

Reduce home energy bills

Everyone can see the effects of climate change with winters becoming milder and rainfall patterns shifting, making droughts and floods more common. Not everyone realises that we can all make a difference and save ourselves some money at the same time. The energy we use at home and when we travel makes up over 40% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. Things like insufficient insulation, leaving lights on unnecessarily or overfilling the kettle all waste energy and result in needless carbon dioxide emissions. Here are some simple tips that will reduce the costs of home energy bills and lessen damage to the environment:

- Cut heating costs by as much as 10% and save around £50 a year by turning your central heating thermostat down by 1°C and making sure your hot water cylinder thermostat is set at 60°C/140°F.
- Close curtains at dusk to reduce heat escaping through the windows and always turn off the lights when you leave a room.
- Save around £32 a year by not leaving electrical appliances on standby or unnecessarily on charge.
- Don't switch on the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher unless they're full and only boil as much water as you need in the kettle.
- Energy saving light bulbs last up to ten times longer than traditional bulbs and each one can save you around £40 over its lifetime.
- When purchasing appliances and electronic products, the Energy Saving Recommended logo guarantees you're choosing an energy efficient item.
- If your boiler is more than 15 years old, replacing it with a high efficiency condensing boiler could cut your heating bills by up to a third.

Selling your house?

An energy efficient house makes sense. It's cheaper to run and it could be a key selling point if you choose to sell your house. Whether you're buying, selling or just improving your home, it pays to know how simple energy saving changes can affect the value of a property in the long term as well as lowering your bills in the short term. Insulating your home is one of the most effective ways of improving energy efficiency.

- Insulating an uninsulated loft saves around £205 from annual home energy bills.
- Draught proofing saves £25 a year and boosts the 'comfort factor' of your house.
- Having cavity walls insulated can save as much as £120 a year.
- Solid walls are expensive to treat, but with potential savings of around £380 a year, solid wall insulation is worth looking at if you're in a house for the long term.
- Double glazing will reduce noise; increase the comfort of your house and save up to £110 per year.

Martin Smith - Environmental Consultant

Telephone: 07974 768553 Email: info@consultmartin.co.uk