

How to cope with high energy costs

October 16, 2006

Posted: 10/16/06

How to cope with high energy costs

By Roy Hayhurst

The arrival of your monthly electric bill can be a tough experience as energy prices continue to rise around the country. Instead of complaining about the rising costs of energy at your home, church or school, there are simple steps you can take to mitigate these escalating expenses. Among the steps:

Turn off the lights. According to the [Energy Department](#), “only about 10%-15% of the electricity that incandescent lights consume results in light — the rest is turned into heat.” That means if you have incandescent lights, turn them off anytime they are not in use — not only will it save electricity costs, but it will help keep a room cooler.

- [Bankrupt believers may tithe](#)
- [Periodic check-ups aid financial health](#)
- [Keep tabs on credit scores, adviser says](#)
- [Good stewardship demands proper estate planning](#)
 - [Lease-to-own program enables home ownership](#)
 - [Strategy for lowering credit card debt](#)
- How to cope with high energy costs
 - [Are 401\(k\) and 403\(b\) Roth contributions right for you?](#)
 - [How to opt in to medicare coverage](#)
 - [EDITORIAL: Oh, that we would debate gross or net](#)

Consider replacing your incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lights. Compact fluorescent bulbs are more expensive — costing 10-20 times more than incandescent bulbs — but last 10-15 times longer. They also produce the same light as incandescent bulbs that need 3-4 times the wattage and most fit in your existing light fixtures with little or no

modification.

Heating and cooling account for 56% of the energy use in a typical home. Bumping that thermostat a couple of degrees higher in summer, or a few degrees cooler in winter can bring significant savings.

Look for cracks or areas where your air conditioning or heating is escaping into the outside — forcing your air conditioner or heater to work harder and consuming more energy. Simple (and relatively inexpensive) weather stripping from your neighborhood hardware store can help keep your home's air conditioner unit from working too hard.

When it comes time to replace home appliances, look for an EnergyGuide Label (required by the Federal Trade Commission on most home appliances, except ranges and ovens), which provides an estimate of the product's energy consumption or efficiency. Another program, the [ENERGY STAR label](#) appears on appliances and home electronics that meet strict efficiency standards set forth by the federal government.

Simple steps can help you reduce your energy bills and cope with rising costs, saving you some pain in your wallet and aggravation all year long.

Roy Hayhurst is a communications development leader for [GuideStone Financial Resources](#) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.