

# The Biggest Loser Challenge

## ENERGY EFFICIENT MEASURES FOR HOME OWNERS

### WHAT YOU CAN DO STARTING NOW!

*(CHECK THE BOX OF THE SAVINGS MEASURES THAT YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS UTILIZING)*

#### **SAVINGS ON WATER HEATING:**

##### ***NOW***

- Install a programmable thermostat and utilize properly to maximize energy efficiency.
- Have ductwork inspected for leaks and seal leaks that are found.
- Avoid running water continuously while doing dishes, washing up, brushing teeth or shaving. Utilize filled sink with stopper instead.
- Set the thermostat to 120°F or less for normal use. Lower the setting when away from home for long periods of time.
- Install a water heater insulation blanket. (Check owner's manual for conflict with warranty)
- Wrap the hot water pipes coming out of your water heater with insulation. Start with the pipes nearest the water heater for greatest savings.

##### ***LATER***

- Install low-flow shower heads and faucets in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Attach low-flow aerators to kitchen and bathroom faucets. Aerators allow the faucet to flow stronger while actually using much less water.
- Replace outdated heating equipment (water heater, boiler and furnace) with energy efficient models

#### **SAVE ON WATER USAGE:**

##### ***NOW***

- If you shower multiple times a day try to cut back.
- Inspect sinks, toilets and showers for leaks or continuous running.
- Monitor water usage from bill to bill.

##### ***LATER***

- Install low flow fixture in kitchens and bathrooms (showerheads and faucets).
- Attach low-flow aerators to kitchen and bathroom faucets.
- Consider installing and energy efficient dishwasher and cloths washing machine.

## **SAVE ON WATER USAGE THROUGH IRRIGATION PRACTICES:**

### ***NOW***

- Do not water between 11:00 am and 3:00 pm. (this is the hottest part of the day)
- Cut back frequency of watering days
- Adjust nozzles to eliminate overspray on sidewalks, patio, structures and other irrigated zones.
- Use nozzle sizes appropriate for the use.
- Install a rain sensor if you have a computer regulated irrigation system.
- Regular maintenance and inspection of system will ensure you are conserving as much water as possible.

## **SAVINGS ON COOLING/ AIR CONDITIONING:**

### ***NOW***

- Have ductwork inspected for leaks. Seal leaks that are found.
- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Avoid around the clock usage.
- Size the individual unit to the size of the space being cooled.
- Check the filter at least once a month during the warm season and clean it as needed.
- Use the fan setting at night when the air outside is cool, or open a window and leave the air conditioner off. Keep windows closed whenever the air conditioner is on.
- Use the air conditioner timer and set it to turn on no more than 30 minutes before you expect to return home.
- The lower you set your temperature, the more it will cost. For example, a 75° setting will cost about 18 percent more than a 78° setting.

### ***LATER***

- Replace outdated air conditioning units with energy efficient models.
- Plant hollyhocks, clematis vines or other shade-producing plants in front of east and west facing windows to reduce the need for air conditioning.

## **HOUSE INSULATION PRACTICES:**

### ***NOW***

(Seal Air leaks in home)

- Caulk clapboard siding

- Have your current insulation system assessed and identify hot spots for energy loss.
- Insulate top floor ceilings or attic spaces.
- Insulate window surrounds. (Especially in replacements in old houses with the large open window cavities that housed the weights)

### ***LATER***

- Installation of energy star qualified new or replacement windows.
- Install insulated and properly sealed doors.
- When residing the exterior of a home, choose an energy efficient or green practice.

### **SAVE IN THE KITCHEN:**

#### ***NOW***

- When you can, cook many dishes together when using the oven.
- Cook with lids on your pans.
- Use the smallest pan and burner needed for the job.
- If the oven self-cleans, turn it on just after use, while the oven is still hot.
- Don't peek into the oven as you cook.
- Contact a qualified heating contractor if your gas burners have a yellow flame instead of blue.
- Seek alternative cooking sources. A pressure cooker cuts cooking time by about two-thirds, and a microwave uses less than half the energy of a conventional electric oven.
- Use energy saving or low water use cycles on dishwashers if available.
- Avoid running small loads in your dishwasher.
- Use no-heat air dry feature if available. If you have an older dishwasher, turn the dishwasher off after the final rinse cycle is complete and open the door. This allows air drying.
- Some dishwashers have heaters to boost water temperature up to 140° or 145°F. However, most dishwashers function well at the 120°F setting. If your dishwasher has a booster heater, turn down your water heater thermostat to 120°F.
- When washing dishes by hand fill wash and rinse basins rather than letting the water run.
- Use cold water when running your garbage disposal. Cold water congeals grease better and keeps the disposal cooler, helping the unit run more efficiently.

### **SAVINGS IN THE LAUNDRY:**

#### ***NOW***

- Hang laundry to dry. Use a clothes line outside during nice weather and in your basement or spare room during winter months.
- Load washers and dryers to capacity, but don't overload. Overloading can cut down on efficiency.
- Use the water level control on clothes washers. Use less water for smaller loads.
- Use the right water temperature for washers. Washing clothes with cold water usually does not affect cleaning results and may reduce shrinkage.
- Follow detergent instructions carefully. Using too much soap makes the washing machine motor work harder.
- Remember that delicate clothes don't require as long a wash cycle as dirty work clothes.
- If the dryer has an automatic cycle, use it. Over drying wastes energy and wears clothes out faster.
- Clean the dryer's lint filter after each load to help keep the machine running efficiently.

### **SAVINGS IN THE LIGHTING:**

#### ***NOW***

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.
- When buying bulbs, look for the highest lumens-per-watt ratio.
- Use brighter bulbs in areas where you do close-up work such as reading, cooking and home projects. Use less-bright light in other areas.
- Keep light bulbs and fixtures clear of dust and other particles. Clean bulbs give off more light than dirty ones.
- Use natural light whenever you can. Make the most of natural light by moving desks, reading chairs and work benches closer to windows. Keep in mind that lighter colors for walls, ceilings and floors reflect more sunlight.
- Replace outdoor floodlights with halogen lamps, or use motion detectors.
- Install LED lights. These are the most energy efficient bulbs on the market.