

Unplug appliances that are not in use

"Phantom" Appliances

Many appliances drain energy even when they are not on.

- It is estimated that phantom appliances use about 450 kWh per household annually (eere.energy.gov). This adds up to 43 billion kWh lost due to idle appliances in the U.S. each year (eere.energy.gov), equivalent to the output of 26 power plants (Vanity Fair, April 2006).

- Turning off the un-used electronic devices in an average American home would prevent over 1,000 lbs of carbon dioxide emissions annually. (Source: stopglobalwarming.org).

- Unplug all appliances and chargers that are not in use to save them from draining energy. The easiest way to do this is to plug groups of similar appliances, such as the television, VHS player, and DVD player, into a power strip or surge protector. This way you can stop electricity drainage with a single flip of a switch.

Clean your Refrigerator Condenser Coils!

Condenser coils attract dust and pet hair, which cause the refrigerator's compressor to run too hot. The result is lower efficiency, higher electric bills, more service calls and a reduced lifetime for the appliance.

A coil brush costs less than \$5. Use it 3 or 4 times a year (be sure to unplug the refrigerator first) and you'll eliminate more than 70 percent of service calls and see an immediate reduction in your utility bills.

Other Refrigerator and Freezer Tips:

The VISTA Energy Program of Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAI CAP) offers the following refrigerator and freezer tips:

> Make sure that the inside refrigerator temperature is 38° F - 40° F.

> Make sure that the inside freezer temperature (or fridge's freezer compartment) is 0° F - 5° F.

> Make sure that the gaskets (rubber strips around the doors) fit tightly so air doesn't leak out of the fridge or freezer. Test by using a flashlight inside the fridge with the doors closed to see if there is any light that comes through when the room is dark.

> Make sure that the freezer or refrigerator is always almost full, even if you have to add containers of water to fill it up – a full freezer or fridge uses less electricity.

> If you have a manual defrost freezer, make sure to clean when frost builds up to ¼ of an inch – the more frost there is, the more electricity is used to keep the freezer cold.

