



## LED LIGHTING UPDATE



Local hardware stores like Home Depot and Lowes Home Improvement are now stocking LED lights suitable for home use at more affordable prices. Due to these lower prices (some between \$5 and \$10), consider buying a few to experience their projected longevity (25000+ hours) and the warmer lighting style that they provide. According to published specifications, LEDs are approximately 50% more energy efficient than comparable Compact Fluorescent Lighting (CFL) with similar reductions in annual cost per year. [Click here](#) to see a comparison chart (life span, watts, annual cost, etc.) between LED, Incandescent and CFL lights. [Click here](#) to read a Nov. 2013 New York Times article with a cool graphic showing the difference in lighting compared with a CFL with the same luminosity.

## DUKE ENERGY FREE HOME ENERGY HOUSE CALL!!

Are you a Duke Energy customer? From Duke Energy's residential web page: - "Do you own your single-family home? Do you have an electric water heater, electric heat or central air? Sign up for a free Home Energy House Call today! It's an easy way to learn more about your house and save big on energy. " If you qualify and sign up, there's free stuff valued at approximately \$30 as well!! Read more about this offer from Duke Energy by [clicking here](#).



What better way to save energy than to drive less, since that energy savings will mean more money in your wallet! Pledge to drive less by sharing the ride or taking public transportation just once between now and July 5th by taking the Triad Commute Challenge. You will also be entered to win weekly prize drawings, and a special prize for Forsyth County Employees only. For more information, or to take the Challenge visit: [www.TriadCommuteChallenge.com](http://www.TriadCommuteChallenge.com)

## SIMPLE WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY IN THE KITCHEN

Here are a few tips for saving energy in the kitchen:

- Save considerable energy by using your microwave and pressure cooker whenever possible.
- Let hot foods cool before putting them in your refrigerator/freezer. Otherwise your unit will work hard and longer.
- Turn off the "heat dry" on your dishwasher. Instead, open the dishwasher drawer and let them air-dry.
- Preheat the oven only when the recipe calls for it. There is no need to preheat the broiler.
- Remove old items from the refrigerator so you won't be keeping them cold unnecessarily. If you have a lot of empty space, fill it with your favorite beverage to reduce space that needs cooling. Liquids hold their temperature longer than air.
- Look for Energy Star label when buying home appliances.

## LANDSCAPING TIPS FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION

The arrival of Spring is the optimal time to consider landscaping projects that not only beautifies your property but may improve your home's comfort and lower energy bills. Here are a few ideas as you plan your landscaping project:

### Planting Tips

**Maple tree**  
Plant a 6-8 foot deciduous tree near your home, and it will start shading your windows in the first year. Depending on the species and the home, it will shade the roof in 5-10 years.

**Oak tree**  
Plant deciduous trees to the south of your home — they can screen 70-90 percent of the hot summer sun while allowing breezes through.

**Hens and chicks**  
Hens and chicks is a type of succulent groundcover plant.  
To cool air before it reaches your home, plant shrubs and groundcover plants.

**Plant bushes, shrubs or climbing vines with a trellis**  
to shade your patio area.

**Plant trees with crowns lower to the ground**  
on the west if you want to shade from lower, afternoon sun angles.



### Landscaping for Water Conservation

Design your landscape to not only save energy but also conserve water.

- Always group plants with similar water needs together.
- Reduce the use of turf and use low-water-using types of turf grass.
- Aerate your soil — it improves water flow to plants' roots and reduces water runoff.
- Water in the morning when it is cooler and evaporation rates are low.
- Organize your turf grass in continuous patterns — it's easier to maintain and uses less water.
- In the summer, raise your lawn mower cutting height — longer grass blades help shade each other & retain more water.
- Use mulch to keep plant roots cool, minimize evaporation and reduce weed growth.



Sources: Energy Saver ([www.energy.gov/energysaver/](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver/)), the Energy Department (<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/library/pdfs/16632.pdf>) and EPA WaterSense ([http://www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor/landscaping\\_tips.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor/landscaping_tips.html)).

Thank you!

Past Energy Management Program newsletters can be found here: [http://fcnet/EMP\\_newsletters.aspx](http://fcnet/EMP_newsletters.aspx)

As always, we seek input and feedback regarding energy conservation ideas, projects or news about something you or your department is doing, or want to do. Contact us @ [elkinsl@forsyth.cc](mailto:elkinsl@forsyth.cc), [raglanre@forsyth.cc](mailto:raglanre@forsyth.cc), and/or [warmuts2@forsyth.cc](mailto:warmuts2@forsyth.cc)