

Go Green! Save Green! – 12 Ways to Save in Your Congregation

How much money has your congregations saved through energy efficiency in the past six months? Here are twelve ways to Go Green and Save Green.

1. Turn your hot water heater-setting down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. This will save on energy bills and reduce air pollution from energy generation
2. Tune up your HVAC equipment tuned up once each year. This will save energy and prevent costly failures and associated repairs. Change air filters at least every three months to improve efficiency.
3. Use ceiling fans in larger rooms with high ceilings. In the heating season, ceiling fans should rotate clockwise at a lower speed to pull cool air up. The gentle updraft then pushes warm air, which naturally rises to the ceiling, down along the walls and back to the floor. This makes a room feel warmer, which allows you to lower the thermostat temperature and decrease the use of heating devices. This can save as much as 15 percent on heating bills.
4. Disconnect power supplies when not in use. Appliances like televisions, computers, printers, and CD players continue to draw power even when turned off. To avoid a power drain connect them to the outlet using a power strip and turning the strip off. There are power strips that sense when a device is turned off and automatically disconnect from the power source.
5. Replace burned out bulbs with LEDs, the more efficient lighting technology. While initially expensive, these bulbs last 20 years or more and consume very little power. Look for the Energy Star certification when purchasing lightbulbs to ensure not only the highest energy efficiency, but also high quality.
6. Replacing your dishwasher? Be sure to look for the Energy Star rating, which indicates lower power consumption than other similar appliances. For example, Energy Star dishwashers often use less water, for a double benefit.
7. Replacing your refrigerator or freezer? Refrigerators can account for 1/6 of your electric bill. Get an Energy Star model to reduce your electric bill and pollution at the same time. Be sure your refrigerator and freezer temperature settings are in the recommended ranges (37° – 40° Fahrenheit for the fridge and 0° – 5° Fahrenheit for the freezer). Lower settings waste energy.
8. Install faucet aerators in your kitchen or bathrooms. This can reduce water usage by up to 50 percent. A 1 – 1.5 gallon/minute aerator is sufficient for hygiene needs and 2.2 – 2.5 gallons/minute suffices for dishwashing.
9. Bottled water contains about double the microplastics found in tap water. Drinking tap water not only reduces your ingestion of microplastics, but also saves a great deal of natural resources used to produce bottled water.
10. Conserve water by installing rain barrels or developing a rain garden.
11. If you have an irrigation system, consider replacing spray heads with rotators. These heads water more evenly and are more efficient.
12. Water the lawn or garden only early in the morning or in the evening to avoid water loss through evaporation. Avoid watering on windy days to limit water being blown away.

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