



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

# SCOTT'S ENERGY SPOT: WARM WEATHER SAVINGS



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### Efficiency tips from Firelands Electric's energy advisor

The summer is coming!  
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During his 1775 midnight ride, Paul Revere cried out, "The British are coming!" to warn colonists about the arrival of the redcoats. Like Revere, climbing temperatures have more than a few people shouting, "The summer is

coming!" An exclamation of excitement for most, it's also the battle cry for members concerned about increased energy costs to cool their homes. But not to fear — with a simple look around your home and the tips below, you can make some low-cost adjustments that will keep your living space more comfortable and your energy bills more affordable.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy's website, 48% of an average home's heat gain in the summer comes through its windows. (Heat gain is when the hot air outside sneaks into your home, raising the temperature inside and causing your AC to run harder and more frequently.) While sealing any air leaks around your windows is one low-cost way to stop heat gain, there is also one defense that is nearly no-cost: Make sure that windows, especially those facing the south or west, have window coverings installed and use them to your advantage.

By closing blinds or curtains on sunny days, you can help keep the heat outside, where it belongs.

Another 14% of a home's summer heat gain comes from appliances and people. Postponing cooking, bathing, and laundry until after the hottest portion of the day (typically between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.) can improve your home's comfort level and reduce AC run times, which translates into both energy and financial savings.

To further increase your savings, give your cooling system a thorough once-over before the dog days of summer arrive. Clear any landscaping, twigs, weeds, and debris away from the outdoor AC condenser, making sure the cooling fins are clean and have a clear path for air flow. Also, change or clean the air filters in your furnace or air handler, which circulates your AC system's cool air throughout your home. Before installing window air conditioners, wash the filters and remove any dirt or grime buildup from the cooling fins.

If the approaching heat of the summer has you feeling the need to sound the alarm concerning your energy bill, take the time to complete some of the inexpensive improvements we've listed here. Spending just a few minutes preparing your home now can help you both keep cool and rein in your energy costs this summer.

For additional energy efficiency tips, visit [www.firelandsec.com/energy-education](http://www.firelandsec.com/energy-education), or contact Firelands Electric Cooperative to schedule an appointment for your FREE energy consultation. I'm always happy to provide you with home energy efficiency guidance!

