



# Energy tips for vacations

Before you start a vacation, invest a few minutes in turning things off. By giving your appliances and electronics a vacation, you'll be saving energy and avoiding safety hazards. And the money you save can help pay for your trip.

- 1. If it's a cool part of the year, turn down your thermostat to 50 degrees. If it's summer and you have air conditioning, turn off the AC or turn the temperature setting up to 85 degrees.**
- 2. Turn off the water heater at the electric panel box** if you are going to be gone for more than three days. It will take only a few hours to reheat your hot water. Leave yourself a note to turn it back on when you return.
- 3. Turn off all lights.** If you leave on any household lamps for security reasons, attach them to a timer, and use energy-saving compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs.
- 4. Unplug all instant-on or standby power electronic devices,** such as TVs, DVD players, stereos, computers, and coffeemakers with a clock. These items that use phantom power can account for as much as 10% of home energy use. You can plug multiple devices (such as TV, DVD player, and stereo) into a power strip or surge protector, and then turn all those off with the press of one button.
- 5. Unplug all chargeable electronics** such as cell phones and battery chargers.
- 6. Close curtains and blinds** to help keep the heat in during cool weather and the hot air out during the summer.
- 7. Refrigerators operate more efficiently when full, so fill the fridge** with beverages that won't go bad while you're gone. Water jugs work well.
- 8. Turn off the hot tub,** or lower the temperature setting and reduce run times.
- 9. Turn off outdoor decorative water fountains, features, and pumps.**
- 10. Check garage and outbuildings** (such as wood shops and studios) **to make sure all unused electric devices are off or unplugged.**
- 11. Read the meter when you leave and when you get home, so you will know how many kilowatt-hours were used. This is a smart way to detect hidden energy wasters** such as electronic devices that appear to be off but are really on standby or phantom power.

*For more tips, advice, and information about saving energy and lowering your utility bills, rely on the energy experts at EWEB.*

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*see other side for water conservation tips*



# Tips for conserving water

Here are some smart ways to lower your utility bills by using water wisely.

- 1. Repair water drips and leaks immediately**, and be a leak seeker. An average of 11% of home indoor water use is attributable to leaks, and a leak in your home or business could be your biggest water user. To discover unknown leaks, turn off every water use in your home (including the ice-maker in your freezer), and then look at your water meter to see if water is flowing. If the slow-flow indicator (a triangle or small bar located on the dial above the numbers) is spinning, then look for a dripping faucet or silent toilet leak. A leaking toilet can add \$20-30 to your water bill month after month. For more information about leak detection and repair, see our website.
- 2. Scrape dirty dishes instead of hand-rinsing before loading into the dishwasher.** Most modern dishwashers have a quick-rinse option that can be used if a partial load will sit for more than a day, and this option uses significantly less water than rinsing by hand. Use the dishwasher's full cycle only when the dishwasher is full.
- 3. When buying a dishwasher or clothes washer, buy a model with the Energy Star rating** that will save water and energy.
- 4. Use full loads in the clothes washer, and wash in cold water** whenever possible. Rinsing clothes in cold water is just as effective as a warm rinse.
- 5. Install efficient shower heads and faucet aerators.** These can save up to 10 percent on your water heating costs in addition to the water that they save.
- 6. Turn faucets off when not using the water**, such as while brushing your teeth or shaving, and use hot water only when it makes sense to do so. When running the garbage disposal, use cold water.
- 7. Insulate exposed pipes and faucets** to prevent freezing during cold winter weather. This is inexpensive and easy to do with foam pipe insulation and insulated faucet covers from your local hardware store. When temperatures are predicted to dip below 25 degrees, cover the vents in your home's foundation. When spring arrives, remove the faucet and vent covers.
- 8. Prevent overwatering of lawns and gardens** by using a Green Grass Gauge from EWEB to measure the amount of water that your sprinklers are applying to your plants.
- 9. If you have an automatic watering system, reduce the amount of watering time.** For each minute that you reduce your watering time, you can save 60 gallons of water each time the sprinkler system comes on.
- 10. Develop a water budget** to help monitor usage, identify leaks, and to determine if you want to take steps to reduce water consumption in order to save money. The goal of the water budget is to estimate an average of how much water would be used per-person and for each 1,000 square feet of your landscape. Then you can compare your actual water bill to this calculation of the average for both indoor and outdoor needs. For a guide on how to calculate your water budget, go to our website.

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*Our water experts can provide a variety of advice and services for using your water efficiently. For more tips, advice, and information about conserving water and energy, rely on the experts at EWEB.*

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