

KEEPING YOUR HOME AND THE PLANET COOL THIS SUMMER

Every year, each Victorian household produces around 12 tonnes or 240,000 balloons of greenhouse gases. Each black balloon represents 50g of greenhouse gas. Thirty percent of Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions come from our homes. Every time we switch on appliances or use energy at home, we produce greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change.

Use a fan instead of the air conditioner this summer and save more than \$50 and up to 8,200 black balloons.

During summer we all like to keep our homes cool and comfortable. On warm days, many of us turn on the air conditioning, which uses a lot of energy and is expensive to run. The great news is that there are lots of simple actions you can do to keep your home cool and comfortable over summer while minimizing your energy use. Many of the simple, everyday energy saving actions are free, but even those that require a small amount of investment will soon start paying for themselves through lower energy bills.

Install external blinds and prevent up to 80 percent of heat entering your home and reduce the need for air conditioning.

The best way to stay cool at home this summer is to keep the heat out in the first place.

Install close-fitting external blinds which are twice as effective as internal blinds at blocking out summer heat. If blinds aren't your style there are now a large range of outdoor window shade products such as patio umbrellas, shade sails, canvas awnings and louvres to suit all homes and budgets. You can buy them straight off the shelf at your local hardware store or have them custom made.

Sails and patio umbrellas are great choices for renters who can't install permanent external blinds but want to save energy and keep their home cool in summer. Choose light colours to reflect heat away from the house.

It's worth shading your windows, because each square metre of glass exposed to sun in summer lets in nearly as much heat as if you were running a single bar radiator.

Close windows, doors and curtains in the morning to keep the heat out, but open your house up when the temperature outside drops to cool it down.

If you like a more natural look, plant deciduous trees or vines along pergolas to which help

shade your windows by blocking out the heat in summer but still allow the winter sun in. Ask your local nursery for more advice about suitable plants.

Insulate an uninsulated ceiling and save up to \$350 a year in heating and cooling costs and more than 40,000 black balloons of greenhouse gas a year.

Insulating an uninsulated ceiling is one of the most effective ways to save energy and money in your home. Rebates are now available from the Victorian Government - visit www.saveenergy.vic.gov.au for more information.

Keep the hot air out this summer by sealing gaps around external doors and windows. Draught stoppers and weather strips are easy to install and you can pick them up for under \$10 in hardware stores.

Set your air conditioner to a comfortable 26 degrees - just one degree less can increase your energy bill by up to 15 percent.

Using a fan instead of air conditioning whenever possible will save you money and energy. If you have to use air conditioning, here's a few tips to help make it more effective and efficient.

- Clean filters regularly (clogged filters reduce air flow and efficiency, meaning less cooling for more dollars).
- Evaporative coolers use less energy than air conditioners.
- Only cool rooms you are using.
- Close off areas of the house which do not require cooling.
- Use a fan to distribute the cool air around the room.
- Keep windows and doors closed to keep the cool air inside (but if you've got an evaporative cooler you need to leave them open to allow air flow).
- Switch the air conditioner off when you go to sleep and when you leave the house.

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- Check for and use economy settings and programmable timers.
- Use energy star rating labels to buy an energy efficient model.

Switch off your second fridge when you don't need it and save up to \$95 and nearly 15,000 black balloons a year.

If you've got a second fridge, turn it off when you don't need it to stop it guzzling energy and money.

More simple and free energy saving tips for summer:

- Wash full loads of laundry and only use cold water.
- Take advantage of the summer sun and use the clothes line or clothes horse instead of tumble drying to save money and energy.
- If appliances are left on standby mode they are still using energy. Wasted standby energy use can account for more than 10 percent of your home electricity use. Switch appliances such as TVs, gaming consoles, microwaves and stereos off at the power point every time.
- Enjoy the long summer daylight hours and only turn on lights when you need them and remember to turn them off when you leave the room.

The Victorian Government's Energy Savings campaign, better known as Black Balloons, shows how we can all save energy and money at home by doing simple, everyday actions around the home.

We all have the power to save energy and make a difference at home this summer. These simple everyday actions can help you save energy and money at home.

For more ways to reduce your impact on climate change visit www.SaveEnergy.vic.gov.au

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