

Tips For Easing Energy Bills

(NAPSA)—A home's points of entry can become a fast exit for energy and end up costing a small fortune on utility bills. To avoid being shortchanged by windows, doors and the garage, home energy experts recommend making a few simple modifications.

Seal The Envelope Before Sending the Bill

Homeowners should seal windows and doors "like an envelope"—or otherwise risk air-conditioning the entire neighborhood. In fact, it's estimated a full 50 percent of annual utility costs stem from homes' heating and cooling systems. To check that doors and windows aren't drafty, look for light under or around the door and condensation around the windowpane, which is an indication of cooling loss. Also, check the attic to make sure it's properly insulated and not letting air escape.

Quick Tips:

- Install thick, durable weather-stripping under your garage door to reduce this common energy leak. Polyurethane insulation or fiberglass duct wrap are both good options.
- Weather-strip and caulk all cracks between the wall and the window trim. Replace broken glass and putty any loose windowpanes to help secure the windows for harsh wind.
- An inexpensive solution to drafty windows is the Shrink & Seal Window Kit, available at Lowe's stores and lowes.com. It fits standard windows and is installed with a hair dryer that literally shrinks and seals a crystal-clear film over the window.
- Upgrade that old refrigerator to the only ENERGY STAR-quali-



fied refrigerator engineered specifically for the garage: Gladiator GarageWorks' Chillerator, by Whirlpool Corporation. It's 15 percent more energy efficient than current federal energy standards, saving an average of \$487 in energy costs over its lifespan.

"One of the simplest ways to save on utilities is to make wise appliance upgrade decisions," said Richard Karney, Manager of Energy Star at the Department of Energy (DOE). "Most people cannot imagine the energy drain associated with older appliances." ENERGY STAR-qualified appliances are part of a joint program of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DOE to help consumers save money and the environment.

According to a survey by Whirlpool, 42 percent of Americans have an old refrigerator in the garage. Studies show that a 10- to 15-year-old refrigerator costs an average of \$82 more a year in utilities compared to an ENERGY STAR-qualified refrigerator purchased today.

For more energy-saving tips, visit www.energystar.gov, www.energy.gov or www.lowes.com/energy.