

# Energy Efficiency and Air Quality

Zero waste also means not wasting energy. Here are some tips to help you save energy (and money) in your home during the warm summer months.

**Summer cooling may not be as big of a concern as keeping warm during a harsh Alaskan winter, but you can still save money by improving the efficiency of your house all through the year:**

- Insulate and seal air leaks to keep the cool air inside.
- Keep window coverings closed during the day to keep the sun from heating up the interior.
- Plant trees or shrubs to shade your house. This may be all you need in Alaska's climate to keep cool.



## LOCAL PROGRAMS

### Home Energy Rebates

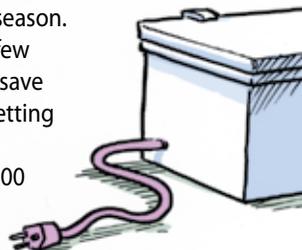
Sign up for an Alaska Housing Finance Corporation energy audit and get reimbursed for the upgrades you make. [http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/energy/weatherization\\_rebates.cfm](http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/energy/weatherization_rebates.cfm)

### SMART POWER CFL Coupons

Chugach Electric Association and Municipal Light & Power are offering coupons to customers for \$2 off the purchase of compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). The coupons are redeemable at the three Anchorage Brown's Electrical Supply locations. Coupons are available at the utilities' customer service departments and at Brown's locations. Download a coupon at [www.chugachelectric.com](http://www.chugachelectric.com). The coupons expire on June 30, 2009.

**Your appliances also contribute to summer energy use.**

- If your air conditioner is old, you could save up to 50% on your utility bill by purchasing a new, energy-efficient model. Look for the ENERGY STAR® and EnergyGuide labels.
- Use a ceiling fan instead of, or in conjunction with, a window air conditioner to spread cool air more effectively through your home.
- Place your room air conditioner on the north side of the house. A unit operating in the shade uses as much as 10% less electricity than the same unit in the sun.
- Your microwave uses two-thirds less energy than your stove and produces much less unwanted heat. For even less unwanted heat during the summer months, cook outside on the grill!
- Your dishwasher, when fully loaded, uses less water than washing dishes by hand. Let dishes air-dry to save even more energy.
- Use the warm or cold water setting when washing your clothes, and always use cold water for rinse cycles. Line dry clothes whenever you can.
- When you need to use the dryer, run full loads, use the moisture-sensing setting, and clean the clothes dryer lint trap after each use.
- One of the best things you can do to reduce energy use in your house is to clean the dust and debris off your refrigerator coils. Twice a year cleanings can reduce the cost of operating your fridge by 10%
- Unplug the spare refrigerator/freezer in the garage if you don't really need it. If you aren't going to use what remains of last season's salmon or halibut, give it away now (contact the Zoo or your friends with dogs), clean out the freezer and unplug it until your first catch of the season. Unplugging for just a few months each year will save about \$25 per year. Getting rid of the spare fridge altogether will save \$100 to \$150 per year.



## AIR QUALITY CORNER

Summer is a great time to try new things. This summer consider trying some of Anchorage's alternative transportation options.

### Bike to Work

May 15 is Bike to Work Day. Take the opportunity to try bike commuting with the support of your employer and fellow co-workers. Look for classes throughout spring and summer about bike commuting, bike safety, bike maintenance and other topics.

There's a lot going on in the Anchorage community so you can learn the ropes from experienced and dedicated bike commuters who often commute by bike all year round. Here are some resources:

The Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage (BCA) promotes "Share the Road" principles for bicyclist safety, works to improve conditions for bicycle transportation and encourages bicycle use as a sustainable, energy-efficient, economical and nonpolluting form of transportation that fosters health promotion and disease prevention, as well as an enjoyable form of recreation.

[www.bicycleanchorage.org](http://www.bicycleanchorage.org)

The Department of Health and Human Services organizes Bike to Work activities and hosts a web page with links to local and national bike site and details about Bike to Work Day registration. Be sure to register! [www.muni.org/biketowork](http://www.muni.org/biketowork)

### Take the Bus

If biking to work isn't your thing, consider getting out of your car and on the bus. People Mover works directly with businesses to help employees figure out the best routes, or get into a Share-A-Ride program through vanpool registration or carpool matching. [www.peoplemover.org](http://www.peoplemover.org)