

Thanksgiving

Energy Efficiency Checklist

As folks arrive for dinner, lower the thermostat a few degrees. People generate heat, so lowering the temperature won't freeze your guests and your heater won't be working overtime for no reason.



Check the refrigerator and freezer doors to make sure they seal tightly. This will keep the cold air in and the warm air out. To test, close the refrigerator door on a dollar bill. If you can slip the bill out easily, or, worse, if it falls out on its own, the door needs to be adjusted or the gasket needs to be replaced.



Allow hot foods or liquids to cool off before placing them in the refrigerator. The cooling-off period should not hurt the taste of the food and will reduce the load on the refrigerator.



Use a "lids-on" approach to cooking. Tightly fitted lids on pots and pans help keep heat in, enabling you to lower the temperature settings and shorten the cooking times.



When preheating your regular oven for baking, time the preheat period carefully. Five to eight minutes should be enough time. There is no need to preheat for broiling or roasting.



When roasting or baking, avoid making frequent progress checks that involve opening the oven door. Each time the door is opened, a considerable portion of the oven's heat escapes.



When using an electric oven, cook as much of your meal as possible in it at one time. Foods with different cooking temperatures often can be cooked simultaneously at one temperature - variations of 25 degrees Fahrenheit in either direction still produce good results and save energy.



Finally, when all of the cooking is done, don't use your oven's self-cleaning cycle unless a major cleaning job is needed. Wipe up minor spills and splatters with a damp cloth. When you do use the oven's self-cleaning feature, start the cycle right after cooking, while the oven is still hot, or wait until late evening hours when use of electricity is lowest.

