



Summer is coming!
Here are 5 ways to keep your cool...
Even after you get the utility bill

It gets a bit warm in Florida in the summertime, but before you crank the a/c, follow these easy checks to make sure your house isn't bleeding energy.

1. The Air Conditioner

- a. Set the thermostat no lower than 75° F. (We'll look at other ways to keep the house cool)
- b. Use a programmable thermostat. Set it to raise the temperature at least 5° F when no one is at home.
- c. Replace old and inefficient units with high efficiency models.
- d. Make sure filters are clean or new.
- e. Keep foliage trimmed around the outside unit to ensure maximum air circulation.
- f. Keep the storm windows closed when the air is on.
- g. Get your ducts sealed by a certified contractor. Leaky ducts account for 25% of cooling costs in an average home.

2. Make the Rounds

- a. Keep the lights off as much as possible.
- b. Use the oven and other large appliances sparingly or only in the early morning and late evening.
- c. Wash your clothes in cold water and dry them outside on a line.
- d. Check the temperature on your hot water heater. You need only 140° F for dishwashers.
- e. Only run the dishwasher when it is full and be sure to turn off the "dry" feature, letting the dishes air dry instead.
- f. Double-check that fireplace dampers are closed tightly.
- g. Reduce usage of your pool filter by setting the sweeper for just a couple of times per day.
- h. Turn off lights, tv's, computers and other electronics when not in use.
- i. Unplug any appliances you can. Even when "off" most appliances still drain electricity.
- j. Replace old appliances with energy-efficient models. Side-by-side refrigerators waste energy. Top or bottom freezers can save you 2-3% on your energy bill.

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3. Fans

- a. Ceiling fans make rooms cooler by creating a breeze and distributing cool air. This helps the air conditioner work more efficiently too.
- b. Think about an attic fan. Attic fans draw cool air up, helping to cool upper floors during the day and drawing in cool night air in the evenings.
- c. Consider increasing your attic insulation.

4. Windows & Doors

- a. Awnings and overhangs keep out the sun and create shaded areas.
- b. Window shades keep out heat and are available with insulation, as are drapes and shutters. Draw the shades and close the blinds during the hottest part of the day.
- c. Tinted and reflective window film does an excellent job of keeping rooms cool by keeping the sun out.
- d. Weather-strip or caulk leaky doors and windows.
- e. When replacing doors and windows, look for energy-saving models.

5. Unused, Empty Rooms

- a. Close the doors of any unused rooms.
- b. Remember to close vents too.
- c. Pull the shades.



Taking the time to do this simple home inspection can save you hundreds of dollars in energy costs during the summer – and all year long. Making investments such as ceiling fans, awnings and energy efficient appliances will help you save now, and add to your home's resale value.

For more ways to improve your home's value, market conditions and issues effecting homeownership, visit our comprehensive web site, NoSnowNaples.com. Access a wealth of information by going to: www.NoSnowNaples.com/Special.php and choose any of our useful Special Reports.

In addition to our web site, our experienced and knowledgeable staff is always standing by to answer any of your real estate questions. Contact us toll free at 800-562-0233 or locally at 239-261-9050.

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