



# County Conservation News

October 2010

Issue 2

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## Energy Conservation Resources

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- [Energy conservation info](#) from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality
- [Save with 5](#) from NorthWestern Energy

## Contact Us

[GreenTeam@co.lewis-clark.mt.us](mailto:GreenTeam@co.lewis-clark.mt.us)

## Energy Conservation

Think your energy bills are high? Imagine paying \$35,000 a month! Hard to believe, but that's what our county government shells out for electricity and natural gas each month. That's more than \$1,000 every day, and it adds up to more than **\$400,000 per year**.



As county employees, we can all take action to save taxpayer money by reducing the county's energy use. Take a look at the energy-saving tips below.

- If you work with a computer, **turn it off** when you leave for the day.
- When you can, **take the stairs** instead of the elevator. How else can you save energy and tone your thighs at the same time?
- **Turn off lights** when you leave the room. Have you heard the rumor that it uses more energy to turn fluorescent bulbs off and on again than to leave them on? In fact, as long as the lights stay off for more than a few seconds before being turned back on, you're saving energy.



As a friendly reminder to turn off the lights when you leave a room, you'll soon start seeing small green stickers next to the light switches in some county buildings. Remember: "When not in use, turn off the juice!"

- If you have control over a **thermostat**, keep it set at a reasonable level. How many of you have ever worn a sweater at work in the summer because the A/C is so cold, or overheated in the winter because the thermostat is turned up too high? We could increase comfort, AND save money, by adjusting that thermostat.
- "To help save energy and to reduce your utility bills, **unplug** your coffee pot, computer and such. Plug appliances in only when you get ready to use them. Leaving them plugged in, you are still using electricity."



Congratulations, Laura Whale! Laura submitted the conservation tip directly above and won a \$5 gift certificate to Tommy's Cafe. Submit tips to [GreenTeam@co.lewis-clark.mt.us](mailto:GreenTeam@co.lewis-clark.mt.us). Who says there's no such thing as a free lunch?



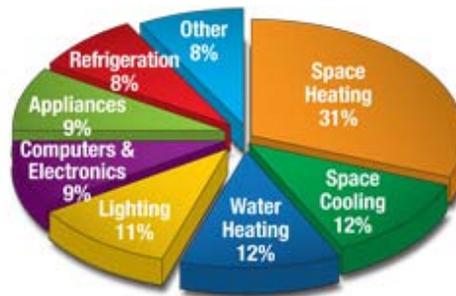
## Saving Energy at Home

Most of the tips on the previous page can be practiced at home, as well as at work. Here are a few more simple ways to reduce your energy bills at home.



- If you haven't already, **replace your lightbulbs** with compact fluorescent bulbs. Each bulb will save you \$30 or more in energy costs over its lifetime! If you tried them in the past and didn't like them, give them another try: there are more products on the market now, and the light quality has gotten better.
- **Seal air leaks** in your house with caulking and weather stripping. In addition to reducing your heating bill, this will make your home more comfortable in the winter.
- Buy a **programmable thermostat**. Available for as little as \$25 (or free! see below), they allow you to program different temperatures for different times of day, so you don't have to worry about remembering to turn down the thermostat when you leave for work.
- Attend NorthWestern Energy's **Home Energy Expo** at the Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds on Saturday, October 23 from 10-3. NorthWestern Energy customers can receive FREE compact fluorescent lightbulbs, programmable thermostats, carbon monoxide detectors, and other great stuff. For more information [click here](#).

For more energy-saving ideas, see the links on the left side of the previous page. And check out the pie chart below, which shows the average American household's energy use by category. Heating and cooling account for the largest chunk of most peoples' energy bills, but lighting, computers and electronics, appliances, and refrigerators are also significant. That's why changing your lightbulbs and turning off your computer when you're not using it can have a real impact on your energy bill.



Source: US Department of Energy, [http://www.energysavers.gov/tips/home\\_energy.cfm](http://www.energysavers.gov/tips/home_energy.cfm).

## Coming Up: Energy Conservation Contest



The Green Team is planning an Energy Conservation Contest among county buildings. The building that reduces its energy use the most compared to previous years WINS! Of course, prizes will be awarded. So start conserving energy now, and you'll be one step ahead of the competition. More information coming soon!