

SPECIAL REPORT

COST-SAVING TIPS FOR EACH ROOM IN YOUR HOME

Every little effort counts when it comes to reducing those utility bills. *my paper* offers some suggestions

1. WATER HEATER

- Instant water heaters are more energy-efficient than storage heaters. Switch it on before you shower and turn it off after use.
- Insulate your water heater with a water heater blanket so it takes less energy to heat up.

2. SHOWER

- Using a low-flow shower head instead of a normal one saves around three litres of water each time you shower.
- Take a shower rather than a bath and save up to 400 litres a week.

3. TOILET

- Re-use laundry water to flush the toilet.
- Fit a water-saving device, such as a bag or bottle, in your cistern to reduce the amount of water needed for each flush. This can save three litres per flush.



1. WASHING MACHINE

- Choose a front-loader on your next buy – it uses up to 50 per cent less energy than top-loaders and 40 per cent less water.
- Air-dry clothes instead of using an electric clothes dryer.

2. KETTLE

- Boil water only when needed. Use a thermos flask to store hot water instead of an electric airpot and save \$300 a year.

3. KITCHEN SINK

- Wash dishes in a plugged sink and don't leave the tap running.

4. REFRIGERATOR

- Choose a four-tick model over a one-tick model and save about \$100 a year.*
- Buy the smallest model that meets your family's needs – larger models generally use more energy.



BATHROOM

BEDROOM



KITCHEN

LIVING ROOM



1. AIR-CONDITIONER

- Use a fan instead of an air-conditioner and save about \$650 a year.*
- Set the temperature higher – every degree raised saves about \$20 a year.*
- Choose an energy-efficient model. A four-tick model saves around \$350 a year compared to a one-tick model.*

2. COMPUTER

- Enable your computer's energy-saving features to switch to hibernation mode or switch off completely when not in use.

3. WINDOW

- Draw the curtains or blinds during the hottest part of the day to keep the house cool, especially for west-facing windows.



1. LIGHTS

- Use a compact seven-watt fluorescent bulb instead of a 40-watt incandescent bulb and save about \$15 per bulb per year.*
- Place lamps in the corners of your room to reflect more light.
- Use light-coloured paint on your walls. A dark-coloured room absorbs light and requires more lighting.
- Make the most of available natural light to minimise the use of electric lighting.

2. POWER SOCKETS

- Stand-by power can account for up to 10 per cent of home electricity use. Switch off power sockets and save around \$50 a year.*

3. TELEVISION

- Turn off the television when no one is watching. Keeping it on for "background noise" will raise monthly bills.

*BASED ON ELECTRICITY TARIFF OF \$0.2388 PER UNIT

DESIGN: CAROL GAN SOURCE: NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL WEBSITE, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND INTERNET

Want to cut energy bill? Change your lifestyle

Singaporeans, hit by rising power bills and inflation, resort to innovative ways to cut costs

DAWN TAY

SINGAPOREANS are resorting to small but innovative efforts to slash dollars and cents off their utility bills, in the light of rising electricity tariffs and inflation.

Domestic electricity tariffs hit a record high of 25.07 cents per kilo-watt hour (kwh) this month when Singapore Power

subsidiary SP Services increased electricity tariffs.

It was the sixth consecutive quarterly increase since April last year.

To tighten their belts, lifestyle changes, such as going without air-conditioning and taking cold showers, have become the norm for many Singaporeans *my paper* spoke to.

One such thrifty Singaporean is Mr Andrew Kwa, 25, a

marketing intern at a water purification company.

Instead of relying on fluorescent lighting, his family now go about their daily activities in the living room by the light of a small rechargeable 20-watt picnic lantern.

Mr Kwa and his family live in a four-room HDB flat.

Said Mr Kwa: "The lantern lights up half of the room when fully charged after four hours and is bright enough for us to surf the Internet and watch television by, even at night."

"During the day, we don't use fluorescent lights at all, and if we need some light, we use the lantern."

The family also went cold turkey on air-conditioning in the beginning of the year. Mr Kwa estimates they now save \$150 on electricity each month.

Said Mr Kwa: "Changing our daily habits was the simplest way to cut costs."

"Investing in energy-efficient technology and appliances costs money and takes time to develop."

Air-conditioning is also a no-no for programmes trainer Wilma Lee, 43, who rents out two of the rooms in her four-room flat to tenants on a "no-air-conditioner" basis.

To minimise her water bills,

she reuses the water used for washing her clothes to clean her bathrooms and toilets.

When she finds her electricity bill – about \$100 a month – going up, she takes time to talk to her domestic helper and tenants on further measures they can take to cut costs.

For senior technician Chan Chee Kong, 44, little changes in his family's daily habits mean big savings in the long run – he has managed to keep his monthly electricity bill constant for almost two years.

At \$70, his monthly bill for his four-room flat is \$20 below the current national average of around \$90.

Cold showers are the norm for Mr Chan, who rarely turns on the water heater.

He also stopped boiling his drinking water last September after he installed a water filter on his tap. Now, he only boils water when he makes coffee or tea.

Said Mr Chan of his lifestyle changes: "It's just a matter of getting used to the changes."

"It's worth it as my family manages to offset the costs of rising tariffs."

Mr Kwa and Mr Chan agreed that education efforts on utility-saving measures are key to encourage Singaporeans to adopt cost-cutting lifestyles.

Said Mr Chan: "Many Singaporeans have a habit of using (utilities) first then thinking later, as small increases in tariffs might not make us feel the pinch."

"More education is needed for Singaporeans to adopt cost-cutting measures."

Added Mr Kwa: "Long-term campaigns to promote energy efficiency will not only help us cut costs, but go green at the same time."

In April, the 10 per cent Energy Challenge was launched by the National Environment Agency (NEA). It is NEA's first national contest that aims to have

households cut their electricity usage by 10 per cent.

A similar 10-litre Challenge was launched by the PUB and the Singapore Environment Council in 2006 to encourage Singaporeans to cut their daily water usage by 10 litres.

Besides providing tips on how to save water, other initiatives in the programme included a labelling scheme for water-efficient appliances.

Other measures which the NEA has also introduced to help households cut power costs include the Energy Labelling Scheme, which was made mandatory at the start of the year.

Under the scheme, all air-conditioners and refrigerators sold here must be labelled with energy labels, which show consumers how much energy appliances use and how energy-efficient they are.

And soon, cost-conscious consumers will find it easier to track energy consumption and costs, with an energy consumption tracker being developed by electrical switchgear Bridex Harwal Pte Ltd. The project is supported by the NEA.

This new device will show home owners the amount they have used over the last 12 months in terms of kwh and dollars.

It will even pinpoint appliances that are the energy-consuming culprits and will be available by the end of the month from Home-Fix stores.

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HELPDESK 我的字典

Fluorescent light: 荧光灯
yíng guāng dēng

Water heater: 热水器
rè shuǐ qì