

THE THERMAL TIMES

Thermal Specialties & Installation Co. Newsletter

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SUMMER ENERGY SAVING

The high cost of energy is forcing us to focus on different ways to save fuel and energy.

You have already made a big difference with your new windows. Nothing helps save energy in the home more than new windows with low-E glass and argon gas, so continue to do a little project or something each year to save money, energy and help the planet.

This summer you can do some things to your home to help save energy. Things like stopping drafts, closing blinds or curtains on the sunny side of the house in the morning or evening. Keeping grass or anything from growing around your outside a/c unit or blocking air from flowing around it. Hose off the unit and fins to clean dirt, leaves and spider webs for better air flow across the fins.

Although we are not a landscaping company, landscaping is a natural and beautiful way to keep your home more comfortable and reduce your energy bills. In addition to adding aesthetic value and environmental quality to your home, a well placed shrub, or vine can deliver effective shade, act as a wind breaker, and reduce energy cost.

Carefully positioned trees can save up to 25% of some households energy consumption for heating and cooling. Computer models devised by the U.S. Department of Energy predict that the proper placement of only three trees will save an average household between \$100 and \$250 in energy cost annually.

You may have noticed the coolness of parks and wooded areas compared to the temperature of nearby city streets. Trees can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 9 degrees. Because cool air settles near the ground, air temperatures directly under trees can be as much as 25 degrees cooler than air temperatures above nearby blacktop. Studies found summer daytime air temperatures to be 3 to 6 degrees cooler in tree shaded neighborhoods than in treeless neighborhoods.

A well planned landscape can reduce an unshaded home's summer air-conditioning cost by 15% to 50%.

To block solar heat in the summer, but let it in during the winter, use deciduous trees. To provide continuous shade or to block heavy winds use evergreen trees or shrubs.

A 6 to 8 foot deciduous tree planted near your home will begin shading windows the first year. Depending on the species and the home, the tree will shade the roof in 5 to 10 years. If you have an air conditioner, be aware that shading the unit can increase it's efficiency by as much as 10%.

Trees, shrubs, and ground cover plants can also shade the ground and pavement around the home. This reduces heat radiation and cools the air before it reaches your home's walls and windows. Use a large bush or a row of shrubs to shade a patio or driveway. Build a trellis for climbing vines to shade a patio area.

Shrubs planted close to the house will fill in rapidly and begin shading walls and windows within a few years. However, avoid allowing dense foliage to grow immediately next to a home where the dampness can be a problem. Well-landscaped homes allow air to flow around the home, keeping the home and its soil dry.

If you want to stay cool and comfortable, save money and energy at the same time, do more of these things instead of raising the setting on the thermostat to save money.

Tell your friends, family and co-workers about the benefits of having new windows like yours. Tell them how much more quiet and comfortable your home is and how much cooler the rooms are in the summer plus how much cleaner and brighter your windows are. But especially tell them about the energy savings and be part of our customer referral program (see back).

If we could do little projects like these around our home and try to combine some of our driving trips, we would be part of the bigger picture of cutting our fuel consumption and again saving money.

There are also Federal and State tax credits on Energy Star products purchased during 2006 & 2007.

Learn more about energy savings at www.energy.gov