

## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

# Easy energy-saving measures for condo owners.

While it's up to building management to ensure communal elements and amenities are consuming energy efficiently, most of the energy expenditure from condo buildings comes from individual units. This leaves much of the responsibility with condo owners and residents to exercise energy-saving measures. Here are some easy ways to cut down your suite's energy expenditure to not only reduce your energy bills but also help save the environment.

## Lighting

Energy-efficient light bulbs, such as Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) and Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs), use up to 80% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs, and don't generate any unwanted heat. They also last up to 25 times longer, saving you money over the life of the bulb, the hassle and expense of replacing bulbs, and reducing the amount of waste that goes into landfill sites. As current incandescent bulbs fail, replace them with energy-efficient equivalents. Note: You will be able to use a much lower wattage to achieve the same light levels, and you can select your preferred colour temperature with these new bulbs. And don't forget about installing LED replacement bulbs in your appliances like refrigerators and range hoods.

## Heating + Cooling

Heating in the winter, and cooling in the summer, can account for a significant portion of your unit's energy consumption and costs. Setting the thermostat a few degrees lower, or higher, depending on the season can significantly reduce your electricity bills. Many newer condos are built with glass exterior walls that let in plenty of light, which can help cut down on energy needs by harnessing the sun's energy during the winter. However, in the summer, the opposite is true. Heat-gain from the sun's rays significantly increases reliance on air conditioning to maintain a comfortable environment. To mitigate this problem, install curtains with a white backing to reflect the sun's heat. This will also save your carpets, upholstery, and artwork from damaging ultraviolet rays.

## Programmable Thermostats

You can further harness energy and environmental savings by using a programmable thermostat. Many newer condo units have programmable thermostats installed, so it's simply a case of maximizing its use by customizing settings to your daily habits. For example, you can reduce heating and cooling while you're asleep, when you're out at work, or when travelling.

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**Laundry Machines**

Transitioning from an apartment building with shared laundry facilities (or weekly trips to the laundromat) to a condo with ensuite laundry facilities can lead to frivolous over-use of these appliances. The best way to adapt your laundering habits is to save up your dirty laundry for one or two large loads rather than several smaller ones. You should also plan your washing and drying for off-peak hours – mornings before 7am and evenings after 7pm on weekdays, or weekends, when energy rates are lower due to reduced power demands. Washing clothes in cold water (with a detergent optimized for cold water performance) will also generate savings. For even more savings and environmental benefits, skip the dryer and dry your clothes on a hanging rack. If you must use the dryer, do back-to-back loads to take advantage of the residual heat build-up in the machine. Throwing a clean tennis ball into the dryer with your wet clothes will help to improve air circulation and dry your clothes faster and more efficiently.

**Dishwashers**

While the use of hot water is inevitable, opt for an air-dry cycle, and only run full loads to reduce energy use. Most modern dishwashers are built with energy-efficiency in mind, so you can often save on water consumption by eliminating the pre-rinse cycle. Running a fully loaded modern dishwasher is actually more efficient in terms of energy and water consumption than washing a similar number of dishes by hand.

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