



Getting Started

Here are some easy actions that will save you money and reduce your personal carbon dioxide pollution for the Rochester region and the world.

Save energy and money with more efficient lighting

Turn off lights when you leave the room. Use timers, light sensors and motion detectors on indoor and outdoor lighting. (Note, do not use these with regular CFLs; you can use these with dimmable CFLs, but dimmable CFLs are more expensive and hard to find – see www.edf.org/page.cfm?tagID=632)

Change as many frequently used lights as possible to high efficiency lighting.

Fact: If every household in America replaced just three heavily used bulbs with energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs, we would each save \$40 a year and collectively save as much CO₂ as [taking 3.5 million cars off the road](#)

Fact: compact fluorescent bulbs save much more than the cost of the bulb they replace. Don't wait for your conventional bulbs to wear out; electricity rates will only go up.

Save energy and money heating and cooling

Seal those leaks! Weatherize your home including caulking holes and cracks, weather-stripping and insulating.

Fact: weatherization can save hundreds of dollars and thousands of pounds of CO₂ annually.

Fact: check to see if your local utility provider will offer a free energy audit that can point out where your home may be inefficient. Visit www.dsireusa.org/

Fact: appropriate insulation and sealing air leaks will increase your comfort, make your home quieter and cleaner, deter bugs and mice, and reduce your heating and cooling costs up to 30 percent.

Fact: Additional tax credits may be available for insulation and sealing products and efficient windows, doors, skylights, heat pumps, and hot water heaters. See www.ase.org/taxcredits.

Fact: High-performance "soft coat low-e" windows can cut cooling costs by as much as 30 percent while increasing indoor comfort and lessening fading of home furnishings. If your windows are otherwise good, consider hiring professionals to permanently adhere to them soft coat low-e window film.

Tune up your heating and cooling equipment.

Fact: Seal your heating and cooling ducts. Sealing and insulating ducts that move air to and from a forced-air central air conditioner or heat pump can improve the efficiency of your cooling system by 20 percent or more.



Heat and cool your home just right with a smart thermostat.

Fact: a programmable thermostat can automatically coordinate the indoor climate with your daily and weekend patterns to reduce cooling bills by up to 10 percent. Set it to crank the AC back up before you expect to return, so you come home to a comfortable house without wasting energy and creating pollution all day. EPA estimates proper use of pre-programmed settings on a programmable thermostat can yield yearly savings of about [\\$150 in energy costs](#).

Fact: Setting a thermostat down two degrees in winter and up two degrees in summer will save 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide and about [\\$98 a year](#).

Fact: If you are in the market for a new central air conditioning system, look for the ENERGY STAR label and purchase the system with the highest possible Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER).

Fact: When buying new equipment, it is important to get a quality installation. Make sure you get a contractor who can do the job right.

Fact: Bigger is not always better. Over-sized air conditioning units inflate your energy costs, reduce your comfort and contribute to poor indoor air quality that worsens allergies and breathing problems. Research indicates that the vast majority of central air conditioning systems are significantly over sized. Check with your contractor or local air conditioning system retailer to properly size your unit.

Fact: Cooling puts the greatest stress on your summer energy bill and the power grid. Just as a tune-up for your car can improve your gas mileage, a yearly tune-up of your heating and cooling system can improve efficiency and comfort. And be sure to clean or replace filters monthly or as needed.



Look up! Ceiling fans for additional cooling and air circulation allow you to raise the thermostat and cut AC costs. But remember: ceiling fans cool people, not rooms; if the room is unoccupied, turn off the ceiling fan to save energy.



Close blinds or shades during the day, or install shading devices such as trellises or awnings to avoid heat build-up.



Plant trees and shrubs strategically on your property to improve the energy efficiency of your home and to reduce carbon load.

Fact: Cut your air conditioning load and reduce pollution by planting leafy trees around your home, especially to the east and west of your home for maximum summer shade, and [painting your roof with highly reflective paint or installing a cool roof](#).

If you want to do more!

Fact: A single-pane window is almost like having a hole in the wall. Installing double pane windows can save 10,000 pounds of CO₂ a year. Although the upfront cost to install double-pane windows can be expensive, some cities and power companies offer ways to offset those costs.

Fact: Get even more tax savings by wrapping in funds for energy-efficiency home improvements when refinancing your home mortgage. Most likely the interest you pay will be tax deductible.