

Saving Energy and Money at Home while on Vacation

Energy Savers Blog

[Earth Day](#) [1], Daylight Saving Time, and the upcoming Memorial Day holiday have me already looking forward to my annual summer "big trip." Before leaving town for extended periods of time, I always take some basic, small steps to save money and energy at home, including:

- Turning down my [water heater](#) [2] to "vacation mode." Because water heating can account for 14%–25% of the energy consumed in your home and a large percentage of the cost of running a water heater is due to the "stand by" losses, this is probably the easiest and most cost effective money- and energy-saving tip I use.
- Setting my [programmable thermostat](#) [3] at a higher temperature than usual.
- Unplugging "[energy vampires](#) [4]," [electronic appliances](#) [5] that even when turned off utilize a small amount of electricity, called phantom loads, including my coffee maker and grinder, GPS, headset chargers, laptop computer, TV, rechargeable toothbrush, and a printer. According to this [YouTube video](#) [6] posted by GOOD, Americans waste approximately one month's electricity bill each year on vampire energy.
- Keeping my [window shades](#) [7] drawn to help keep the house cool from the afternoon sun.
- Making sure all [lights](#) [8] are turned off. For lights on a security timer, I use [CFLs](#) [9], which have about 75% energy savings.

During vacation, I also try and save money and energy by:

- Trying these [tips for improving your vehicle's fuel efficiency](#) [10], including driving sensibly. (Aggressive driving—speeding, rapid acceleration and braking—wastes gasoline.)
- Considering [neighborhood electric vehicles](#) [11] for short distances.
- Carpooling and using public transportation.

It's always nice reviewing the month's utility bill and realizing how easy it was to save energy and money at home while on vacation.

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Links:

[1] <http://www.eere.energy.gov/earthday/>

[2]

http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=12760

[3] http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/space_heating_cooling/index.cfm/mytopic=12720

[4] <http://www.eereblogs.energy.gov/energysavers/post/Vampire-Power-Is-Scary-All-Year-Round.aspx>

[5] http://www.energysavers.gov/tips/home_office.cfm

[6] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgZfry82LC4>

[7] http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/windows_doors_skylights/index.cfm/mytopic=13580

[8] http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/lighting_daylighting/index.cfm/mytopic=11970

[9] http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/lighting_daylighting/index.cfm/mytopic=11975#cfl

[10] <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/drive.shtml>

[11] http://www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/avta/light_duty/nev/index.html

[12] <http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/EnergySavers/~3/A0yg1VMmk08/post.aspx>