

Reduce your Carbon Impact and Save Money Too!!

Simple things YOU can do in your own home, with little skill and at low cost--and (in some cases) *who* you can ask at LHFM for advice.*

- **Adjust your daily activities.** Most immediately impactful is raising your home temperature in the summer (78 degrees is a good target) and lowering the temperature in the winter (try 68 degrees to start). And then dress appropriately! Other practices to consider include turning the hot water heater temperature down (but no lower than 122 degrees), washing your clothes in cold water (and even hang-drying selected clothing), and of course turning out lights when not needed (and using natural light wherever possible). Also, wherever possible, use a microwave rather than oven or stove.
- **Install a programmable thermostat that** can be set to automatically turn off or reduce heating and cooling during the times when you are asleep or away. With a programmable thermostat, you eliminate wasteful energy use from heating and cooling without upgrading your HVAC system. On average, a programmable thermostat can save \$180 per year.
- **Replace any remaining incandescent or CFL light bulbs with longer-lasting and less-energy-intensive LED bulbs.** Available online at www.1000bulbs.com, Amazon, etc., or at any hardware store. Unsure about what color(s)? The Arlington County Library lends out samples to try out.
- **Use smart power strips.** “Phantom loads,” or the electricity used by electronics when they are turned off or in standby mode, are a major source of energy waste. It’s estimated that 75% of the energy used to power household electronics is consumed when

they are switched off, which can cost you up to \$200 per year. Smart power strips (AKA “advanced power strips”) eliminate phantom loads by shutting off the power, with one easy switch, to electronics when they are not in use. Smart power strips can be set to turn off at an assigned time, during a period of inactivity, through remote switches, or based on the status of a “master” device. Most also have built-in surge protection for your delicate electronics.

- **Weatherize your home**

- a. Weather-stripping --- for leaky doors including attic and windows. Easy to detect by looking for light entering at the junction.

- b. Caulking – a reusable caulking gun and a five-dollar tube of caulk. Leaks can be identified holding a lighted candle close to the wall where you may have noted cold entering (in the winter), or detected excess warmth while operating A/C in the summer. Multiple colors available to match the surrounding surface.

- c. Install foam insulation of electrical receptacles in outdoor walls (of newer wood frame buildings only) – inexpensive foam pieces available online or at hardware stores fit to light switches and outlets which allow outside air to enter. All you need is a slotted or Philips screwdriver and a few minutes. Keith (571-212-4139) has samples.

- d. Close chimney flues when not in use. Also, install a cap on chimney.

- **Purchase and use energy-efficient appliances.** Look for the Energy Star label every time you replace or add an appliance, whether a toaster or a HVAC system. Buy the higher-rated one wherever possible.
- **Replace air filters.** Replacing dirty filters regularly, especially in the summer, can reduce household energy consumption up to 15%. This is because clean filters are more efficient and put less strain on your system.
- **Install a ceiling fan** – in winter, helps heating system work more efficiently (saving \$ in short and long terms), in summer adds to coolness at higher temperature settings.
- **Buy renewable energy.** Don't just passively pay your monthly Dominion or Pepco bill! Green energy is available in VA—at least two options: Dominion Green Energy Program (<https://www.dominionenergy.com/virginia/renewable-energy-programs/100-percent-renewable-energy>) or Arcadia (www.arcadia.com). For options in DC or MD, contact PEPCO.
- Install flow restrictors in your faucets and showers – these can save water generally without affecting the velocity and "feel" of the flow.
- **Low-cost energy audit** – commercial energy audit companies abound in the DC Metro region. Four recognized local energy audit firms include:
 - a. Home Energy Medics
(https://www.homeenergymedics.com/?utm_campaign=gmb&utm_medium=organic&utm_source=gmb or 703-420-4749). Rated 4.7 (103 reviews), rec'd by Keith Oberg

- b. Home Energy Savings – Solutions, Rockville (301-842-8188 or <https://marylandenergyaudit.net/>). Rated 4.9
 - c. Home Energy Savings Solutions, Vienna (703-260-1933 or <https://virginiaenergyaudit.net/>). Rated 5.0
 - d. Residential Energy Auditors, Fairfax Station (703-304-2740 or <https://www.reauditors.com/>). Rated 5.0
- **Composting** –If you can't do "DIY" backyard composting, consider a weekly pick-up service, such as Veteran Composting. OR, near-free option: buy a small airtight container to put compostable food scraps in & every few weeks take it to spot in Arlington to dump the scraps—they have a program to collect & compost. See Naomi T (naomihope@comcast.net)
 - **Dietary changes** – increase you consumption of vegetarian meals, especially eat less or no beef.

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