



Energy Ratings, Audits and Consulting

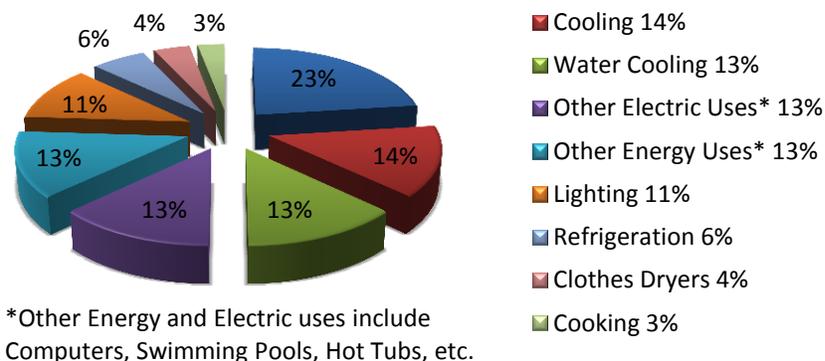
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## *Energy Saving Tips*

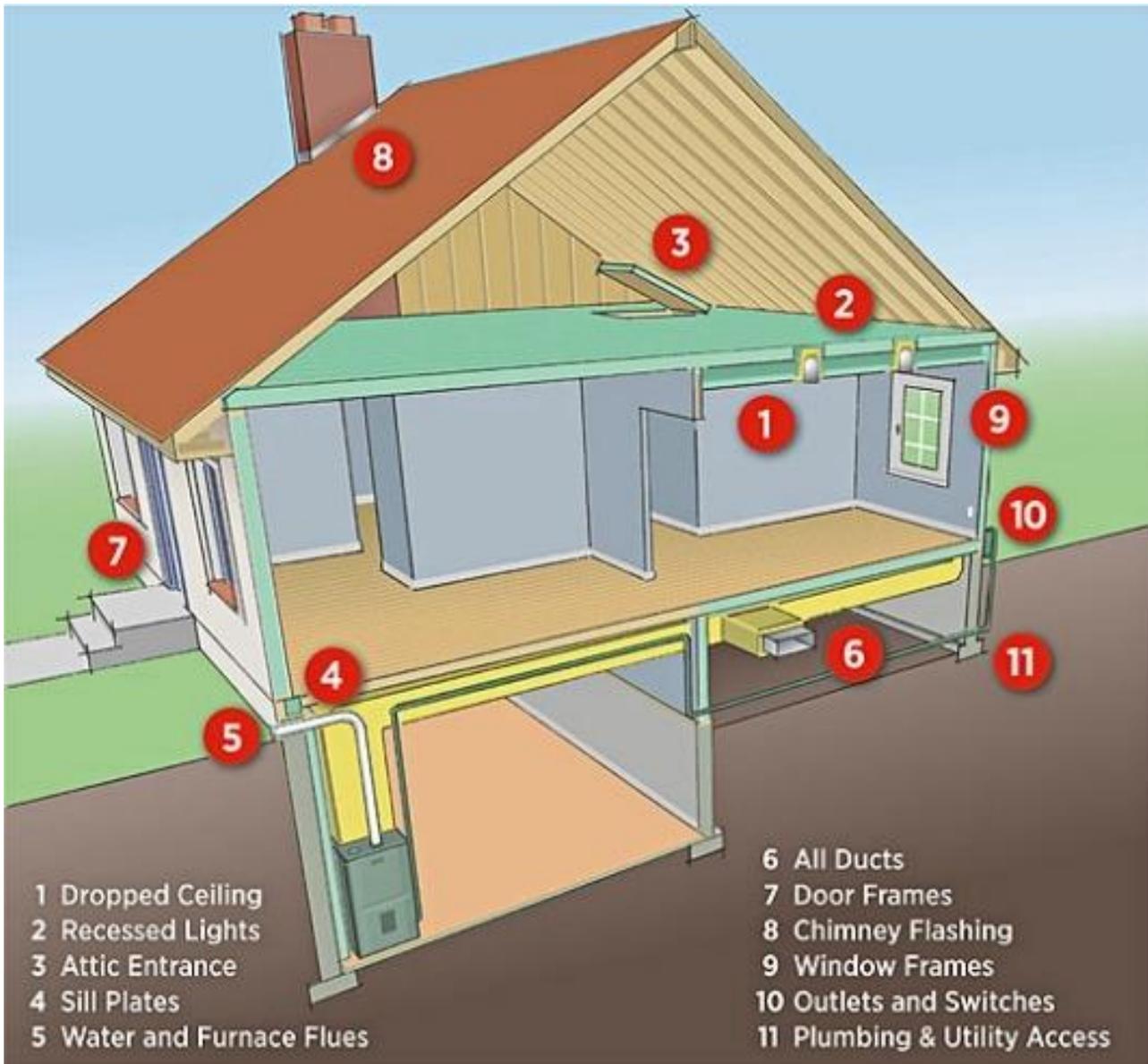
- Use task lighting instead of brightly lighting an entire room; focus the light where you need it.
- Turn lights off when you are not in a room. Turn off the TV when no one is watching it.
- During hot summer days keep your window coverings closed to block the sun's hot rays, and use white window shades, drapes, or blinds to reflect heat away from the house.
- Use energy-saving settings on refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines, and clothes dryers.
- Air dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle
- Try raising the temperature in your house a degree or two.
- Take short showers, with a low-flow showerhead, instead of baths.
- Wash only full loads of clothes when possible and clean your dryer's lint filter after every load.
- Turn off your computer when it is not in use; automatic switching to sleep mode or manually turning monitors off is always the better energy-saving strategy.
- Don't place lamps or TV sets near your thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary.
- Reduce air conditioning cost by planting shade trees and shrubs around your house, especially on the west side and by your air conditioning unit.

**Ceiling Fans:** Ceiling fans can be extremely efficient for improving comfort and reducing air conditioning use, so don't stop with bedrooms. The cooling effect that people feel will encourage them to raise the thermostat by as much as 4°, and each degree the thermostat is raised above 78° will save about 7% of cooling costs, making fans a very good investment. Just remember to turn them off when you leave.

### Typical Home Energy Use



## *Tips: Sealing Air Leaks*



Sources of Air Leaks in Your Home. Areas that leak air into and out of your home cost you a lot of money. The areas listed in the illustration are the most common sources of air leaks.

Air leaks can waste a lot of your energy dollars. One of the quickest energy and money-saving tasks you can do is caulk, seal, and weather strip all seams, cracks, and openings to the outside.

## Tips for Sealing Air Leaks

- Test your home for air tightness. On a windy day, carefully hold a lit incense stick or a smoke pen next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, ceiling fixtures, attic hatches, and other places where air may leak. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak that may need caulking, sealing, or weather stripping.
- Caulk and weather strip doors and windows that leak air.
- Caulk and seal air leaks where plumbing, ducting, or electrical wiring comes through walls, floors, ceilings, and soffits over cabinets.
- Install foam gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on walls.
- Inspect dirty spots in your insulation for air leaks and mold. Seal leaks with low-expansion spray foam made for this purpose and install house flashing if needed.
- Look for dirty spots on your ceiling paint and carpet, which may indicate air leaks at interior wall/ceiling joints and wall/floor joists, and caulk them.
- Cover single-pane windows with storm windows or replace them with more efficient double-pane low-emissivity windows. See the Windows section for more information.
- Use foam sealant on larger gaps around windows, baseboards, and other places where air may leak out.
- Cover your kitchen exhaust fan to stop air leaks when not in use.
- Check your dryer vent to be sure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire.
- Replace door bottoms and thresholds with ones that have pliable sealing gaskets.
- Keep the fireplace flue damper tightly closed when not in use.
- Seal air leaks around fireplace chimneys, furnaces, and gas-fired water heater vents with fire-resistant materials such as sheet metal or sheetrock and furnace cement caulk.
- Fireplace flues are made from metal, and over time repeated heating and cooling can cause the metal to warp or break, creating a channel for air loss. To seal your flue when not in use, consider an inflatable chimney balloon. Inflatable chimney balloons fit beneath your fireplace flue when not in use, are made from durable plastic, and can be removed easily and reused hundreds of times. If you forget to remove the balloon before making a fire, the balloon will automatically deflate within seconds of coming into contact with heat. A do-it-yourselfer can create an inexpensive, reusable fireplace flue plug by filling a plastic trash bag with fiberglass batt scraps and jamming it into the flue. Attach a durable cord with a tag that hangs down into the fireplace to (1) remind you the flue is blocked and (2) provide an easy plug removal method.