

Mr. Green's Cool Home Checklist



Whole House/Utility Room

- Install a programmable thermostat. Winter temps should be 68 degrees F, and 60 F or less while you sleep. In the summer, set the air conditioner at no cooler than 78 degrees F.
- Adjust hydrostat on water heater to 120 degrees F.
- For old water heaters, install insulating blanket on tank and insulate pipes.
- Consider upgrading to an Energy Star water heater. For ultimate efficiency, buy a "flash" (also called "on-demand" or "tankless") water heater or a solar water heating unit.
- Check home insulation in attic, basement and walls. Is it adequate?
- Seal any gaps in walls. Pay special attention to plumbing outlets, vents, and recessed light fixtures.
- Seal ducts to maximize HVAC efficiency.
- Keep AC and furnace filters clean.
- Install weatherstripping and caulking on drafty doors and windows.
- Replace single-paned windows with double-paned windows designed for your climate.

Living Room/Bedrooms/Family Room

- Consider installing ceiling fans.
- Use curtains, shades, and shutters for insulation and shade.
- Use task lighting rather than ambient lighting when possible.
- Replace your incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents, especially in the most-used light fixtures.
- Turn off lights when not in use, and consider installing motion and occupancy sensors where appropriate.

Bathrooms

- Install aerating shower heads and faucets to reduce hot-water consumption.
- Take showers instead of baths.
- Do not run vent fan more than necessary.

Kitchen

- Always buy Energy Star appliances.
- Use water- and energy-saving features on dishwasher. (Do not use dishwasher to dry dishes.)
- Only run full loads.

Home Office

- Consider using a laptop instead of a desktop PC.
- Do not buy a bigger monitor than you need.
- Set computer to go into sleep mode when not in use.
- Turn off computer, printer, and peripherals at power strip so that transformers do not continue drawing power even when "off."

Outdoors

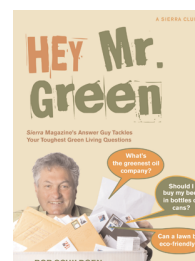
- Install compact fluorescents rated for outdoor use.
- Install motion detectors on security lights.

Laundry Room

- Buy Energy Star appliances. As a rule, front-loading washing machines are more efficient than top-loading machines.
- Wash and rinse clothes in cold or, if you must, warm water.
- Install and use a clothesline.
- Only run full loads.



Hey Mr. Green



What's the best way to be more earth-friendly? Just ask Mr. Green! Bob Schildgen, a.k.a Mr. Green, is the author of *Hey Mr. Green: Sierra Magazine's Answer Guy Tackles Your Toughest Green Living Questions*, published by Sierra Club Books. Find it at www.sierraclub.org/books. Or ask Mr. Green a question at www.sierraclub.org/mrgreen.