

Saving Energy: A Smart New Year's Resolution By Sustainable Belmont

Saving money is a common New Year's resolution people strive to make but often fail to keep. Fortunately, there are easy ways in which you can make this resolution stick for the long term: make your home more energy-efficient.

First, switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). About 90 percent of the electricity used by incandescent bulbs is wasted as heat, which means that for the nearly \$20 it costs to run a 60-watt light bulb for a year (assuming six hours of daily operation and a rate of 15 cents per kilowatt-hour), about \$17 of that is wasted—and that's just for one bulb! A 15-watt CFL will generate the same amount of light for one-fourth of the electricity, saving you about \$15 per year for each bulb you replace.

Next, take a look at your refrigerator. If it's more than 10 years old, consider upgrading to a new Energy Star-rated model. Today's refrigerators use about 50 percent less energy than models made just 10 years ago. You could save up to \$100 each year in electricity costs depending on how old your fridge is. For maximum efficiency, choose a model with the freezer on top or bottom, which use about 15 percent less energy than side-by-side models.

For other easy tips on how to save energy, visit the BMLD website at http://belmontma.virtualtownhall.net/Public_Documents/BelmontMA_LightNews/Energy%20Conservation/ or email sustainablebelmont@gmail.com.