



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

During the Holidays

Between buying presents and traveling during the holiday season, expenses at the end of the year seem to skyrocket. One way to keep your holiday budget intact is to start at home. How? You can make your house energy efficient with simple tactics like upgrading your tree lights to LED bulbs and using your air fryer for cooking. At Patten Title, we love to help our partners save money. As you decorate your home for the holidays, you can implement any of our easy tips to help lower your energy bill, so you have more to spend on holiday fun.

INDOORS

Upgrade your bulbs: Upgrade your tree lights or outdoor decorations to [LED bulbs](#). They last longer and are more energy efficient than regular light bulbs.

Let your tree do the work: You can turn off lights in a room when your tree is lit, saving electricity in your most-used rooms. (Also, it boosts the holiday ambiance!)

Use a power strip: Plug multiple electrical decorations (like the train, tree, and wreath) into a power strip. [Wall outlets can drain power](#), even when electronics are turned off.

Dust: Dusting isn't just to keep your house clean for parties. Dust can [reduce lighting levels](#) by as much as 50%. When you dust your lighting fixtures regularly, you immediately improve the lighting in your room.

Decorate without electricity: [Mirrors](#), tinsel, glass, popcorn strings, and other crafts are great ways to add sparkle without lights.

Turn down your thermostat during a party: When the party is hopping, more people are in your home to help create heat. [Set your thermostat as low as you can stand it](#), then break out those loveable Christmas sweaters.

Familiarize yourself with your chimney: A fire in your [fireplace](#) provides a festive atmosphere and warmth during the winter, but an open damper can drain your heating bill. After extinguishing the fire, close the damper to keep the cool air out.

Turn off big appliances: It's easy to want to keep the TV on as background noise for pets when you're out holiday shopping, but it's also a [drain on your energy bill](#). Turn off TVs when you leave the house, and plug in your computer and accessories on an electrical strip to turn off the system when you're away.

Watch the walls during redecorating: You might be moving around big furniture to find the perfect spot to put the tree. Avoid placing lamps, TV sets and other heat-generating gadgets [near a wall-mounted thermostat](#). The heat from these appliances may trigger your HVAC system to overwork.

Ask the big guy for a smart home system: A [smart thermostat](#) can save you as little as 8% on your annual heating bill or as much as 23%. Smart thermostats recognize when people are home and moving about and when they're gone. This helps regulate your home's climate, even if you forget to adjust the temperature before leaving. Ask Santa for an upgrade.



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OUTDOORS

Inflatable decorations: When you decorate your front yard or patio with inflatables, you can add years to the motor and save your energy bill by putting them on a timer. Keep them inflated for no longer than [eight hours each day](#) to reduce wear and tear on the material and the motor.

Take the party outside: Let your guests enjoy an all-weather shindig when you invest in an outdoor heater. Consider the [best type of heater for your space](#). An electric heater can reduce energy costs and is best for the environment, while a propane heater can reach a larger space. Also, when the party goes outside, you can lower your thermostat indoors when the party goes outside.

Leaving town? Turn off your decorations: Remember to turn off your decorations and outdoor lights when you leave for a weekend of holiday cheer. Even those on a timer can fail when you are gone and signal an emergency.

COOKING

Use your microwave or air fryer: It takes as much as 80% [less energy](#) to use your air fryer or microwave than an electric or gas stove. Also, check out these [great holiday recipes from Taste of Home](#) that you can make in your air fryer.

Thawing food: Leave yourself time to [thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator](#) instead of on the counter or in the sink. This method is safer for your holiday guests and helps cool the refrigerator without using extra energy.

Utilize all the space in your oven: [Baking dishes together](#) reduces the total time the oven is on, though you may have to adjust cooking times. Plan to bake your holiday cookies in batches together, or find a companion for the ham in the oven.

Let your dishwasher do the work: Did you know that when you hand-wash your dishes, you can use as much as [27 gallons of water](#)? Compared to a dishwasher that uses three gallons per load, it's better for your water bill to give yourself a break.



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