience with Operation Energy Save.

*Professional assistance may be required to perform this task.



Easy Tips for Everyday Living

While you can't control rising energy costs, you can lower your energy bill by following these simple and proven tips in your home.

1. Follow the 10-10 Rule. Lowering your thermostat in the winter by 10 percent (like from 74° to 67°) for 8 hours can shave 10 percent off your heating bill. Try it at night and use extra blankets when sleeping.
2. Run your washing machine and dishwasher only when you have a full load. Use the cold water setting when possible. And always clean the clothes dryer's lint filter after every load.
3. Keep the lights off in unoccupied rooms.
4. Turn off kitchen and bathroom ventilating fans when you're done. If left on for an hour, they can suck all the heat out of the house.
5. During the winter, open drapes, blinds, or shades on windows facing the sun to warm your rooms. At night, cover the windows for better insulation. Also keep the windows clean so they can let in the maximum amount of light and heat.
6. Make sure none of your furniture is blocking a heat register. To feel warmer, move furniture away from cold exterior walls and windows.
7. Contact your local utility company to ask about a home energy audit. Costs vary, but some companies offer free audits.
8. To learn more about other helpful services in your area, dial 2-1-1. A 2-1-1 Virginia Community Resource Specialist will assist you.

We hope this information has been helpful. In addition to Operation Energy Save, *AARP Create the Good* encourages everyone to make a difference in the lives of others. To find out more, please visit us online at [AARP.org/CreateTheGood](https://www.aarp.org/CreateTheGood).