



# 20 tips for saving energy

**1.** When you build a new home, save energy by starting as you mean to go on and consider passive solar energy. A home constructed on a correctly oriented concrete pad is an ideal way to trap the warmth of the sun.

**2.** Invest in double-glazing to retain the sun's heat. To capture as much sun as possible, all windows should be kept clean and trees trimmed so they don't block the sunlight.

**3.** Plant a deciduous tree to shade your largest west-facing window. In summer, you'll have shade and, in winter, sunlight.

**4.** If you are renovating an older home, never miss an opportunity to insulate the walls or ceiling properly. Use adhesive draught-stop strips in any gaps in windows or around doorframes.

**5.** While polished wooden floors are an attractive feature in many older houses, they can make for cold and draughty winters. Don't be afraid to hang on to carpet while the weather's freezing. Rugs are also a fantastic option.

**6.** In winter, close the doors and curtains of rooms that you're heating. Curtains should be drawn just before it gets dark to keep in the heat. Ideally, they should be full-length and lined to make the most of their insulation qualities. They look better this way too.

**7.** Position heaters away from windows, so they heat rooms more effectively. Use the thermostat and timer on your heaters so they only come on when you need them and automatically switch off when they reach a certain temperature.

**8.** Block off your fireplace when you're not using it, or heat from other sources will escape straight up the chimney. Use a hot water bottle or put an extra blanket on the bed, instead of using an electric blanket.

**9.** Insulate your hot water cylinder and adjust the thermostat so that hot water is 55°C at the tap. Fix any dripping taps and have short showers instead of baths. Use cold water when you're filling the jug and rinsing dishes. Switch off your hot water if you're away for more than two weeks.

Paint your home in Resene Cool Colours to minimise the amount of heat absorbed by the paint. This will help keep your home cooler, saving costs in the hot months (as well as helping your paint finish and substrate last longer).

See the Resene Hi-Glo colour chart or your Resene ColorShop for more information.

**10.** Switch off any lights you're not using and take advantage of natural lighting whenever possible. Choose the appropriate strength of bulb for the area. Don't use a 100 watt bulb for a bedside lamp, when a 40 watt one would be sufficient.

**11.** Clean your lights and lampshades regularly to receive maximum light. Lampshades need to look good, but more importantly, they need to work for you too. Don't be fooled by something pretty if it leaves you squinting for more illumination.

**12.** In a large open-plan space, have your lighting wired to different circuits, with switches to turn on only the lights you need. You usually don't need to have 15 halogens on at once, if it's just you in the room. Selective lighting makes for a better ambience, anyway.

**13.** Fridges and freezers work most efficiently when they're full, but not overloaded. Defrost your freezer regularly to reduce the ice build-up. Use the most efficient temperature settings – set your freezer at -18°C and your fridge between 2°C and 5°C.

**14.** Leave space around the back of your fridge or freezer for air to circulate and avoid placing the appliance next to your oven or stove, or in direct sunlight.

**15.** Avoid opening your oven door too often – each time you do, the temperature drops by up to 15°C. Use your oven to cook several things at once. Keep lids on the pots when you're cooking and make sure they fit well. Put small pots on small elements and large pots on larger elements.

**16.** When you're not using appliances, unplug them or switch them off at the wall. Even standby mode wastes power. The biggest culprits are microwaves and televisions.

**17.** Wait until the dishwasher is full before you use it – and use the economy cycle. If your dishwasher can generate its own hot water, then use this function, as it's more efficient than using hot water from your cylinder.

**18.** Don't overload your washing machine – although it's better to wash full loads than half loads. Adjust your wash cycle to match the load and try to wash using cold water. Use shorter wash cycles if possible and make sure your clothes are well-spun before putting them in the dryer.

**19.** Use your clothesline as often as possible. Try to use your clothes dryer only when it's raining, and then make sure you fill it – it's more efficient to dry a full load. Use the low heat setting on your dryer whenever you can. Ventilate the clothes dryer to the outside and clean its lint filter every time you use it.

**20.** When buying a new appliance, look for an energy-efficient model for long-term savings. You can check out the star rating on most new appliances. The more stars they have, the more energy efficient they are. **H**