

## ***Introduction:***

As [Environmental Issues](#) continue to rise, people, organizations, governments and nations are seeing the benefit to sustainable or eco-friendly (environmentally safe) practices. At HomeSeattleHome.com we strive to help homebuyers make informed decisions to not only to save money but to invest in their future with eco-friendly, toxic-reducing home practices. Before going eco-friendly learn about how businesses, organizations and buildings become “[certified](#)” and “[earn points](#)” at the [USBGC](#) (U.S. Green Building Council) and search through their [directory](#). We are happy to hear you are interested in reducing your carbon footprint and for additional questions, please contact us at [HomeSeattleHome.com/Contact](#).

## ***Energy:***

The average American household spends \$2,000 a year on energy bills. Through eco-friendly methods, you can reduce those up to 30%, that's up to \$600 a year or \$12,000 over twenty years.

Start by assessing your opportunities to save with:

- [EnergyStar's Interactive Diagram](#)
- [EnergySaver](#) by the U.S. Dept of Energy
- Conducting a [Home Energy Audit](#)

## ***Incentives & Applications:***

Search for energy rebates & incentives at the [U.S. Department of Energy](#).

See other resources here:

- [Weatherization Assistance Program](#)
- [Puget Sound Energy](#)
- [Seattle's Energy Upgrade Program](#)
- [Snohomish PUD](#)
- [Cascade Natural Gas](#)
- [Tacoma Power](#)
- [Solar Power Incentives](#)

Here are a few online applications that can help you save energy and lower your bills:

- [VELOBill](#)
- [WattzOn](#)
- [SimpleEnergy](#)
- [Leaffully](#)

## ***Insulation:***

- Insulating your home from the roof to the foundation is ideal for optimal savings. Before you do, look at various [types](#) of insulation, [where](#) specifically to insulate and [how much](#) you anticipate to save. Be careful of conventional insulation methods which typically contain [formaldehyde](#) a known [cancer-causing](#) substance. Here are some non-toxic Eco-Friendly insulation products:
  - Wool: [Sheep Wool](#)
  - Recycled Denim: [Bonded Logic](#)
  - Cellulose: [GreenFiber](#) & [Celbar](#)
- Air leaks are another way to save money and energy. Improve [leaks](#) and [ducts](#) and lower utility bills. Learn about [spray polyurethane foam](#) (SPF) exposure for safety precautions.
- Replacing old windows, doors and skylights with [EnergyStar](#) approved products can lower energy bills by 7-15%.

## ***Heat & Energy:***

Heating and cooling account for about 54% of your utility bill. Below are some ways to save:

- Consider [Renewable Energy Sources](#) for your home like [Active Solar Heating](#), which can heat space, floor and water sources. [Sunergy Systems](#) is a WA Based Solar Company.
- Consider [radiant heating](#) for floor heat.
- Use an adjustable [thermostat](#) for managing your heat throughout the day & night. Keep it low at night and when you are at work for optimal saving.
- Use window drapes for heating and cooling control.
- Lighting accounts for about 10% of your energy bill. Start by replacing your incandescent lights with [fluorescent lights](#) which will last around 10 times longer. When you change 15 old bulbs to energy saving bulbs you will save around \$50 a year.
- The general rule of thumb is if you are going to be out of a room for over 15 minutes, then turn off the light. Try keeping your house mostly dark when you sleep and when you are out.
- Many devices & appliances can still use electricity when turned off yet plugged in. If you aren't using a device that isn't hard to unplug, give it a try and unplug!
- Winter, fall can be difficult to use a line to dry your clothes, but spring and summer are up for grabs!
- Open windows instead of using the AC.
- Use manual tools over power tools when the job isn't too hard.
- Use natural lighting and ventilation when available to reduce costs and keep air flowing in your home.

#### **Water:**

- Calculate potential water savings with the EPA's [Water Savings Calculator](#).
- [Collect](#) rain water for watering plants, etc.
- [Research](#) and [choose](#) an energy [efficient](#) water heater to install.
- Can't afford a new water heater? For about \$30 you can [insulate](#) your water heater and cut heat loss.
- Keep water heater's temperature at 120 to avoid scalding. Going below 120 can cause bacteria to form.
- Use the vacation settings on your water heater when you leave town.
- Flush the water heater yearly to remove sediment at the bottom, using a garden hose.
- Insulate your [water pipes](#) if you do it yourself for realistic savings.
- Limit your water use when washing and showering. Also use cold water as often as possible.
- Consider a [WaterSense showerhead](#), which can save around 2,900 gallons each year.
- Consider a [WaterSense toilet](#), which can save around 4,000 gallons each year.
- Consider a [WaterSense faucet](#), which can save around 500 gallons each year.
- Use the "economy" settings on your dishwasher and if you have a modern dishwasher, don't worry about using the "pre-wash" option.

#### **Indoor Air Quality:**

- Use materials with low chemical emissions like linoleum, ceramic tile, [non-toxic cleaners](#), low-VOC materials, linoleum, and formaldehyde-free products.
- Before using products, check the [Material Safety Data Sheets \(MSDS\)](#) to verify safety.
- Learn more about [Indoor Air Quality](#) and what you can do about it
- [Learn](#) about & test your home for [Radon](#) and [lowering](#) levels.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector for home safety. [Learn](#) about the compound, symptoms and prevention.
- Prevent [mold](#) by reducing the moisture in your home.
- Learn about [Asbestos](#) and [protecting](#) your family.
- Learn about [Lead](#), [protecting](#) your family, and the [Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule](#).
- Learn about Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and how to [reduce exposure](#).
- Learn about [Hazardous Waste](#) and how to properly [dispose](#) of it.
- Consider non-carpet flooring, as [carpets trap pollutants](#), allergens and more.

### **Green Building:**

- Below are resources for building and remodeling a home with Eco-Friendly and Energy-Efficient methods.
- The [Building for Health Eco-Center](#)
- [Energy-Efficient Home Design](#) by U.S. Energy Dept
- [Eco-FriendlyHouses](#)
- [Green Roofs](#)

### **Shopping:**

Finding safe products for your home, family and environment can be difficult at times. Luckily there are a few tools you can use:

- Buying local and organic foods (if able) is not just eco-friendly it's friendly to your body as well.
- Use reusable shopping bags.
- Use Re-Stores like [Habitat for Humanity](#) to prevent landfill build up.
- EPA's [Safer Product Labeling Program](#)
- [Consumer Product Safety Commission Search](#)
- GoodGuide [online](#), apple [mobile app](#), or android [mobile app](#)
- [Testing chemical sensitivity](#)

### **Recycling & Waste:**

- As often as possible, [Go Paperless](#) to save clutter, trees, and sometimes money.
- As often as possible, [Reduce, Reuse, then Recycle](#) to divert waste and conserve energy.
- Donate old electronics for re-use with [InterConnection](#)
- Electronic waste: EPA's [eCycling Program](#)
- Electronic waste: [Best Buy's Recycle](#)
- WA State Search: [WA State Recycle Database](#)
- King County's [Waste Guide](#) or comprehensive [What Do I Do With List](#)
- [Seattle Refrigerator Replacement Rebate](#)
- Try [1GreenPlanet](#) in Renton for appliances, machinery, and more
- [APlus Removal & Recycle](#) in Auburn

### **Landscaping:**

- Restore [native plants](#) when landscaping.
- Water your lawn less frequently. 1 inch a week is enough water to maintain your yard in summer.
- Use [compost](#) or worm bin for food scrapes which you can use for gardening and the overall health of your property's plants.
- Avoid man-made pesticides and herbicides all together which typically contains petroleum and other harsh chemicals. Use organic fertilizer if you need it.