

10 IDEAS

Year 'round Savings Around Your House

1. Insulate your water heater. Purchase a water heater "jacket" at your favorite home center store. They install in a jiffy and will keep the heated water hotter, longer.
2. Install a hot water demand system under the furthest sink from the water heater. You'll get hot water almost instantly, save money on wasted water and the fuel to heat the wasted water.
3. Replace your old and very inefficient forced air furnace. The new models are 92% efficient (your old one is likely to be less than 70 %), they are smaller, can be installed in the attic, in any position... even upside down.
4. Replace the thermostat on your furnace with a SMART programmable model. While you are away, it will turn up the heat before you get home from work and set-back the temperature at night and during the day... automatically.
5. If your refrigerator was built before 1990, replace it with a new "energy efficient" model. The monthly cost savings in electricity may be as high as \$15. That's \$180 yearly. Don't make the mistake of putting the old one in the garage. Get rid of it entirely! (SDG&E will pick it up free and give you \$50 as well).
6. Install insulation in the attic. If you have insulation in the attic, make an inspection of your attic and make sure the insulation is all in place properly. I find most attic insulation in disarray from the activities of electricians, HVAC mechanics, TV cable installers, telephone repairmen, plumbers and anybody else that had occasion to work in the attic. They usually don't put the insulation back after completing their work.
7. Install gutters and drain lines to direct runoff water away from the dwelling. Water that lingers and puddles at the foundation, over time, causes a lot of damage and is usually expensive to repair.
8. If you have single glass windows, replace them with new, dual glazed windows. Up to 15 times more energy is wasted through single glazed windows than through uninsulated walls in a house.
9. Install operable skylights in the kitchen and bathroom. Mother nature will give you free daylight and bath towels will dry out with circulating air going out through the roof.
10. If you buy bottled water, save yourself a bundle by installing a reverse osmosis water filtration system that fits nicely below the kitchen sink. You'll get pure H₂O for a fraction of the cost and you can also hook it up to your icemaker water line.

Steve Lusk, CGR, LUSK Building & Remodeling