

SAVING WATER

A five minute shower uses about half as much water as a bath.

If you use a dishwasher, run only full loads. When you wash dishes by hand, rinse them in a tub of clean water instead of under running water.

Turn faucets all the way off. Just one drip a second from a leaky faucet can waste up to 400 litres of water a month. When washers are worn out, ask the landlord **in writing** to replace them.

Low-flow showerheads cut the flow of water by 40 to 60%. Either install one yourself or ask your landlord to **in writing**.

Hot water is heated by gas or electricity, so saving hot water saves energy. Use cold water for household washing, rather than hot. Today's laundry detergents are powerful even in cold water.

FOR MORE CONSERVATION IDEAS

www.powerwise.ca features a handy online calculator allowing you to estimate your electricity use.

www.smartliving.ca has a section for tenants, and offers free workshops to community groups.

This pamphlet produced by:



www.torontotenants.org

TENANT HOTLINE: 416-921-9494

**..saving energy..
...saving water...
..saving money..**

CONSERVATION FOR TENANTS

Conserving water, electricity and gas is important for the future of our society and our planet. For tenants, conservation can also save us money.

Some of us are already billed directly for the electricity we use in our own units and conservation has an immediate effect on our bills. But for most of us, the cost of water, electricity and gas – our “utilities” – is included in our rent. How can conservation make a difference to our monthly costs?

Under Ontario law, if utilities costs go up, landlords can apply to the Landlord Tenant Board for an above-guideline rent increase to cover those increased costs. Conservation can help us avoid that rent increase.

Also, if the landlord does qualify for an above-guideline rent increase based on utilities costs, the landlord has to give information about utilities bills to the Landlord Tenant Board for the next five years. If the utilities costs go down, the tenants will automatically get a reduction in rent.

This pamphlet suggests some ways for tenants to conserve energy and water.

SAVING ELECTRICITY

Air conditioners, electric stoves and ovens, clothes dryers and washers, electric heaters, dishwashers and inefficient refrigerators are the big electricity users in a typical home.

Keeping an air conditioner's filter clean helps it run more efficiently. In hot weather, doing the cooking in the early morning or at night when the weather is cooler will keep your home cooler. Try an electrical fan - it uses just one-tenth of the energy needed to run an air conditioner.

Microwave ovens, electric kettles and countertop appliances use much less power than stoves and conventional ovens.

Line-drying laundry saves lots of electricity – and quarters!

A frost-free refrigerator runs more efficiently. So does a fridge that is not too full of food.

If you use a dishwasher, always run full loads and use the “air dry” setting.

You can also save electricity by making sure that lights and appliances are turned off when not in use. Many electronics – like DVD players, TVs, and computers – draw power even when they are turned off. Use a power bar and switch it off.

When choosing appliances or electronics, look for the Energy Star label - the international symbol of energy efficiency. Products qualified with the Energy Star label are the most efficient.

Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are much more energy-efficient than incandescent bulbs, and reduce air and water pollution.

If you are using electric heaters in winter, see the next section on “conserving gas” for ideas to keep your home warmer.

What are Peak Hours?

Electricity distributors in Ontario will soon charge higher prices for power used during “peak hours” when consumption is heaviest. This will mean that waiting until after peak hours to do laundry or baking, for example, could save you money.

In hot summer months, peak hours are 11am - 5pm.

In winter, peak hours are 7-11am and 5-8pm.

CONSERVING GAS

Most buildings are heated by gas boilers. Tenants can conserve gas by lowering the thermostat (if we control the temperature in our own units) and sealing cracks to the outside.

Moist air feels warmer than dry air. A humidifier, or shallow pans of water near radiator tops or close to warm air vents, will help keep the air in your unit moist.

Arrange furniture so it doesn't block radiators or vents. An air deflector attached to a vent, or a radiator reflector on the wall behind a radiator, will direct warm air into your unit. These are inexpensive items available at a hardware store.

Make doors and windows airtight. If you have a lot of drafts, ask your landlord to fix the problem, in writing. A low-cost alternative for your door is a draft guard - a closed tube of cloth filled with sand that is laid against the bottom of your door. For windows, you can use plastic sheeting over your windows in winter, or invest in insulated curtains.

A window air-conditioner, if left in the window all winter, will often let in drafts. Either remove it or cover it well on the inside and outside if possible.