

## *Suggestions for Honoring God's Creation*

# HOME



*Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me?*

*ACTS 7:49, KJV*

- Take that first step! An energy audit can help you save up to 30 percent on your energy bills. You can halve your energy costs by changing a few simple behaviors.
- Turn down the temperature on your water heater to 120 degrees. (Look for a little metal box on the side of the water heater.)
- Turn your refrigerator and freezer to a warmer setting.
- Activate the “sleep” mode on your home office equipment. Use laptops rather than desktops when possible.
- Turn the thermostat up three degrees in summertime and down three degrees in wintertime—saving \$200 per year!
- Turn off lights, TVs, stereos, and computers when leaving the room.
- Hang clothes on the line to dry. (Even once a week helps!)
- Reduce shower time by at least two minutes.
- Close curtains at night during the winter and on hot days in the summer.
- Only do full loads when using the dishwasher, clothes washer, and dryer.
- Consider downsizing. Twenty-three percent of the new homes in America are more than 3,000 square feet. The bigger the house, the more resources it consumes.
- Switch to energy-saving lightbulbs, which use about one-quarter the energy of standard lightbulbs and last up to ten times longer.
- Purchase a programmable thermostat and use it to turn on heat or a/c just before you wake up or come home.
- Replace furnace and air-conditioning filters at least three times a year.
- Caulk between window frames, door frames, and walls.
- Add storm windows or use plastic film kits to improve single-pane windows. Replace inefficient windows.
- Insulate water heater and pipes, and turn water heater down to 120 degrees.
- Install motion sensors, dimmers, and timers for indoor and outdoor lighting.
- Install ceiling or other fans to cut down on air-conditioning costs.
- Decide what you want before you open the door—refrigerator gazing can cost \$30–\$60 per year.
- Put hot food in a cold-water bath or place it outside in cold weather before refrigerating, so less energy is required to keep it cool.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer full. Doing so uses less energy because less cooling is lost each time you open the refrigerator. Defrosting food in the refrigerator also keeps the refrigerator cooler.
- Unplug extra refrigerators (such as those in your garage or basement) when not in use.
- You can save as much as \$580 each year by making your own homemade cleaning products. Visit [www.blessedearth.org](http://www.blessedearth.org) for recipes.



- About 25 percent of the water supplied to the average American home is used for showers. Installing a low-flow showerhead can save a family of four 350 gallons of water each week—about \$73 per year.
- As much as 40 percent of our drinking water is flushed down toilets. Flush once less per day and you will save as much water as the average person in Africa uses all day for drinking, cooking, bathing, and cleaning.
- Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth. If every American used one gallon of water less per day, we would save more than 100 billion gallons per year.
- Avoid disposable products. Two billion disposable razors end up in landfills annually.
- Switch to organic makeup and natural healthcare products.
- Buy clothes from secondhand stores. After food, clothing has the highest environmental impact of any consumer activity.
- Use fans instead of your air conditioner. It costs sixteen times more to run a room air conditioner than a ceiling fan; it costs forty-three times more to run a central air conditioner than a ceiling fan.
- Close the fireplace damper when not in use. An open damper can allow 8 percent of your home's heat to go up the chimney. In the summer, an open damper can add about \$100 to your cooling costs.
- Eliminate the source of temptation: the average household could save \$1,400 per year by banning mail-order catalogs from the house. To decline unsolicited credit card offers, visit <http://www.optoutprescreen.com>.
- Replacing existing office equipment with Energy Star-qualified products – you can cut annual energy bills by 30 percent.
- Get rid of phantom loads. In the average household, eight appliances are left on standby mode at any one time. The typical TV is left on standby seventeen hours per day.
- Wash clothes in cold water. About 80 to 85 percent of the energy used to wash clothes goes toward heating the water.
- Pre-cycle and avoid over-packaged items. Every American creates 4.5 pounds of trash per person, per day.
- Drink tap water instead of bottled water. About 80 percent of our plastic waste ends up in landfills—including 60 million plastic water bottles a day.
- Think before you print. Americans are by far the biggest paper users in the world, consuming more than 400 pounds of paper per person, per year.
- Adjust the thermostat three degrees up in the summer and down three degrees in the winter. Heating and cooling (including water) account for about 56 percent of the energy used in a typical household.
- Insulate your water heater – if your water heater is not insulated, about three-quarters of energy used may be wasted. Not sure if your water heater needs to be insulated? If it's hot to the touch, you need a water heater jacket.



## OUR MISSION

*Blessed Earth is an educational nonprofit that inspires and equips faith communities to become better stewards of the earth. Through outreach to churches, campuses and media we build bridges that promote measurable environmental change and meaningful spiritual growth.*

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