

Happy Hallogreen!

Energy Savers Blog

With the fateful transition to cooler weather and Halloween just upon us, it is important to remember some key tips when preparing to have the most energy-efficient Halloween possible. From lighting, to pumpkin usage to heat insulation, there is something each of us can do to ensure minimal energy waste and maximum efficiency this October 31st. Here are a few ideas for a Happy Hallogreen:

Control your lighting – If you choose to stay in and hand out candy to trick-or-treaters, keep your energy usage down by turning the lights off in your house for the evening. Try using candles instead (pumpkin spice scented!) to illuminate the house and keep energy and spookiness alive.

If you're hesitant to use candles in your home, consider purchasing energy-efficient [LED string lighting](#) [1] in a variety of Halloween colors. You can purchase these at any major retailer or hardware store and they are great for decorating for holidays year round. I recently purchased compact fluorescent spiral light bulbs in orange black which are perfect for replacing the bulbs of small outdoor space lighting, such as patios or porches, and add to that truly eerie feel of Halloween. Learn more about your choices in [energy-efficient lighting](#) [2].

It is important to remember that even for a dark holiday the sun can still play a major role. Last year, my neighbor used a [solar walkway lamp](#) [3], instead of a candle, in his jack-o-lantern. Not only did he avoid candle mishaps and flame outages, his pumpkin looked great and he was able to use the opportunity to educate children about solar energy, while saving a substantial amount of energy himself. This is such a simple and cheap way to make Halloween fun and eco-friendly. A solar walkway lamp can be purchased for around \$3 at most hardware stores.

Control your heat loss – One of the best gifts of any fall holiday is utilizing the [fireplace](#) [4] as a viable heat source, but if you're not using yours, you want to be sure it isn't a source of heat loss in your home. I purchased glass doors for the wood burning fireplaces in my house which are designed to reduce airflow and thus heat loss. Your glass door should include a frame with adjustable air intake vents, tempered glass doors, an interior screen and a special bracket to secure the frame in place. To maximize your energy efficiency, keep the door closed during burning, which allows the fire to be better controlled and reduces the amount of radiant heat transfer into the room. Find more ways to [reduce heat loss in your home during the winter](#) [4].

If your home is sans fireplace, keep your [thermostat](#) [5] on a moderate setting and prevent heat from escaping the house by closing the front door between trick-or-treater visits. Step outside and close the door each time, to maximize heat retention.

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Control your waste – Unless you intend to use your pumpkin’s guts for a pie or hearty thanksgiving bread, consider composting your pumpkin after use. Best practices for composting large items like pumpkins is to smash up the item, allowing for more surface area to be covered. Take it a step further by raking up some of those beautiful fallen leaves and adding to the pile. For brave composters, add manure or a nitrogen supplement like bone meal.

Have a safe, happy and energy-efficient Halloween!

Kristin Swineford supports DOE's Weatherization & Intergovernmental Program in Communications & Outreach.

[SOURCE](#) [6]

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Links:

[1] http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/lighting_daylighting/index.cfm/mytopic=12032

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

[3] http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/lighting_daylighting/index.cfm/mytopic=12170

[4] http://www.energysavers.gov/seasonal/tips_winter.html

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

[6] <http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/EnergySavers/~3/d2hYXxPs0Lc/post.aspx>