

TOP 10 ENERGY SAVING TIPS FOR A NEW (OR OLD) HOME

- 01.** The most effective way to conserve energy is to change our habits. Set the thermostat to 68 degrees instead of 72 degrees, take a 5-minute shower instead of a 10-minute shower. Altering our behaviors can have a huge impact on our energy efficiency.
- 02.** Change out your light bulbs. CFLs and incandescent bulbs are so 20th century. We now have quality LED bulbs and fixtures that operate 10x as long at a fraction of the cost.
- 03.** Add insulation to your hot water heater. You can easily go to Home Depot and purchase R-13 insulation to wrap around your hot water heater. Adding insulation helps your heater be more efficient.
- 04.** Purchase a programmable thermostat that is attached to the Internet. A Nest or an Ecobee allow you to track energy usage program times on easy-to-use apps. Turn the HVAC down from your car on the way to the airport (or anywhere).
- 05.** Unplug un-needed devices. So many things in our homes are operating 24/7 and we are not even aware of it. That cable box in the un-used bedroom is a vampire. You can unplug it when not in use and save a lot of electricity, or add a 'smart' power strip.
- 06.** Proper insulation in the house (this goes with proper air-sealing). Some spaces are easier than others to insulate. For example, many people have 50-year-old insulation in the attic that is not offering good insulation value. You can have that removed and add R-49 Cellulose insulation without breaking the bank.
- 07.** Another great place to add insulation is at your band boards (where your floor sits on the foundation wall, or first floor wall). It is more labor intensive but you can cut 1' of drywall out from the entire exterior wall and have a company install spray foam insulation. Once that is completed you must repair the drywall. However, this is a very effective way to prevent air-infiltration and add insulation at a weak spot.
- 08.** Proper air sealing is key for energy efficiency, comfort and health. In many ways this is as easy as finding and fixing a hole. This can be accomplished by looking at all of your exterior walls and penetrations and addressing any holes with caulk or a can of spray foam. Also, during the winter I find it easy to feel where cold air is getting through the cracks (around windows, doors, etc.).
- 09.** Install and use window shades, especially during the summer, to prevent solar gain. This can have a great effect on lowering your cooling bills.
- 10.** When installing/replacing appliances or plumbing fixtures, look for energy-efficient options: WaterSense; Energy Star.