

# LIVING LIGHTER

## 10 Principles for Saving Energy

A large amount of the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced in the world comes from domestic energy use. To reduce our impact on the environment, we must think about the energy we use at home and about the lifestyle changes we can make, using a little technology where necessary. Small changes can make a big difference, so here they are our top ten principles on how you can save energy:

- 1. Switch off.** Always switch off lights when you leave a room. Turn off and unplug TVs, computers, game consoles, mobile phone chargers, etc. when not in use – do not leave them on standby! Turn off taps when you're not using them. While brushing your teeth or washing your car, turn off the water until you actually need it for rinsing.
- 2. Turn it down.** Turn your thermostat down. Reducing your room temperature by 1 degree could cut your heating bills by up to 10 per cent. If you are still feeling cold, then put on an extra sweater! Reduce temperatures in any unused rooms to a minimum. If you have a programmer, set your heating and hot water to come on only when required rather than all the time.
- 3. Insulate/draft dodge.** Install wall and loft insulation and draft proof your home. Install weather stripping or caulking around doors and windows and fix drafts from doors, windows, letterboxes, keyholes, etc. Fill gaps in floorboards, ceilings, and skirting boards with newspaper or sealants. Fit one or, where practical, two layers of secondary glazing film to all windows. Close curtains to keep heat in at night. Put an insulating jacket around your hot water tank.
- 4. Watch your washing.** Fill up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher: one full load uses less energy than two half loads. Use cooler programmes to wash your clothes and dishes. Modern washing powders work just as well at lower temperatures and most clothes can be successfully washed at 30°C. Whenever you can, turn off your tumble dryer and hang your clothes outside to dry.
- 5. Boil only what you need.** Only boil as much water as you need in a kettle. Jug kettles tend to be more efficient. Cover pots when boiling water to speed up the process and reduce heat wastage.

**6. Use energy efficient appliances.** Consider energy efficient models when you next buy a home appliance. Consider installing a tank-less water heater – they heat water on demand so no stored water needs to be continuously heated. Avoid products that come with excess packaging, especially moulded plastic and other packaging that can't be recycled.

**7. Use energy saving light bulbs.** They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs.

**8. Stop drips and use less water!** Fix leaking taps and make sure they're fully turned off! Have a shower instead of a bath, and try to stick to 5 minutes in the shower. Having a shower not only saves on water, but it also saves on the energy used to heat the water.

**9. Use natural resources.** Let the sun be your guide. In winter or during cooler weather during the day open drapes and blinds to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows. In summer or during warmer weather, close drapes or blinds to keep it cooler.

**10. Think quirky!** Utilize ceiling fans. Running fans in reverse very slowly in the winter will circulate warm air down around a room. Check the arrangement of your furniture – don't place furniture over vents or a baseboard radiator, which decrease the efficiency of the units.