

HOME ENERGY & WATER EFFICIENCY CHECKLIST



Southface



Use this checklist to improve your home's energy and water efficiency and save money on your utility bills! For information on weatherization, appliance upgrades, and rebates, check the resources section on the back.

Energy Conservation: No Cost Options

TEMPERATURE & LIGHTING

- Use ceiling fans instead of HVAC when temperatures are safe.

Turn off indoor and outdoor ceiling fans when you're not home or using a room.

Reverse ceiling fan direction as seasons change using the switch on your fan unit: clockwise for the winter and counterclockwise for the summer.
- Minimize the use of wood and pellet stove fireplaces. Close flue and/or dampers when not in use.
- Ensure that lights and appliances are off anytime you leave a room.

- Summer: Set thermostat to 78°F or more. Add 7°F at night (w/fan) or when away.

Winter: Set thermostat to 68°F or less. Reduce by 7°F at night or when away.

- Make use of natural lighting. Open windows and doors whenever possible and turn off HVAC when windows and doors are open.

WATER & LAUNDRY

- Lower the thermostat of your water heater to 120°F.
- Use a clothesline or drying rack to hang clothes when possible.
- Wash clothes in cold water.

- Reduce lawn watering. Ensure that sprinklers do not water the sidewalk or driveway.

AROUND THE HOUSE

- Turn off your computer and monitors when not in use. Set them to "sleep" mode.
- Use a microwave or toaster oven instead of your full conventional oven.
- Unplug unused electronics, appliances, and chargers.
- Use a laptop instead of a desktop computer when possible.
- Use the dishwasher over hand-washing dishes. Turn off the heated dry.

Energy Efficiency: Medium & High Cost Options

AROUND THE HOUSE

- Use ENERGY STAR appliances and equipment.
- Schedule a home energy audit with your electric company or a private contractor. Select contractors that are Building Performance Institute (BPI) or Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) certified.
- Install heat pump HVAC units

TEMPERATURE & LIGHTING

- Install a programmable thermostat

OUTSIDE

- Install solar panels.
- Plant trees and vegetation. Use only native/non-invasive species, and prioritize ones that are drought tolerant.

WATER & LAUNDRY

- Use WaterSense rated low-flow faucets.
- Replace older toilets (≥ 1.6 gpf or unlisted) with WaterSense rated, ≤ 1.28 gpf toilets.
- Install heat pump water heaters for IRA credits and rebates.

Southface is a nonprofit promoting sustainable homes, workplaces, and communities through education, research, advocacy, and technical assistance. We are excited to expand our work into North Georgia to connect communities with energy efficiency resources.

For more information on Southface and our energy efficiency work, contact Will Collier (wcollier@southface.org) and Artis Trice (atrice@southface.org).

Energy Efficiency: Low Cost Options

TEMPERATURE & LIGHTING

- Add weather-stripping for exterior doors and windows.

Make sure exterior doors and windows close fully and can latch after installing new weather-stripping.
- If you have an attic access, pull-down stairs, or door in your house, add weatherstripping and insulation to it.
- Seal air leaks around plumbing penetrations in the kitchens and bathrooms with a low-expansion foam.
- If you have recessed can lights in your insulated ceilings, replace them with insulation contact (IC) rated fixtures and air seal around them.
- Remove bath fan covers and air seal the gap between the fan and ceiling with caulk.

Re-attach covers after caulk has dried.
- Use solar-powered outdoor lighting.

- Install LED light bulbs and/or light fixtures.
- Remove HVAC supply and return grilles and air seal the gap between the ductwork and the ceiling or floor.

Re-attach grilles after the caulk has dried.

WATER & LAUNDRY

- Install WaterSense rated, low-flow showerheads and aerators to existing faucets.
- Use a pool cover to reduce temperature fluctuations in your pool.
- Insulate accessible hot water pipes that are located in unconditioned basements, crawlspaces, and/or attics. If you are unsure, insulate all accessible water pipes
- Replace irrigation system that uses potable water with one that uses captured rainwater.
- Install an irrigation system with a soil moisture sensor or weather station.

AROUND THE HOUSE

- Change your air HVAC filter regularly.
- Use a pressure cooker to speed up cooking times.
- Use energy efficient or programmable power strips for appliances and electronics.

Resources

[Reducing Residential Energy Use from the US Department of Energy](#)

[Energy Use and the Environment from the US Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[Energy Resources from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority](#)

[Southface](#)

[North Georgia Conservation Coalition](#)

[Tax Credits and Rebates from Rewiring America](#)

[Building Performance Institute \(BPI\)](#) certified contractors and additional homeowner resources

[Residential Energy Services Network \(RESNET\)](#) to learn about home energy modeling and assessments

[EarthCraft Program](#) certified home Technical Advisors and homebuilders

[Building America Solution Center](#) to learn about energy improvement solutions in existing homes