



Extension News Column

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To: Mary Beth Smetzer, community news editor, News-Miner, 459-7546 (wk), 452-7917 (fax), mismetzer@newsminer.com, and people@newsminer.com
From: Roxie Dinstel via Ronda Halvarson
Re: Pinching Pennies to run Mondays on page A-3

Additional

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Are you more interested in energy conservation or energy efficiency? Most people think they mean the same thing, but they don't. Energy conservation and energy efficiency are two sides of the same coin.

Energy conservation means reducing the level of energy use by turning down a thermostat, turning off a light or turning up the temperature of your refrigerator.

Energy efficiency means getting the same job done while using less energy. Efficiency is usually done by replacing an older, less-efficient appliance with a new one.

When you replace a single pane window in your house with an energy efficient one, the new window prevents heat from escaping in the winter, so you save energy by using your boiler less and still stay comfortable.

When you replace an appliance, such as a refrigerator, with a more energy efficient model, your food stays cool, but uses less energy.

One of the easiest ways to be more energy efficient is to make sure any appliance you use is full before using. Running the dishwasher, washer or dryer when it is half full isn't efficient. Make sure your load is full, but not overfull so the appliance doesn't work correctly.

It is actually more efficient to run the dishwasher than to wash your dishes by hand. The dishwasher uses less water than hand washing. By the numbers, according to one study at the University of Bonn in Germany, the dishwasher uses only half the energy, one-sixth of the water, and less soap, to boot. This assumes that you are using one of the newer dishwashers. If yours is older, it might be time to replace it with a more efficient unit.

Make energy efficiency your top priority when buying new products. Be sure to check the energy star rating on any new appliance you buy. Over the life of a new energy star qualified washer,

you'll save enough money in operating costs to pay for the matching dryer. With your water savings, you could fill three backyard swimming pools.

Is your washer more than 10 years old? Replace it with a new energy star qualified washer and you could save \$135 each year on your utility bills.

Most new appliances have the energy star rating on the label. Pay attention as you select.

If you are purchasing a vehicle, choose an energy efficient one to reduce gasoline bills and emissions. Beginning with the 2013 model year, there will be new energy efficiency labels on vehicles. The new labels will give you:

- Useful estimates of the amount consumers will save or spend on fuel over the five years after purchase, compared to the average conventionally powered new vehicle.
- Easy-to-read ratings on a 1–10 scale (10 being best) of the way a particular model compares to all others for fuel economy, air emissions related to the formation of smog, and air emissions related to climate change.
- An estimate of how much fuel or electricity it takes to drive 100 miles.

So watch as these new labels appear on vehicles. In the meantime, check out websites such as www.edmunds.com and www.fueleconomy.gov to compare fuel efficiency of individual vehicles.

Finally, add energy performance to your selection criteria when buying or renting a house or apartment. Ask how much fuel oil was burned in that unit during last winter. Then take that into consideration as you select where you want to live. When considering buying or renting a home, make sure you know how energy efficient it is before you sign on the dotted line.

Considering energy efficiency of both the equipment you use and the way you use it will help reduce the energy you consume.

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