Ways to save $100 this year

Change your light bulbs to compact fluorescents

Compact florescent light bulbs burn about 1/4 the energy of a regular incandescent light bulb. The cost of lighting your home can be a major portion of your electric bill (frequently 30%).

To calculate your savings conduct an inventory of your home's light bulbs, the watts each bulb draws, and the number of hours each bulb is on each day. Determine the total watts per month (see example below), convert to kWh (divide by 1,000), and multiply by $.156 (most peoples electric rate here in Eliot) to get your total monthly lighting cost.

Then use your inventory as your compact florescent shopping list!

Note: *Two good web sites for buying bulbs are: www.wattbusters.com, and www.efi.org*

Example:

	Qty	Watts	Hrs on/day	Watts/day	Watts/month
Kitchen	1	25	0.1	2.5	75
	1	60	0.25	15	450
	2	75	4	600	18,000
	2	20	3	120	3,600
Dining	2	75	1	150	4,500
Living	2	75	3	450	13,500
Study	1	60	1	60	1,800
	2	40	0.5	40	1,200
Music	1	60	0.5	30	900
	1	75	0.25	19	570
Bath	2	60	3	360	10,800
Mud Room	4	40	1	80	2,400
Stairway	1	60	1	60	1,800
Bedroom 1	1	50	1	50	1,500
Bedroom 2	2	60	1	120	3,600
Basement	8	60	0.25	120	3,600
	2	40	1	80	2,400
Outside Door	1	75	1	75	2,250
				Total Watts/month	72,945
				Total kWh/month	72.945

Current Lighting Bill:
72.945 kWh X $.156/kWh = $11.39month

New lighting Bill:
25% of $11.39 = $2.85

Total monthly savings: $8.54

Total annual savings is $102.48

If your home has two computer systems that could be turned off an additional 4 hours each a day, turn them off and save **$55/year**.

Turn off your computers

The average computer uses 120 watts/hr (45 watts for CPU and 75 watts for monitor, a flat screen monitors is lower and uses about 30 watts). So for every hour your computer is left on that you are not using it, you are paying 2 cents. Doesn't sound like much until you consider that this amounts to $166.45 a year. Add the electrical usage of the printer, cable modem, and other peripherals and you are easily up to $200/yr.

Use a Fan instead of a dehumidifier

An average dehumidifier uses 800 watts a fan uses 155 watts each hour. Consider opening basement windows and doors and running a couple of fans instead of the dehumidifier and save $1.82 every day they are running or $55 a month.

Wash in cold water

If you now use hot water for half of your laundry, switch to cold and save **$120/yr**

A whopping 85-90% of the energy used by a washing machine goes into just heating the water. So you can save a bundle by using cold water. Laundry detergents are now designed for cold water washing and if you have grass stained paints use some stain remover, it is amazing how well it works. If you heat water electrically and wash the national home average of 7.5 loads/wk in hot water in a regular washing machine you will save $241/yr by switching to cold water.

Hang out the laundry

Hang out 50% of your laundry and save another **$120/yr**

An electric clothes dryer uses about 4kWh/load. If you dry 7.5 loads of laundry a week your total annual cost for drying cloths is $243.

Install a digital thermostat

Lower your thermostat 10 degrees while you sleep and are at work and **reduce your home heating oil usage by 10%.**

For every 1 degree you lower your thermostat, you save 2% in energy costs. Install a digital thermostat and take advantage of this when you are not at home or are asleep. If you were to lower the temperature 10 degrees for the 8 hours you sleep and the 8 hours you are away at work that is 96 hours a week you could be saving money. If your oil usage was 1,000 gallons last year you could drop this buy 100 gallons, a value of at least $200 at last winters prices.

Note: *The nice thing about digital thermostats is that they can be set to raise the temperature before you get up or get home, so you never have to be uncomfortable. They are also easy to install.*

Replace old appliances

Example of an 18 CF Fridge energy usage:

20 yr old Fridge	$184/yr
10 yr old Fridge	$132/yr
New Fridge	$76/yr

Technology is improving the efficiency of the motors in all our appliances. New refrigerators are nearly twice as efficient as they were 10 yrs ago. New washers use half the water and spin cloths better so we can run our dryers less. If you are in the market for a new appliance always buy an Energy Star rated product.

Install a low-flow showerhead

If your family takes 1,000 showers a year, install a low-flow showerhead and save **$190/yr.**

A nice high-pressure, low-flow shower head uses 1.5 gallons of water per minute (gpm). Typical non-conserving shower heads use 3-4 gpm. Saving just 1.0 gpm of hot water can add up to a lot of money if there are 4 people in the house each taking the average 10 minute showers. Each shower would cost about $.19 less in electricity.

Use power strips

If you have a lot of electronics with power packs (those black boxes at the end of the electric cord), each one is drawing amps (phantom loads) even when the item is turned off. Additionally all your electronics with remote controls are drawing phantom loads. If you plug all these items into a power strip and then into the electrical outlet, you can eliminate these phantom loads by turning the item off at the power strip. These loads can be as much as 15% of your electric bill because, although they are not pulling a lot of watts, they are on 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

Insulate

A typical older un-insulated home in Eliot fuel usage can be cut in half by insulating. Most newer homes are not well insulated and can cut fuel usage 25% by adding additional insulation and fixing poorly installed insulation. Contact an insulation firm to review your home. Usually you will re-coup your investment within 5 yrs.