

No.1/Sept. '10

**MEDIA
PLANET**

ENERGY SAVING SOLUTIONS

IMPROVE YOUR HOME'S EFFICIENCY

4
TIPS

Sarah Beeny talks: Get advice from the people who know best

Be in the know
Dick and James
Strawbridge
share their tips



DK PUBLICITY

Get insulated
Learn the tricks
that could save
you cash



NATIONAL INSULATION ASSOCIATION

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CHALLENGES

Adopting eco-friendly energy solutions will help in the battle against climate change - and, at a time of rising fuel costs, significantly reduce your bills.

Why it pays to be energy efficient

In times of austerity, energy efficiency becomes a key issue for much of the population. At the energy saving trust we have increasingly found ourselves in the spotlight alongside other organisations with interests in energy, sustainability and saving money.

Energy prices are rising, so we have to become more self-sufficient; not only through simply using less energy in the first place, but also by selecting the most efficient appliances and products, and even becoming energy generators in our own homes through cash incentive schemes like feed-in tariffs.

Key barriers

1 It's all very well talking about investment, but it's easy to forget about the factors stopping people taking action; even if an individual or family desires to live a more



Philip Sellwood, Chief Executive of the Energy Saving Trust

sustainable life, there are key barriers. Questions about how technologies work, what kind of upheaval it might mean and, most pressingly, upfront costs.

I recently spoke to a single mum who is getting energy efficiency measures and solar panels installed in her home by taking part in the Government's Pay as You Save pilot scheme. The reality was her income was too low to afford the energy-efficiency measures she needed without extending the mortgage on

her house. The financial help found, in the form of a local council grant combined with the pilot scheme was welcomed and essential.

Help is at hand

2 Help is increasingly out there. We've recently added hundreds of new local offers to our Grants and Discounts Database, and the Government's Green Deal will offer great potential in terms of helping people to make affordable energy saving alterations to their homes.

Let's not forget the great economic benefits of sustainability. The Existing Homes Alliance states that with sufficient investment in tackling the energy efficiency of homes, over 100,000 direct and indirect new jobs could be created each year to 2020, in England alone.

A little investment now can make a big difference in the future.



WE RECOMMEND



Sarah Beeny
The property guru shares her top tips for cutting costs

PAGE 6

"If you keep the heat in, then that's a great step towards going 'green'"

MEDIA PLANET

We make our readers succeed!

ENERGY SAVING SOLUTIONS, 1ST EDITION, SEPTEMBER 2010

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Print: Trafford Park Printers

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*Source: SEDBUK website. Calculation based on energy efficiency savings versus an old type heavyweight boiler.

INSPIRATION

TIP

1

EMBRACE NEW
TECHNOLOGY

Question: Will expensive solar technology ever become a viable energy source for the average householder?

Answer: Yes, says the Renewable Energy Association, thanks to feed-in tariffs now stimulating the market and bringing down prices.

The wonders of a solar system

CHANGE

As little as six months ago, solar photovoltaic (PV) technology was a pipe-dream for the average householder. The idea was enticing - solar panels on your roof generated electricity for domestic use - but PV was so expensive to buy that only the very green and wealthy were tempted to install it.

But that's changing, says Ray Noble from the Renewable Energy Association, the industry body promoting renewable energy in the UK. And it's all thanks to the introduction of feed-in tariffs.

Viable solution

Feed-in tariffs, which became available in the UK in April of this year, are payments made by energy suppliers to householders and communities who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources. A payment is also made for every unit of sur-

plus power exported to the Grid - and that's in addition to the bill savings made by using on-site-generated electricity.

It now means that the cost of PV technology (which varies, but is approximately £10,000 for a typical home) is starting to make sense: feed-in tariffs have been designed so that the average monthly income from an installation will be significantly greater than a monthly loan repayment (with a 25 year loan).

Falling prices

The UK is lagging behind in this area. Many EU countries have feed-in tariffs; and Germany, which has operated the system for the last seven years, is now the largest market in the world for solar power.

"Feed-in tariffs stimulate the market," says Noble, "and they can take about two years to kick-in. Once that stimulation starts, however, prices come down. It's estimated that by 2020, the cost of a solar



"Solar puts the customer in control of generating their own energy"

Ray Noble
Renewable Energy
Association

system and the energy it generates will be the same price as the electricity you'd pay for from the Grid. At that point, installing solar technology becomes a no-brainer."

Energy saving

It already seems to be making a difference. "Over the last 15 years," says Noble, "about 30 MegaWatts of solar energy were installed in the UK. In the first three months of the feed-in tariffs, however, 13 MegaWatts were installed."

Companies are also offering to fit PV systems for free and claim the generation tariff, while the householder gets the electricity and the export tariff.

"In effect," says Noble, "solar puts the customer in control of generating their own energy. And a typical house, will be saving two tonnes of CO2 a year."

TONY GREENWAY

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Image courtesy of Matthew Borowiecki, RIBA



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3

DICK STRAWBRIDGE, ECO EXPERT'S BEST TIPS

Solar panels are simple

1 There's no maintenance! There are no moving parts. They're not like a wind turbine which you have to drop every year to maintain.

Think of solar panels as an investment

2 People install a new kitchen or bathroom in their homes, thinking of it as a 'good investment'. But hold on. Tastes change and a new buyer might rip them straight out. A solar panel, however, is a guaranteed long-term investment, sure to increase the value of your home. Wouldn't you rather buy a home that has no bills, knowing that fuel prices are going to go up in the next 20 years?

Look at the thermal option

3 The most economic way to harness the sun is with a solar thermal system — which captures heat directly — to heat your water. Believe it or not, in the UK, this will heat your water throughout the year - not 100 per cent in the winter, obviously, but the saving on your heating bill will be significant.

A SUNNY FUTURE
Soon, new energy saving techniques will be an affordable option for thousands.

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INSPIRATION

TIP

2

CHECK YOUR
INSULATION

GREEN LIFESTYLE
Dick and James Straw-
bridge enjoy living green
and self-sufficient.
PHOTO: DK PUBLICITY

Easy ways to 'green' your home

■ Question: Do you have to spend a fortune on making your home green and energy efficient?

■ Answer: No, says TV's Sarah Beeny and Dick Strawbridge. Simple fixes can make a big difference.

HOW WE MADE IT

Want your home to be more eco-friendly? Then take a tip from Channel 4 property guru Sarah Beeny. "If you keep the heat in, then that's a great step towards going 'green'," she says. "You don't have to spend extra money - just use less energy. My advice is don't heat your house so much...and use the rest wisely."

In October, viewers will see Beeny renovating her own East Yorkshire manor home, Rise Hall, in a new TV series, Beeny's Renovation Nightmare. Working on the project wasn't easy: for one thing, Rise Hall has 97 rooms.

Heat sensibly

"We draft-proofed every single window in the house," says Beeny, "and there are 147 of them. To be honest, if you do insulate properly and watch your heating, then that's better than spending £300,000 on a 'green' boiler



Sarah Beeny
Property expert
and TV presenter

room and walking around in a T-shirt." Beeny did, however, invest in the very best, most energy-efficient oil-fired boiler on the market.

Dick Strawbridge — environmentalist star of TV's *It's Not Easy Being Green* and co-author of a new book, *Practical Self Sufficiency* - agrees with Beeny about overheating. "That's a good one," he says. "And rectifying it can be simple. Turning the thermostat down and wearing a jumper can make a big difference in terms of reduced bills and fossil fuels."

Insulation investment

Strawbridge also warns that if you turn the heat off and your house gets cold quickly then, obviously, the warmth is escaping somewhere. "Check your loft insulation," he says. "It's an investment because a massive amount of heat is lost through the roof.

"And not everyone has double-glazing, so close the curtains in the

evening to keep the heat in. If you have rattling sash windows and see your curtains billowing, you're losing heat. So fix it."

If you're going to install glazed windows, says Strawbridge, it pays to understand glass. "Double-glazing and triple-glazing have different performances," he says, "and in some rooms you have to be careful you don't stop the sunshine coming in to heat your house up."

Truly enjoyable

Strawbridge is optimistic that 'green' is going mainstream; although he's concerned that 'guilt' and 'misery' factors are still attached to it. "Yet I make no bones about it," he says, adding, "My family's green living is truly enjoyable, as opposed to: 'Oh, I can't turn that on because I'll be using electricity...'"

■ Beeny's Renovation Nightmare will be broadcast on Channel 4 in October.

■ Practical Self Sufficiency by Dick and James Strawbridge is out now, price £20. Visit www.dk.com for more information.

TONY GREENWAY

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4

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS



Heat resistant?

1 The Energy Saving Trust says that the older your boiler is, the more inefficient it is likely to be. If it is 15 years or older, you should think about changing it.

Standby bills

2 On average, UK households waste around £40 each year by leaving appliances on standby. Households in the UK are estimated to spend around 8 per cent of their electricity bill just by powering appliances in standby.

Washed out

3 The EST says the average washing machine is used for 260 cycles a year; a dishwasher for 245 cycles and a tumble dryer 140 times. Washing clothes at 30 degrees instead of higher temperatures uses around 40 per cent less electricity (saving you around £10 a year). Modern washing powders and detergents work just as effectively at lower temperatures.

Glass act

4 If you are installing new windows, don't immediately choose triple glazing over double glazing, as both have useful properties. The ability of triple glazing to reduce heat loss from the home is superior, while double glazing allows more energy from the sun as well as more daylight to pass through. Therefore, it's sensible to make use of better-insulating triple glazing on northerly facades (where natural daylight is at its least) and double glazing on southerly facades.

SUSTAINABLE HOMES MUST HAVE THE HOMEOWNER AT THEIR HEART

Responsible for nearly 30% of the UK's carbon emissions, the energy efficiency of our homes remains in the political spotlight, despite the economic downturn.



The VELUX CarbonLight Homes, designed to the new definition of zero carbon.



While the Housing Minister has confirmed his commitment to the 2016 target for all new homes to be 'zero carbon' and provided house builders with a road map to achieving this ambitious goal, it is less clear whether we will also be able to successfully build homes that are sustainable in the wider sense of the word.

On average, we spend over 90% of our time indoors and therefore, as well as reducing carbon emissions, it is essential that our new homes create a comfortable, practical and healthy living environment.

This principle of balancing energy efficiency and homeowner well-being is at the heart of the Sustainable Living Campaign, launched by VELUX to help ensure we develop homes that stand the test of time.



Kevin Brennan,
Head of Sustainability
at VELUX,
talks about the
company's vision:

What are your thoughts on the 2016 drive for all new homes to be zero carbon?

The Government's ambitious efforts to fight against climate change, which include policies to reduce the emissions attributable to our new and existing housing stock, are to be highly commended.

However, I would argue that it is possible to place too much emphasis on a home's

energy efficiency, at the expense of its aesthetics, comfort and indoor air quality.

As we are fast discovering, the result of such a narrow focus is that of an air-tight, dimly-lit box with artificial ventilation and little interaction with the external environment.

While this may tick the box for carbon emission reductions, it certainly doesn't satisfy the wider criteria for a truly sustainable home. This should seek to achieve a balance between reducing energy use and creating a practical living environment that people would choose to live in.

So you believe there is more to sustainable homes than simply reducing the carbon emissions?

Absolutely. In fact, recent reports suggest that an air-tight property without natural daylight or ventilation may be detrimental to human health over the long term, leading to a rise and worsening in cases of asthma and obesity and vitamin D deficiency.

This is not sustainable and must be avoided. We need to leave our future generations a legacy of homes that actively promote their health and well-being while meeting the needs of modern lifestyles.

How would you define the ideal sustainable home?

The ideal home needs to be an attractive proposition for the homeowner, both in terms of cost and the quality of the internal environment. It should incorporate high levels of natural daylight and fresh air –

a theory supported by several academic reports.

Dr Richard Hobday MSc, an expert in sustainability and health in the built environment, asserts that healthy homes should feature windows that open, views of nature, high levels of natural light and direct sunlight and natural ventilation. Scientists have also recently uncovered direct evidence suggesting that Vitamin D - made by the skin in the presence of sunlight - is needed to protect against a whole range of diseases, including cancer.

In addition, we believe that our homes should be built in tune with the principles of Active House – encouraging families to spend more time at home, interacting with each other and the environment.

So what is the next step?

We would like to see the Government move beyond energy reduction targets and introduce standards for the performance and quality of the space within the home.

Keen to play an active part in helping to develop sustainable buildings, VELUX will be building two 'CarbonLight Homes' in Kettering later this year. As one of the first pairs of homes designed to the new zero carbon definition, they aim to prove that it is possible to build extremely energy efficient housing that is appealing to the consumer and can be easily and affordably replicated on a mass scale.

To find out more about VELUX's sustainable homes and building projects, please visit www.velux.co.uk and download the 'Designs for living' brochure.

for a brighter future



Question: How do you know if a domestic appliance or product is as energy efficient as it claims?

Answer: Check for endorsement from an independent source – such as a recommendation from the Energy Saving Trust.



THE ECO STAMP OF APPROVAL

Do you want to help save the planet – and slice some cash off your next energy bill? The fact is, you can do both at the same time if you use the right energy-efficient domestic appliances.

The challenge, of course, is finding the most efficient appliance. When you're shopping for, say, a new dishwasher, how do you know for sure if it is ecofriendly?

Independent source

One way is by looking for an endorsement from an independent source. For instance, the Energy Saving Trust (EST) – the impartial, non-profit organisation promoting sustainable energy use – recommends various products and appliances by labelling them with

a distinctive blue logo. These Energy Saving Trust recommended items have to meet strict, annually reviewed criteria, set by an independent panel.

Consumer benefit

Peter Bromage, Head of Category Management at the Energy Saving Trust, is responsible for the 10-year-old scheme. "What we try to do for the benefit of the consumer," he says, "is illustrate that, by choosing an EST recommended product, they will potentially save an amount over the lifetime of that product which will more than compensate for the difference in price.

"Although energy-saving characteristics aren't simply being im-

plemented at the top-end of the range, but at the middle and bottom end, too."

Product categories

Currently, there are 31 product categories under the EST recommended banner, including different kinds of insulation, glazing, boilers and a range of electronic and domestic appliances.

In some cases, says Bromage, technology moves ahead at a cracking pace, so keeping ahead of the eco-curve is vitally important. With IT products, for example, developments occur on an almost weekly basis. Meanwhile, with cavity wall insulation or glazing, the timeframes can be longer.

Plus, because of improving tech-

nologies, a product that is EST recommended today may not pass muster in two years' time.

"But," says Bromage, "that's a healthy progression. It means we're constantly reviewing our standards to ensure the consumer is getting the best value for money.

"Because whatever the logo is on, we're saying: 'This is an energy saving product. If you use it, you can potentially save on your electricity bill AND benefit the environment.' It's a win-win situation."

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/recommended

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ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Doing your research is key, says Peter Bromage from the Energy Savings Trust.

PHOTO: EST

3

TOP TIPS



Switch onto green

1 A new Energy Saving Trust Recommended dishwasher will use around 20 per cent less energy than a typical old model. The EST recommend that, when using your dishwasher or washing machine, wait for a full load, or use the economy cycle if your machine has one.

Save yourself money

2 If you replace your old dishwasher with a new Energy Saving Trust recommended model, you'll save around £11 a year on energy bills and around 47kg of CO2.

Upgrading makes sense

3 If everyone in the UK upgraded their old refrigeration appliances to Energy Saving Trust Recommended products, it would save over £700million-worth of electricity every year. Plus, enough CO2 would be saved annually to fill the Royal Albert Hall 15,000 times.

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NEWS

Let there be light – the eco-friendly way

TIP

4

EXPLORE ALL
YOUR OPTIONS

■ **Question:** Can today's eco-friendly light-bulbs significantly reduce energy bills and carbon emissions?

■ **Answer:** Yes – and even more advanced LED technology is on its way, equipping light-bulbs with a 25-year life span.

Domestic lighting has already undergone one revolution. A year ago, 'traditional' high-energy bulbs – of the 100W and frosted incandescent variety – began to be phased out across the EU, with an expected saving of one million tonnes of CO₂ per year by 2020.

Energy-efficient eco-bulbs – or Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) – are now familiar features in many households. The Lighting Association – the UK's leading industry body – says that energy efficient light bulbs could cut energy losses by over 75 per cent.

But another lighting revolution is coming, says Peter Hunt, The Lighting Association's Chief Executive Officer. The good quality LED lights now making an appearance on the market are on a par with Compact Fluorescents – and, crucially, have a life-span of 25 or 30 years. This means we will begin to think of light-bulbs as an investment – not disposable objects.

Long-term buy

"Good quality LEDs will revolutionise lighting," says Hunt. "When you think about it, we won't be leaving the light bulbs in our homes when we move house. We'll be buying light bulbs for the long-term."

When eco-friendly Compact Fluorescent Lamps were introduced, some griped that they didn't give off enough light. But this complaint is not based on fact, says Hunt. Moreover, the technology has significantly improved.

"We hear a lot of people say that CFLs aren't as bright as the 'old bulbs'," says Hunt. "But that simply comes down to buying the right ones because there is every bright-



A BRIGHT IDEA
Make way for a revolution, says the Lighting Association.
PHOTO: AMANDA ROHDE

ness available on the market."

Consumer change

LEDs, says Hunt, will likely make the most impact as downlighters, re-

placing halogen spotlights; but, at present, their cost can be off-putting. "I think we will see a massive swing," he predicts, "but presently LEDs are £25-plus, which is a lot of money to

invest in a light bulb." Actually, says Hunt, even at that price if you do the maths the numbers stack up in the LEDs' favour. "Most consumers don't do the sums, however. When they're faced with replacing a light bulb for two pounds or £25, they'll go for the cheaper option.

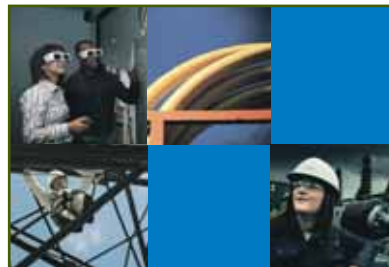
"But when the price is £10 and the long-life and energy efficiency messages get across, things will change."

TONY GREENWAY

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FACTS

- **Energy saving bulbs** use up to 80 per cent less electricity than 'old fashioned' bulbs.
- **Statistics from the Energy Saving Trust** show that by replacing all the remaining traditional bulbs in your home with energy saving light bulbs, you could save around £25 a year from your energy bill and 100kg of CO₂.
- **Over the lifetime of all the bulbs**, this could add up to £390 saved on bills and bulb costs – and 2.2 tonnes of CO₂.



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SYLVANIA

NEWS

Poor insulation? It's your loss

■ **Question:** What's the most important first-step when it comes to saving energy?

■ **Answer:** Insulation. If your home isn't insulated adequately, you are losing money and increasing carbon emissions.

"There is a massive lack of public awareness regarding poor insulation and heat loss," says Neil Marshall, Chief Executive of the National Insulation Association, the trade body representing over 90 per cent of the UK's home insulation industry. "We conduct a survey every year to find out public attitudes towards insulation. The last one showed that two-thirds of adults were unaware that around half the heat of an uninsulated house can be lost through the walls and roof. And only one in five adults knew they could save over £250 a year by insulating properly" Marshall explains.

Spreading the word

In terms of customer perception, this doesn't make gratifying reading. The question is: why isn't the 'insulation, insulation, insulation' message getting through? One short public information film in the break during X Factor, for example, would hit an awful lot of people.

"The coalition understands the importance of insulation," says Marshall. "But I think what's needed is some kind of over-arching consum-



ON AVERAGE insulation typically saves around £115 a year on bills

PHOTO: NIA

er awareness programme. What we need is someone in authority communicating on a national level, because there are six million people who need their cavity walls insulated and 14 million people who need their lofts insulated."

Green Deal

Apart from reduced fuel bills, those extra lagged lofts would help hit the Government's stringent, legally binding carbon reduction targets. In June, the Department of Energy & Climate Change announced it was ramping up its focus on home insulation, paving the way for its Green Deal in 2012. This is a scheme giving homeowners the chance to upgrade their properties without incurring upfront costs.

When you're thinking about insulation, says Marshall - and, with winter and a VAT hike around the corner,

that should be now - ask yourself if you have cavity wall insulation; and, crucially, what thickness of insulation you have in your loft.

"The recommended depth of insulation in your loft is 270mm," he says. "With the grants and subsidies available for loft insulation - and the money it can save you - why wouldn't you do it?"

TONY GREENWAY

info.uk@mediaplanet.com

FACTS

■ **Around 45 per cent** of a home's heat can be lost through un-insulated solid walls and 75 per cent through un-insulated cavity walls.

■ **If everyone in the UK** installed 270mm loft insulation, we could save around £520 million and nearly three million tonnes of CO₂ every year.



DON'T MISS!

Getting a grant

➔ There are a range of schemes available (from Government, local authorities and energy suppliers) to provide grants and subsidies for insulation installation. Check the National Insulation Association (NIA) website for details (www.nationalinsulationassociation.org.uk). The NIA website also features a list of all insulation installers in your area.

Insulate

➔ There are around seven million properties with solid walls in the UK, that need insulation. To hit government targets, around two million of these homes will need to be insulated by 2020. That is, roughly, a 10-fold increase in current levels.

Save money

➔ Solid walls can be insulated on the inside using Internal Wall Insulation (IWI) or on the outside using External Wall Insulation (EWI). External wall insulation can save around £400 a year on householder's fuel bills year-on-year. Internal wall insulation can save around £380 a year on fuel bills and reduce a home's carbon footprint by around two tonnes of CO₂ a year.



Sempatap Thermal Solid Wall Insulation



Insulating a solid wall home has, in the past, been a major problem either requiring a serious financial investment or major disruption.

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PANEL OF EXPERTS

	<p>Rosalyn Foreman Data Services Manager, Energy Saving Trust</p> 	<p>Dave Lacey Commercial Director for Vaillant (UK & Ireland)</p> 	<p>Nigel Griffiths Principal Consultant -Sustainable Buildings, AEA</p> 
<p>Question 1: When shopping for heating appliances, are today's consumers really influenced by promises of low carbon emissions?</p>	<p>Like a new, major kitchen appliance, boilers are - usually - only bought as a replacement product, when necessary. This will be down to cost, but also hassle. However, bill savings are influential: they could be up to 25 per cent when replacing an old boiler, and installing a full set of heating controls.</p>	<p>Without doubt, there is a growing awareness of the need to lower carbon emissions. Consumers do want to choose products which will safeguard the environment, but they still want value for money. The system they choose has to make financial sense for their own personal circumstances.</p>	<p>Consumers are now more aware, and most will look for an energy efficiency rating. However, boilers or central heating systems are expensive. When the opportunity arises, consumers may look for more efficient appliances; but, in many cases, still with a view to saving money rather than reducing emissions.</p>
<p>Question 2: With advances in technology, are today's 'green' heating appliances more reliable than older 'unsustainable' ones?</p>	<p>As with many new technologies, early models may have been less reliable. Condensing boilers now have over 20 years of proven reliable operation and many of the parts used are the same as those used in non-condensing boilers. It's recommended to get any boiler serviced annually to make sure it runs efficiently.</p>	<p>Newer, improved technologies have to be tried and tested before they can be launched. To work at their most efficient, heating systems need to be correctly specified and installed by a qualified Gas Safe registered installer for gas boilers; or MCS approved installer for renewable systems.</p>	<p>As manufacturers are coming under closer scrutiny for their 'green' claims and being pushed to examine their 'down the line impacts,' one method for reducing the overall environmental impact of a product is to prolong its lifetime and reliability. Therefore, the market has seen a dramatic push in claims of higher levels of reliability.</p>
<p>Question 3: What impact can thermostats, programmers and other technology have on heating bills and carbon emissions?</p>	<p>Good heating controls can provide added comfort, control and savings. The largest savings can come from a room thermostat. Even if you already have one, turning it down by one degree to an appropriate temperature (usually between 18 and 21 degrees C) can save 10 per cent on heating bills - that's around £50 a year.</p>	<p>They are crucial. Anyone upgrading their heating system should improve the controls so they can keep the temperature at the most appropriate level and maximise the benefits of the heating system. If you don't design and control your system properly, the heating technology you choose will have less impact on your carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Efficiency with any system is about using the right amount of energy when and where you need it. This is what thermostats and other controllers allow the consumer to do. Some controls these days even give you the ability to remotely access systems, allowing you to reset times and temperatures when you are out.</p>



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