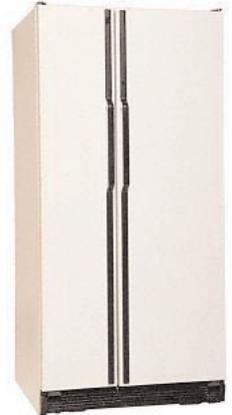


Refrigerators Efficiency Tips and New Models

Refrigerators and freezers consume about a sixth of all electricity used in American homes, and much of that can be saved. Although advances in technology have cut refrigerator energy consumption by 60% over the past twenty years, the refrigerator still uses far more electricity than any other home appliance. In just the past two years, Federal appliance standards have improved refrigerator efficiency by 20% to 25%. Even these dramatic gains can be bettered: studies and field tests have shown that manufacturers can make refrigerators that use less than one-third as much electricity as a new model meeting the 1993 appliance standards.

If you have an old model, it is probably very inefficient and could cost up to \$140 a year in electricity to run. A new, efficient one could save up to two-thirds of that electricity cost, and it may be cost-effective to replace an old clunker even before it dies a natural death. Since all of the electricity used by your refrigerator is converted into waste heat vented out the back of the fridge, saving 1,000 kWh per year by buying a new fridge will also reduce your cooling costs every year.



How to Save Energy on Your Refrigerator

- If possible, place the refrigerator or freezer away from heat sources and direct sunlight.
- In the kitchen, try to keep the refrigerator away from the dishwasher and the oven.
- Allow at least one inch of space on each side of refrigerator or freezer for good circulation.
- Check the temperature. The refrigerator should be kept between 36 and 38 degrees, and the freezer should be kept between 0 and 5 degrees. Keeping temperatures 10 degrees lower than the recommended levels can increase energy use by as much as 25%.
- Check the door seals.
- Insert a dollar bill into the door as you close it. If it does not stay firmly in place, the seals probably need to be replaced or place a bright 150 watt flood lamp in the unit and close the door. Check seals for any areas where light shines through. Reposition lamp inside the unit so that you can cover all of the seal. If no light shows through, your seals should be in good shape.
- Move refrigerator to a cooler location. Doing this will increase its energy performance.
- Check the power-saver switch. Many refrigerators have small heaters built into the walls to prevent moisture from condensing on the outer surface. On some newer units, this feature can be turned off with the energy saver or power saver switch. Unless you have noticeable condensation, keep this switch on the energy saving setting.
- Defrost as necessary. Manual defrost and partial defrost refrigerators and freezers should be defrosted on a regular basis. If not, the build up of ice on coils inside the unit can cause the compressor to run longer, wasting energy.
- Avoid putting hot foods directly in the refrigerator or freezer. Let them cool at room temperature first. Cover foods, especially liquids. Otherwise they will release moisture into the refrigerator compartment, increasing energy use by the refrigerator.
- A full refrigerator and freezer will perform better than when they are nearly empty. (This can be especially true during a power outage.) If they are not full, store plastic containers with water to keep interior temperatures more stable when their doors are opened.
- Mark items in the freezer for quick identification so that you do not have to search with the door open.

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Refrigerators Efficiency Tips and New Models

Choosing a New Refrigerator

If you're in the market for a new refrigerator, it definitely pays to shop around for an efficient one, since there is significant variation in the energy efficiency of various models. Carefully consider the style, size, and features you want and what the energy implications might be. The good news is that efficient models often cost less than inefficient ones, since many of the features which add to cost - such as through-the-door ice - also add to energy consumption, while those that save energy, like better insulation, also make other components smaller (compressors) or unnecessary (anti-sweat heaters).

Purchasing Tips

- Choose the right size refrigerator for your household needs. If two refrigerators of a different size use the same amount of energy, the larger model is usually more efficient. The larger unit keeps more space cold with the same amount of electricity.
- Consider buying a model with a top freezer. Top freezer models use 7-13% less energy than side-by-side models.
- Consider doing without an ice-maker and dispenser. Automatic ice-makers and through-the-door dispensers increase energy use by 14-20% and raise the purchase price by about \$75-250.
- Models with an anti-sweat heater consume 5-10% more energy. Look for a model that has an "energy saver" switch that turns off or turns down the heating coils.
- The most energy-efficient models are 16-20 cubic feet. Generally, the larger the refrigerator, the greater the energy consumption. Too large a model will waste space and energy; too small a model could mean extra trips to the store.

Check the yellow EnergyGuide label to determine how much energy is used to operate the model, compare the energy use of similar models, and approximate annual operating costs.

- Ask for an ENERGY STAR model. When buying a refrigerator from a contractor, request an ENERGY STAR qualified model to ensure it is energy efficient.
- Manual defrost models use half the energy of automatic defrost models but must be defrosted periodically to realize energy savings.

If you would like additional energy savings tips, please see our energy efficiency section at www.vectren.com or contact us by e-mail at marketinginfo@vectren.com.

