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Go Green to Save Some Green This Summer; Tips to Saving Money and Energy This Summer

MAY 16, 2008

Gas prices are going through the roof. Weather experts are forecasting a warmer than expected summer. Georgia Southern University's Monique Dipple, the interim environmental sustainability manager is providing some tips on how you can save valuable dollars and also help the environment at the same time.

Go Green to Save Some Green

1. **Regulate Your AC.** At work all day and no one is at home? One great way to save is to turn up your air conditioner so that it is not running all day while you are away. Most modern thermostats also have a programmable feature that is often a little intimidating. With a quick read of the directions, you can program in your desired timing and temperatures and never have to worry about turning it up or down.
2. **Check Your Tires.** One simple way of saving some green during the summer is making sure your tires are properly inflated. According to the Rubber Manufacturers Association, 45 percent of drivers wrongly believe that the correct inflation pressure is printed on the tire sidewall. Another 15 percent do not know where to find the correct pressure. Even more interesting is that only 15 percent of drivers properly check their tire inflation pressure. The Department of Energy states that properly inflated tires can also improve gas mileage by around 3.3 percent and save 9 cents per gallon at the gas pump.
3. **Unplug It.** Think your TV, DVD or computer is not consuming electricity when it is turned off? Think again! They are still using electricity. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, even idle televisions can cost you five dollars per household. Put power strips on all of your electronics, that way, when you're not using them, you can switch all of them off at once.
4. **Choose CFL.** Did a light bulb go out? Don't replace it with the 'same old' bulb. Choose Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs (called CFLs) instead. These bulbs last up to 10 percent longer and require 75% less energy than traditional light bulbs according to the Alliance to Save Energy (ASE).
5. **Check Your Hot Water Temperature.** Many of today's hot water heaters have thermostat units that are set to a default temperature of 140 degrees or higher. Turn the thermostat down to 115-120 degrees and watch the savings pile in.

6. **Replace Your Furnace Filter.** You should replace your furnace filter at least once per year, and replace or clean your air conditioning filters and vent openings and intake regularly. The cleaner they are, the easier it is for your air conditioner to push and pull the air around.
7. **Shut the Blinds.** By reducing the amount of sunlight coming into your house during the day, especially when you are not there, you will reduce the cooling load of your air conditioner. The ASE recommends that you consider targeting east and west facing windows and if possible, delay heat-producing activities such as dish washing until the evening.
8. **Full loads only!** Run only full loads in your dishwasher and washing machine.
9. **Turn out the lights.** Even when you are at work, you can help. If your office has windows, consider turning out your lights or office lamps during particularly sunny times during the day. This will not only help you, but your employer.

‘Taking a few extra minutes now can add up to a major savings,’ says Dipple. ‘These are all things that everyone can do without much effort while making a major impact.’