

# Appliances and Electronics

## Cooking

Cooking, combined with lighting and the energy use of other appliances accounts for about 33% of a home's energy bill. Cooking on gas barbeque grills in the summer is much more efficient than using a conventional stove. Gas grills use no electricity at all and do not release heat into the kitchen forcing your refrigerator and other cooling systems to work harder and use more energy. Microwaves, toaster ovens and slow cookers can use 75% less energy than a large electric oven.

## Refrigerator

Your refrigerator's energy use can be reduced. Make sure refrigerator and freezer seals fit tightly when doors close. Keep outside coils clean. Dirty coils make your refrigerator compressor work longer to remove heat. Setting your freezer below 0° uses extra energy. Setting your refrigerator below 37° uses extra energy.

## Dryers

Drying clothes can use a fair amount of energy. Don't over-dry your clothes. If 50 minutes works, don't set it to 70 minutes. Make sure to clean the inside lint filter before each drying cycle. Periodically check your flexible metal dryer vent hose to ensure it is still tightly connected and not kinked.

## Electronics

Almost every home is equipped with computers, several televisions, answering machines, microwaves, and the like. Electronic appliances can draw power even when they are turned off. Turn off computers and other office equipment when they're not being used, especially overnight, on weekends and when you go on vacation. Avoid leaking energy by unplugging your appliances or turning off the switch on the power strip. Energy saving circuits that have a hard off switch can save 90% of the potentially lost energy.

## Outside

Don't forget about the energy you're using outside of your home. Motors in fountains and water features can draw a surprisingly high amount of energy. Don't forget to consider the cost of running these items when you calculate the price of installation and maintenance. Consider replacing pool pumps and motors with updated, more efficient equipment. Set your hot tub heater thermostat to 102° F, which is the temperature recommended by most health departments for adults and children. Some hot tubs have been factory set to heat water to 104° F. Turn down the thermostat while you're on vacation. Insulated covers will help more efficiently maintain pool and hot tub water temperatures.