

## Ways to Green Your Home

1. Switch to Energy Star-rated CFL bulbs, like GHRI fave Satco's Mini Spiral S6202; they use 75 percent less energy and last 10 times longer than standard bulbs. You'll knock \$30 off your electric bill for each bulb over its lifetime.
2. Plant trees around the house strategically (on the south and west sides; shading the air-conditioning unit, if possible) to save up to about \$250 a year on cooling and heating.
3. Install dimmer switches in the living and dining rooms and three bedrooms to dial down electricity fees about \$37 a year.
4. Since 1992 legislation, all new showerheads must have a flow rate of 2.5 gallons per minute or lower. Replace your old showerhead and save up to \$45 a month for a family of four.
5. Wrap an insulation blanket around your water heater and lower its running cost as much as 9 percent.
6. Run a full dishwasher whenever possible — it uses half or less of the water and energy of washing the same dishes by hand. And don't waste water by rinsing before loading (today's machines are designed to power off the mess).
7. Invest in a faucet-mounted water filter for a low \$30, and use refillable bottles like our top-rated GHRI pick, the Nalgene OTG Everyday 24-ounce bottle. By giving up bottled water, a family of four can save about \$1,250 a year.
8. Magazines. Roll up a couple of these and stick one into each of your calf- or knee-high boots so the footwear will keep its shape.
9. Empty paper-towel roll. Flatten, and use it to sheathe a knife kept in a drawer.
10. Small glass food jars. These make perfect see-through storage vessels for nails, screws, nuts, and bolts.
11. Old shower curtain. Stash one in your car's trunk to line it when carting potentially messy paints or picnic and beach gear.
12. Used coffee grounds. Spread them over flower beds of acid-craving plants such as azaleas or rhododendrons.
13. Plastic tub. Get the largest-size container of yogurt, sour cream, or margarine. When done with the tub, rinse and reuse it as a travel dish for pets or for craft-supply storage.

14. Plastic gallon milk jug. Cut off top with a utility knife just above the handle and use as a scoop for kitty litter, birdseed, etc.
  
15. Foam packing peanuts. Put some in the bases of potted plants to help drainage.
  
16. Plastic mesh produce bag. Turn it into a no-scratch scrubber for a gunky pot or pan. Ball up the bag, scour, then throw the whole mess away.