



Little Tricks Add Up To Big Savings

Q. I'm interested in saving energy around the house. Even if I didn't believe there was a shortage of available energy, I'd want to save money. Are there any ways I can do this, "no purchase necessary," until we have cash for insulation, storm windows, etc.?

A. Yes, the simplest ways are some of the most effective. Wear more clothes indoors in winter so you can lower the thermostat; wear fewer in summer. Dry clothes on the line. Use a fan (or plain old fresh air through the window) unless air conditioning is an absolute must. Turn off the radio, TV, record player, lights when you leave a room.

Q. I'm ready to go "whole hog" to save energy. Where should I start?

A. How about with a new house? Builders have learned a lot about keeping heat and cold in and out of a house, according to the season. Pick an architect knowledgeable about the problems of your area. In one part of the country, for instance, a builder claims his new houses are cutting home heating costs by 80 per cent! He is using double walls with double insulation.

A. Even in a temperate climate, proper insulation can reduce your fuel bill 40 per cent. You'll notice most insulation material is lightweight and fluffy. It's the entrapment of air that does the trick. Surprisingly, brick, a dense material with little air space, will conduct five times as many BTU's as wood. A mineral-wool blanket will allow only a fifteenth as much heat to pass through.

Q. I think we've done all we can, in our present house, to prevent heat loss. But we are now planning to buy a new refrigerator. My wife is tired of defrosting. Is there a difference in the amount of electricity used by regular or frostless refrigerators?

A. You bet there is! In a 14-cubic foot frostless combination refrigerator/freezer, you'll use about 1,829 kilowatt hours a year. By facing that defrosting task yourself, you'll cut the kwh consumption to 1,137 annually.

Q. We've been looking at new television sets, and we notice most of them now claim to be "solid state." Does this mean anything in use of electricity?

A. Yes, if you are a typical TV viewer, you'll add about 660 kilowatt hours to your electric bill annually with a tube type color TV, but just two-thirds that much (440 kwh) with a solid state model.

Q. My friend, who owns a microwave oven, insists she is saving energy. Is that true?

A. Absolutely. Microwaves can cut cooking time by 75 per cent and reduce total energy use. The industry estimates average kilowatt hours consumed by a microwave oven at 190.

Q. I'm told convection ovens are another way to save energy. What's the principle of this oven?

A. A blower forces heat around the

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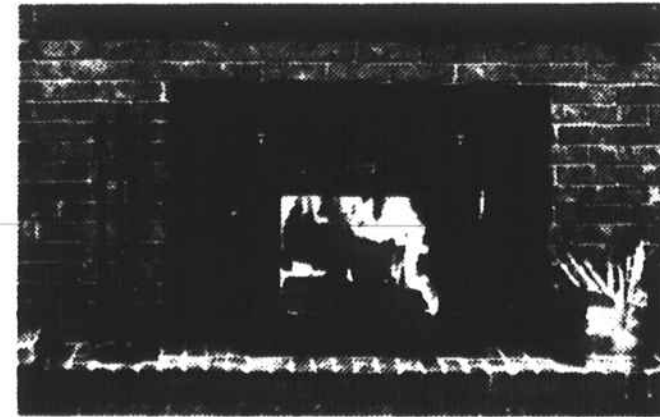
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