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What energy saving devices can help homeowners reduce their energy consumption? by Jesse Wallace

Article published on June 28th 2012 | Finance

If you've been stung by energy price hikes, learning about different ways to reduce your household energy consumption and lower your electricity and gas bills can be useful for saving money. Replacing older, less energy efficient devices with modern products designed to use less electricity can be a worthwhile investment, as it won't usually take long before these devices pay for themselves in terms of lower energy bills, after which you can continue to enjoy the savings.

If you're serious about reducing your home energy consumption, a good starting point is to find out which appliances and systems cost the most to run, and whether there are alternatives that use less electricity. Microwave ovens are one example of an energy efficient cooking appliance, as less heat energy is wasted compared to oven cooking. Because microwaves produce minimal waste heat in kitchens, you could also lower your reliance on air conditioning in the summer.

Installing programmable or automated systems could also save you money and frustration, when making use of thermostats or light fittings that will automatically switch off at a specified time, or after a certain period of inactivity. This means you won't have to worry whether you left the systems running when heading out to work, and you'll also be able to look forward to waking up at a comfortable temperature when programming your thermostat.

Many modern appliances are designed specifically with energy efficiency in mind, and you should always check for energy star ratings and similar rating systems when buying new products for your home. Energy saving light bulbs are a good example, as these fittings consume significantly less electricity than standard bulbs while producing the same level of illumination. With lighting typically being one of the biggest drains on household electricity, this could save you a small fortune in the long run.

Conserving heat energy is important for overall energy savings too, and you could greatly reduce your reliance on heating and cooling systems by ensuring that your property is well insulated and capable of retaining heat in the winter and cool air in the summer.

Loft and cavity wall insulation can produce dramatic results in making buildings more heat efficient, and replacing your window treatments with blinds or shutters can offer greater control over light and heat levels in rooms, compared to curtains. Fixing or replacing broken windows and other parts of your home's structure can also ensure that less heat is lost to the outside world.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/finance-articles/what-energy-saving-devices-can-help-homeowners-reduce-their-energy-consumption.htm - Article Side

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Article Keywords:
energy, home energy, electricity, home electricity, home electricity and gas, electricity prices, electricity cost

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