



Tips,
Tools and
Resources for
Organizers

Operation Energy SaveSM

Operation Energy Save is designed so that individuals, organizations and community groups can help older friends and neighbors save money on energy costs. Your involvement will make a difference to people you care about.

INCLUDED IN THIS KIT:

- 1 Group Organizer Tips**
- 2 Project Planning Sheet**
- 3 Sample Announcements**
- 5 How to Help Your Friends and Neighbors Save Energy**
- 6 Lend-A-Hand Checklist**
- 7 Easy Tips for Everyday Living**
- 8 DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program**



Group Organizer Tips

Operation Energy Save is designed so that individuals, organizations and community groups can help older friends and neighbors save money on energy costs. Your involvement will make a difference to people you care about. Suggestions for organizing volunteers are listed below. Best of luck.

- 1. Know your role** – The project organizer is the one person who oversees volunteers and makes sure all of the work gets done properly.
- 2. Confirm boundaries** – Select a completion date for the project and confirm the number of people who are available to help.
- 3. Hold a meeting** – Meet with the people who will play key roles in the project. You may want to bring doughnuts, coffee, fruit, etc., to reinforce appreciation and teamwork.
- 4. Clarify goals** – Decide what success will look like, the work that needs to be done and who will take responsibility for major pieces of the project.
- 5. Develop a plan** – Write and share a brief project plan for everyone to use. To get you started, we have included a sample on the next page, but you can also make your own. The plan should include dates, times and locations of meetings; promotional ideas such as including project descriptions; and kickoff dates in faith group bulletins, neighborhood newsletters, community bulletin boards, etc.
- 6. Stay in touch** – Create a project timeline, meet or send email updates as needed, provide encouragement and publicly praise team members.
- 7. HAVE FUN** – After all, this is about making a difference in your community. Celebrate success after the project and send a short “thank-you” note or email to all who participated. Remember, people like to learn how their efforts make an impact on people’s lives. As a follow-up, consider telling the results to everyone who helped, sharing interesting personal stories and thanking everyone again.



Group Organizer’s Project Planning Sheet

General Project Goal: To help reduce the impact of the high cost of energy this winter for older people and others living on a tight budget and those who are most vulnerable.

Specific goals for our group: number of people helped _____ number of volunteers involved _____

Key message: With a small amount of time, you can help someone save money on energy costs this winter.

Call to action: Spend an hour looking for easy ways to help a friend, neighbor or relative save money on energy costs. Join us on DATE _____.

Project Organizer: NAME _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

DATE OF PROJECT _____

Key Handouts: *Lend-A-Hand Checklist, Easy Tips for Everyday Living*

Announcement/Promotion Plan: At least two weeks prior to the project kickoff date, provide a description of the project in faith group bulletins, neighborhood newsletters and community bulletin boards. If needed, ask for small donations. Use the back of this page to write your promotion plan, key dates and contacts.

Key Contacts/Planning Committee:

NAME _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

NAME _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

NAME _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Budget Needed (if any): _____

Plan for collecting results and opinions: _____

Plan for recognition/thanks (both immediate and as a follow-up) e.g., summarized results placed in a newsletter: _____



Sample Newsletter Description #1: If You Want to Organize a Group Project

Note: If you are organizing a group project, use the sample below to help get the word out about your organization's participation in Operation Energy Save. Submit the announcement to the appropriate publication at least two weeks prior to the date of your project. Places to include your announcement may be local newspapers, faith group bulletins, neighborhood newsletters, local hardware stores and community bulletin boards.

Help Older Neighbors, Friends Reduce High Energy Costs This Winter.

Please join us!

The members of **[COMMUNITY NAME, FAITH GROUP, ORGANIZATION]** are joining together **[DATE, TIME AND MEETING LOCATION OF OPERATION ENERGY SAVE]** to help tackle the high energy costs required to keep people warm in their homes all winter long. While anyone can benefit from this program, people living on a tight budget and older people living alone are often the most likely to be in need. Every dollar saved can make a big impact.

As you know, energy costs continue to rise. But you can do something to help others. AARP's Operation Energy Save campaign was designed to encourage individuals and community groups to help their friends and neighbors conserve energy. By using the Operation Energy Save checklist of suggested simple maintenance tips that have been proven to reduce energy costs with your family, friends and neighbors, you can make a difference. That way, your friends can save money and stay warm.

For more information, contact **[PROJECT ORGANIZER NAME]** at **[PHONE, EMAIL]**.



Sample Newsletter Description #2: If You Want to Encourage Individual Involvement

Note: If you want to encourage others to get involved as individuals, use the sample below to encourage individuals to visit CreateTheGood.org to get information about Operation Energy Save or forward the information and Operation Energy Save link to your list of friends by email: CreateTheGood.org/EnergySave.

Places to include your announcement may be local newspapers, faith group bulletins, neighborhood newsletters, local hardware stores and community bulletin boards.

As you know, energy costs continue to rise. But you can do something to help others. The Operation Energy Save campaign was designed to encourage individuals and community groups to help their friends and neighbors save money on energy costs.

AARP is providing a downloadable Operation Energy Save checklist of simple maintenance tips that can help reduce energy costs. Visit CreateTheGood.org/EnergySave to get the list. You'll be making a real difference by helping your friends and neighbors stay warm and save money.



How to Help Your Friends and Neighbors Save Energy

Operation Energy Save was created for individuals and community groups to help friends, family and neighbors conserve energy by sharing a checklist of tips that have been proven to reduce energy costs.

1. Choose three friends and neighbors you plan to assist:
(Of course you can help as many as you like, but three is a great starting point.)

A.

B.

C.

2. Schedule a quick energy-saving walk-through of their home(s) and use the Lend-A-Hand Checklist.
3. Leave a copy of the “Operation Energy Save: Easy Tips for Everyday Living” tip sheet so they have a list of more ways to save on energy costs every day.
4. Remember, you can always print more copies; the files are at CreateTheGood.org/EnergySave.
5. Visit CreateTheGood.org to let us know how this project worked for you and offer suggestions for future ideas.



Lend-A-Hand Checklist

As you know, energy costs continue to rise. But you can do something to help others. Operation Energy Save was created for you to help friends, family and neighbors conserve energy by sharing a checklist of tips proven to reduce energy costs. That way, those you care about can save money and stay warm.

- Replace light bulbs with an ENERGY STAR–qualified compact fluorescent light bulb. They use 75 percent less energy and last about 10 times longer than an incandescent bulb.
- Close and lock all windows and close the heat vents and the doors in rooms that aren't being used.
- Shut fireplace dampers to prevent heated air from going up the chimney when you're not using the fireplace. Be sure all embers are out.
- Clean registers, baseboard heaters and radiators and be sure that they're not blocked by curtains, furniture or carpeting.
- Lower the temperature on the water heater to 120 degrees. Reducing the temperature by 20 degrees can save you nearly \$50 a year.
- Replace or clean furnace air filters. A clogged, dirty filter forces your furnace to work harder. A clean filter can save you 10 percent on your bill.*
- Remove window air conditioning units when the summer is over to prevent heat from escaping. If the unit can't be moved, cover it to prevent drafts.
- Use expanding foam (available in spray cans) to seal the gaps around pipes that connect to the house from the outside.
- Install weather stripping or caulk around doors and windows and place foam gaskets behind outlet plate covers on exterior walls. If there's a large gap at the bottom of an exterior door, install a door sweep.*
- Seal and insulate ducts and joints with a nonhardening sealant. Ducts running through unfinished spaces (attics, crawl spaces and garages) that aren't properly sealed and insulated can add 25 percent to your home's heating bill.*

*Professional assistance may be required to perform this task.



Easy Tips for Everyday Living

While you can't control rising energy costs, you can lower your energy bill by following these simple and proven tips in your home.

- 1. Follow the 10-10 Rule.** Lowering your thermostat in the winter by 10 percent (like from 74° to 67°) for 8 hours can shave 10 percent off your heating bill. Try it at night and use extra blankets when sleeping.
- 2. Run your washing machine and dishwasher only when you have a full load.** Use the cold water setting when possible. And always clean the clothes dryer's lint filter after every load.
- 3. Keep the lights off in unoccupied rooms.**
- 4. Turn off kitchen and bathroom ventilating fans** when you're done. If left on for an hour, they can suck all the heat out of the house.
- 5. During the winter, open drapes, blinds or shades on windows facing the sun** to warm your rooms. At night, cover the windows for better insulation. Also keep the windows clean so they can let in the maximum amount of light and heat.
- 6. Make sure none of your furniture is blocking a heat register.** To feel warmer, move furniture away from cold exterior walls and windows.
- 7. Contact your local utility company** to ask about a home energy audit. Costs vary, but some companies offer free audits.
- 8. Call your local department of social services** to ask if they can help with your home energy expenses.



Want to permanently lower your energy bills?

You can lower your energy bills by preventing heating and air conditioning from escaping through cracks and gaps around doors and windows.



And, thanks to the 2009 Stimulus package, new weatherization assistance money may be available in your community! *The Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program* may be what you need.

What is the weatherization assistance program?

Sponsored and run by the U.S. Department of Energy, if you are eligible for the program, then a professionally trained crew would come into your home to determine the best ways to save you the most on heating and cooling costs. Depending on what you need and what you are eligible to receive, they could install insulation, seal ducts, tune and repair heating and cooling systems, and if indicated, replace them – all free of charge.



Whether you own or rent, you may be eligible for up to \$6500 in free weatherization services.

To find out if you are eligible, visit the Department of Energy's website to find your local weatherization office at www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization.

