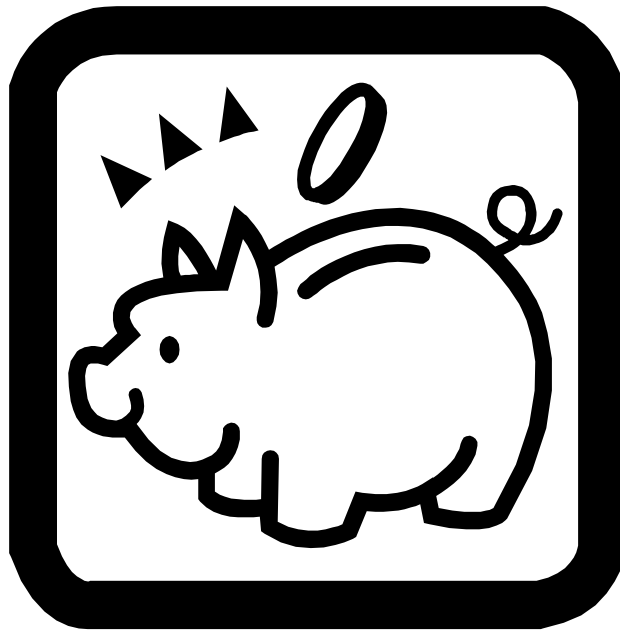


# CONSERVE AND SAVE



## HELPFUL TIPS TO LOWER YOUR LIVING COSTS

Compiled by  
Southern New Hampshire Human Services Council  
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## Home Appliances

***Turn off and unplug appliances and electronics such as toasters, cell phone chargers (or any charger), computers, coffee makers, stereos, etc. when not in use.***

Ranges/Ovens – Keep the oven door closed as much as possible during cooking times. Utilize your crockpot or slow cookers as often as possible. They use less electricity. Cover your sauce pans to retain heat. Cook items that call for cooking temperatures within 50 degrees together rather than separately. Utilize your microwave it uses half the power of a conventional oven.

Refrigerator – Turn it down. Using a thermometer, set your refrigerator temperature as close to 37 degrees and your freezer as close to 3 degrees as possible. Turn the energy saver switch on. Check the gaskets around the refrigerator/freezer doors to make sure they are clean and sealed tightly. Keeping your fridge and freezer full also keeps the cost down as well. Regularly vacuum the condenser coils. Cool food items on the counter before storing them in the refrigerator. Close the doors tightly.

Clothes Washer – Use warm or cold (not hot) settings.

Clothes Dryer – Clean the lint trap. Hanging damp clothes in the house during the winter adds moisture to your home, which may save you from using a humidifier and can help protect your furniture from dry rot. Hang your jeans and towels to reduce the drying time. Better yet, use an outdoor clothesline!

Dishwasher – Only run full loads. Allow the dishes to air-dry. Turn off the drying cycle manually. Not using the heat in the drying cycle can save 20 percent of your dishwasher's total electricity use. Don't pre-wash or rinse the dirty dishes. Use the pot scrubber feature. It heats the water to higher temperature which is preferable to turning up the thermostat on your water heater.

Water Heater – Turn down the thermostat. Thermostats are often set to 140 degrees F when 120 is usually fine. Some turn off their water heater at night or during the day when they are not home for long periods of time, thus saving them more money. Wrap your water heater in an insulating jacket, which costs just \$10 to \$20. Wrap hot water pipes with insulation wherever possible.

Bathroom-Showers-Take shorter ones. Invest in a low-flow shower head to save hot water and energy. When shaving, fill the basin instead of letting the hot water run. Fix the toilet if the water runs.

Old Appliances – When replacing old, broken appliances, select the most energy-efficient models. Look for the Energy Star Label. Buy the appliance that fits your needs.

Heating/Cooling – In the winter, set your thermostat at 68 degrees in daytime, and 65 degrees at night. In the summer, keep it at 78. Clean or replace air filters once a month! In the cold months, wear sweaters and heavy socks. Install programmable thermostats. For every degree you turn your thermostat down (in the 70-80 degree range), you can save up to 5% in energy costs.

Use ceiling fans by reversing the spin and setting on the lowest speed to keep warm air down in the living area. The fan must be turning clockwise.

Glass fireplace doors help stop heat from being lost up the chimney. Close the fireplace damper when not using fireplace.

In winter, open shades on the sunny side of the house to let the sun warm the room. Close the shades before sundown to help keep the heat from escaping. In summer, keep window coverings closed during the day to help keep the heat out.

Do not block radiators or heating vents with furniture or draperies. Vacuum hear registers to keep them from getting blocked.

Drafts-Remove air conditioners or cover them to prevent drafts. Block other drafty places: mail slot, doors, windows, floorboards.

Only heat or cool those rooms you use. Close vents and doors to unused rooms.

Lighting – Buy energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs for your most-used lights. Although they cost more initially, they save money in the long run by using only ¼ the energy of an ordinary incandescent bulb and lasts 8-12 times longer.

## **Home Improvement/Maintenance**

Weatherize – Use caulk and weather stripping to plug air leaks around doors and windows. Ask your utility company for a home energy audit to find out where your home is poorly insulates or energy inefficient. This service may be provided free or at a low cost. Make sure it includes a check of your furnace and air conditioning. Or you can do an energy audit yourself. Start by using the energy calculator available online: [http://www.psnh.com/Energy/Home\\_Efficiency/ehg-selfaudit.html](http://www.psnh.com/Energy/Home_Efficiency/ehg-selfaudit.html)

To find leaks within your home, begin by closing doors, windows, and fireplace dampers, animal doors, etc. Next, turn on bathroom and kitchen fans and the

clothes dryer to create a negative pressure inside the home. Then, check for drafts or airflow around potential leak areas. These may include:

- Window/exterior door frames
- Electrical outlets/switch plates
- Baseboards
- Ceiling fixtures
- Recessed lighting
- Attic doors/hatches
- Baseboards
- Plumbing under sinks
- Wiring that runs through floors or outside walls

It's easiest to find these leak sources when it's cold outside and warm inside because you'll be able to feel them. You can also find leaks by blowing out a match and holding it near a suspected leak to see if the smoke is drawn to it.

The important thing to remember is that you may find one or more large leaks, a loose window track, or a bottom door seal that's missing. Repairing these simple things can greatly reduce your energy bill.

Insulation – Insulating your walls and ceilings can save 20-30 percent of home heating bills and reduce CO2 emissions by 140 to 2100 pounds per year. If you live in a colder climate, consider superinsulating.

Windows – Replacing ordinary windows with argon-filled double-glazed windows. If replacing windows is not an option for you, temporarily prevent air leaks by sealing windows with a clear, heat-shrink plastic cover kit. They're inexpensive and available at most hardware stores and home centers. Caulk any cracks where air is leaking in.

Thermostats – Install programmable thermostats. They will automatically turn down the heat at night and when people are at work or school during the day.

Plumbing – Fix the dripping faucet and running toilet. Installing low-flow shower heads will use less hot water. Take shorter showers; eliminate baths.

## **Retail**

Salons – Cut your own child's hair.

Furniture & Clothing –

- Furniture and clothing can be purchased at local thrift stores. Many even carry new items.
- Lowell Wish Project at 978-441-9474 (Free furniture if available)

- Household Goods Recycling- [www.hgrm.org](http://www.hgrm.org) 530 Main St, Acton, MA Collects, stores, distributes household items for those in need
- Purchase flannel sheets and PJ's
- Use scatter rugs on flooring, wear slippers or socks to keep feet warm.

### Coupons – USE THEM!!

- Use reward/loyalty cards at grocery stores and pharmacies. Online coupon sites such as [www.shortcuts.com](http://www.shortcuts.com) let shoppers load coupons into their store loyalty cards for savings without printing or clipping. Just click the coupons you want and they're automatically redeemed when you use your loyalty card.
- Don't be afraid to ask merchants if they will take expired coupons or rain checks. Many merchants would rather your business than you choosing to go elsewhere. As if merchants will match prices/sales from other stores.
- Rebates/Free-bates. Look for rebates and free-bates which refund you the full purchase price. You can make money in some cases when you use a coupon and then get a full-price free-bate. Don't forget to mail-in the forms.
- Buy one; Get one Free are great deals on their own, but you can also use one coupon for each item. So if you get two items, make sure to use two coupons.
- Check out [www.coupons.com](http://www.coupons.com) and [www.smartsource.com](http://www.smartsource.com) which let you select and print coupons.
- Frequent the web sites of your favorite brands. They often have printable coupons on their site or you can sign up for special offers by mail/email.
- Coupons for sale. If you spot a great sale and want to double up on your savings, go online to a site like [www.thecouponclippers.com](http://www.thecouponclippers.com) which lets you order coupons for a few cents each.
- Stack coupons. Some retailers offer coupons that can only be used at their stores. You can use these coupons along with manufacturers' coupons on the same product for extra savings. By doubling up, you can sometimes get the products for free or nearly free.
- Double and Triple Coupons. Some grocery stores double or triple coupons and sometimes only on certain days of the week. Check the newspaper for which days they are multiplied.

### **Transportation**

Medicaid Transportation. If your child has Medicaid you are eligible to receive compensation to providers of Medicaid, Dr's, hospitals, therapies, picking up prescriptions, as long as your child is in the car with you. You need a "resource number" from Medicaid and a form each time you go to a provider. Keep them in your glove compartment so they are there when you need them. You will also need an enrollment form. You can get both at the Salem Health and Human service office on Main St. In Salem.

Devon Nicole House – this is a place for you and your family to stay in Boston when your child needs medical care at Children’s. It is walking distance from the hospital, very reasonably priced and very homey and clean. Also, if you stay there, you are eligible for grants from the foundation to help with medical costs or transportation or other needs for your child. Following is the website for application and contact information.

<http://www.childrenshospital.org/patientsfamilies/Site1393/mainpageS1393P4sublevel78.html>

Irving Gas Program through Dartmouth Hitchcock in Lebanon – If you have Dr. appointments or need hospitalization at Dartmouth in Lebanon you can get gas vouchers for Irving Gas Station. When visiting the hospital, ask for the “Center for Families” at the front desk. They will direct you.

NH Rideshare is a FREE commuter matching service provided by the NH Department of Transportation and dedicated to finding an alternative way for commuters to travel to and from work. NH Rideshare uses Geographical Computer Matching to provide commuters with information and assistance about ridesharing and alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle including carpools, vanpools, buses, and trains. To save time, money, and the environment simply register with the NH Rideshare Program at 1-800-462-8707

Whenever possible walk, bike, car pool or use mass transit. You can save money by not driving.

### Trash

Reduce your trash and your need of trash bags:

- Purchase fewer prepackaged items
- Compost your fruit and veggies left-overs
- Recycle your paper, cardboard, plastic and cans

### Groceries

- Buy store brands.
- Eat leftovers.
- Use coupons.
- Make a shopping list. Avoid going to the store several times a week. This saves time and gas and some money (impulse buying)
- Pay with cash.
- Shop the perimeters of the grocery store. This is where you’ll find the unprocessed basics; The inner aisles usually contain the processed, more expensive foods.
- Buy fruits/produce that are in season from local farmers. Avoid juice
- Buy packaged meats in large quantities. Divide and freeze.
- Eat fruits rather than drinking juice.
- Hot air popcorn instead of packages of microwave popcorn.

- Bake cookies from scratch.
- Make your own bread. A machine is great but not necessary
- Grow your own herbs
- Tap water instead of bottled water.
- Use ammonia, bleach and vinegar instead of bottled spray cleaners.

## **Resources**

NH Office of Energy and Planning:

<http://www.staywarmnh.org>

Rockingham Community Action (fuel assistance):

<http://www.rcaction.org/index2.htm>

Fuel Assistance Program: Citizens Energy Corporation, (877) 563-4645; website:

<http://www.citizensenergy.com/english/pages/ContactUs>

Energy Solutions for your home/business:

[www.nhsaves.com](http://www.nhsaves.com)

Financial Management:

<http://extension.unh.edu/>

Recipes and Tips for Healthy, Thrifty Meals:

[http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic\\_text/food/rec-thrifty/recipes.htm](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/food/rec-thrifty/recipes.htm)

Ways to stay warm this winter:

[www.staywarmnh.org/#where](http://www.staywarmnh.org/#where)

Blogging for Information

[www.Moneysavingmom.com](http://www.Moneysavingmom.com)

[www.couponcravings.com](http://www.couponcravings.com)

Free Items or Trade Items or Low Cost Items

[www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

[www.Craigslist.org](http://www.Craigslist.org)