

How to beat soaring energy costs

With the price of a barrel of oil double what it was just eighteen months ago and natural gas costing twice as much as a year ago, most people are looking for ways to cut energy costs. We can learn some lessons from what others have done:

Lisa realized that it was getting more costly to drive her kids to school each day and pick them up after classes. By walking them to and from school, she is now consuming far less gasoline, causes less wear and tear on her vehicle, and they all get some much needed exercise.

Charles and Betty know that energy prices also affect the cost of other things they consume, like water and electrical power. They installed small, inexpensive water cut-off valves on their shower heads that allow them to get wet, shut off the water flow while they lather up, and then resume their shower to rinse off.

When it was time to replace their clothes washer and dryer set, they chose the more cost and energy efficient front-loading washer. It uses far less water and is much gentler on their clothes so they last longer. Betty also hangs as many clothes as she can to dry and uses her electricity hungry dryer far less.

Charles switched out the flush mechanisms in their toilets to a new system that gives them a choice of half flush or full flush. He noticed that the majority of toilet flushes were for "small jobs" that really didn't need a full flush to handle. Charles also regularly changes the washers in their faucets to

reduce drips that put a drain on their utility costs by wasting water, especially water they paid to heat.

Paul and Linda sold their large house in the suburbs and moved to a smaller home closer to where they work. Their living space needs are still adequate and it's far cheaper to heat in the winter months. Paul used to commute over half an hour one-way to work. He still commutes the same half hour, but on his bicycle. This actually frees up time for him, as his daily exercise time is also his commuting time.

They installed an electronic thermostat that lowers the temperature during the day while at work and at night while snug in their bed. When they are home, they keep the temperature just a little lower and dress warmer to further lower their heating bills.

Ron and Sally got rid of their gas guzzling oversized SUV and replaced it with a more fuel-efficient vehicle. They really didn't need a monster vehicle to transport their children to school, hockey and ballet. For the very few times each year they need a larger vehicle, they now rent one. They also walk more often. Instead of driving to the video store, they walk as a family and have a great visit along the way.

Ron makes sure their vehicle is well maintained and keeps the tire pressure at the higher end of the recommended range. They roll easier and help maximize fuel economy. He also drives slower, especially on the highway. Ron and Sally hand wash their dishes more often, using the dishwasher only if they have been entertaining.

Want to know more about saving money? Call today!

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