

# WATTWORKS

## Energy Efficiency Newsletter

February 2009

### In This Issue

[Do-It-Yourself Home Energy Analysis Kit](#)

[Save the Date! Energy Efficient Seminars Return In March](#)

[Saving Energy At Home Home Improvement Tax Credits](#)

### Quick Links

[Store Location and Directions](#)

[News](#)

[Energy Analysis for Home and Business](#)

[Contact Us](#)



### Featured Product



#### Do-It-Yourself Home Energy Analysis Kit

This handy kit includes the tools you will need to complete your own energy analysis.

Kit includes:

-Book *Energy Efficient Homes for Dummies* by Rik DeGunther

-Kill A Watt Electricity

This issue of the Watt Works Energy Efficiency Newsletter is dedicated to helping you find ways to save energy at home. With the threat of rising energy costs looming, now is this time to start analyzing your home's energy usage and determining what steps to take to lower your consumption. The article ***Saving Energy At Home*** will walk you through some of the steps of a do-it-yourself energy analysis and help you point out ways to save. This month's Featured Product is our ***Do-It-Yourself Home Energy Analysis Kit*** which contains some of the tools you will need to complete your own home analysis.

From small behavior-related changes, like remembering to turn off the lights when you leave a room, to large overhauls, like replacing your home's HVAC unit, energy-saving measures will help you save money on your utility bills, and in some cases, you may be eligible for tax credits (for more information, see ***Home Improvement Tax Credits*** below).

We hope that you find this information useful and start making changes today. If you need help uncovering more ways to save energy, please feel free to call, email or stop by!

### → Saving Energy At Home

by Don Hall, President of Watt Works

As utility costs rise it becomes increasingly clear that using less energy and water will benefit your monthly budget, as well as decrease your impact on resources. If we all make a reasonable effort to save energy, the impact on the country can be enormous. It is not difficult to reduce energy consumption by 20% in most homes, and reducing national energy use in homes by 20% could eliminate the need for additional power plants and even allow some to be idled.



So where do you start in your efforts to save energy at home? First, do an "Energy Analysis". This can be as simple as making a list of all the things that use energy in your home, with an estimate of how many hours a week that you operate it, or you can hire a company to perform an Energy Audit or Energy Analysis. A professional service will provide a detailed report and offer specific opportunities to make improvements, but you can generally make significant energy reductions on your own by paying careful attention to how you use and potentially waste energy.

The search for savings begins by documenting how much you have used and spent over the last year or two. Gather up copies of utility (electric, gas, water, sewer, propane, heating oil) bills for as many previous months as you can, hopefully a little more than a year's worth if possible. Tabulate the units consumed (kilowatt hours, cubic feet, gallons etc.) and billed costs for each month. The idea is that a year's record will give you a picture of how seasons affect your consumption. The lowest electric bill of the year usually represents mild weather (almost no heating or

### Usage Monitor

-8' Extension Cord (for use with the Kill A Watt)

-Infrared Thermometer (for sensing cool/hot spots and drafts)

-25" Mirror with Flexible Arm (to read the name plates on your appliances and HVAC unit)

-LED Flashlight

-Watt Works Home Energy Analysis Check List and Guidelines

### Kit Price: \$125

To purchase the kit, call 614-458-1162, email [sales@wattworks.com](mailto:sales@wattworks.com) or stop by our showroom at 1078 Goodale Blvd. in Columbus.

### Additional Energy Efficient Products from Watt Works

[LED Lighting](#)

[Cold Cathode Lighting](#)

[Home Power Cost Monitor](#)

[Kill A Watt](#)

[Lexin Heating Panels](#)

[Geothermal HVAC Systems](#)

### Save the Date!

### Watt Works Energy Efficient Seminars Return In March

Fri., March 6 at 6pm & Sat., March 7 at 2pm:  
"Solar Technology and Its Application Today"

Fri., March 13 at 6pm & Sat., March 14 at 2pm:  
"Energy Analysis and How It Saves You Money"

### -NEW-

Fri., March 20 at 6pm & Sat., March 21 at 2pm:

cooling), so that represents what you consume in a month for non-comfort uses (lights, cooking, cleaning). If you do not have air conditioning, your summers will be the lowest months. Similarly, your gas (or heating source) bills will be highest in the winter, and the summer lows are either minimum billing charges or used for heating water. Comparing one year to another can show how the rates have changed, or how your habits of usage have improved (or not).

Next, walk around the house and record all of the information you can get about your energy using appliances, lights and equipment. I like to start in the kitchen, because there are usually many items to record here. Write down the make, model and power information from the nameplate if you can find it. Record how many hours a week you energize that appliance. The largest loads do not necessarily reflect the heaviest users over time; a Range has a huge nameplate power rating, but in most homes gets very few hours of use, whereas a refrigerator uses much fewer watts when running, but is operating many hours a week. When you don't know the exact ratings or hours, make an educated guess or write down a range of values. A meter such as the "Kill-A-Watt" (\$35 at Watt Works) logs power peak and power consumed over time and can be a valuable tool in finding your power uses. The same size and hour information should be recorded for everything that uses power or fuel in the home. The furnace and air conditioner, clothes dryer and washer, the attic fan, the sump pump, the water heater, all should be recorded. The most important items to record are those that are in use more than one hour a week. A closet light that is only used once a month is not impacting your energy consumption, but if it is being left on as a night light it needs to be considered. You can lump things together on your list to make it easier; "Two porch lights, 150W total, 60 hours/week".

As you record your energy uses, keep in mind you are trying to reduce your energy use and while you need to be honest with the hours you currently use each item, also think about how you could use it less often, or how you could substitute a lower power method to accomplish the same task. Lights that get left on when you leave the room are good candidates for adding a timer or motion detector to gain "offtime". Lights that you need to operate long hours should be converted to lower power technology, and typically have longer life and reduce replacement costs as well as provide energy savings.

Some energy savings are as simple as changing habits or behaviors (not easy, but generally very inexpensive). Other opportunities will require minor investments in products to help enforce behaviors (programmable thermostats save energy by never forgetting to adjust temperatures on a schedule) or to reduce waste (door seals and insulation) or to operate more efficiently (LED lights use 1/6th the power of incandescents). Some larger energy savings will require a substantial investment that can take years to pay back from the savings, yet can still be well worth doing for all the accumulated benefits, such as replacing a water heater with a tankless heater or solar water heater, or upgrading a furnace to a higher efficiency model or using geothermal (1/3 the energy costs). Until you know where your energy is going now, you cannot know how improvements will impact your energy bills.

Watt Works can perform a home energy analysis for you, or we can use the information from an energy audit you perform yourself to show you many methods and products that can move you toward your goals, whether it be to save utility costs, reduce your carbon footprint, or to go off-grid and independent. It is typical to find 20% energy savings in a home from only modest investments in time and materials. The sooner you start the sooner the bills go down.

*For more information about the energy analysis services Watt*

"LED Lighting for Home and Business"

For more information and a current list of seminars and topics, [click here](#).

Watt Works is proud to be a Lighting Facts LED Product Partner and to sell Energy Star products.



Works provides, call 614-458-1162.

## → Home Improvement Tax Credits

On October 3, 2008, President Bush signed into law the "Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008." This bill extended tax credits for energy efficient home improvements - windows, doors, roofs, insulation, HVAC, and non-solar water heaters. Tax credits for these residential products, which had expired at the end of 2007, will now be available for improvements made during 2009. However, improvements made during 2008 are not eligible for a tax credit.

According to EnergyStar.gov:

- All ENERGY STAR labeled windows and skylights qualify for tax credit. Installation costs are not included.
- ENERGY STAR doors will almost always qualify, except for certain parts of California. Installation costs are not included.
- All ENERGY STAR labeled metal roofs qualify for the tax credit and it must be expected to last 5 years OR have a 2 year warranty. Installation costs are not included.
- For insulation to qualify, its primary purpose must be to insulate and it must be expected to last 5 years OR have a 2 year warranty. Installation costs are not included.

For more information on these and other energy efficient tax credits, see [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

More information regarding the products mentioned in this newsletter can be found on our website at [www.wattworks.com](http://www.wattworks.com). Products can be purchased online, by phone at 614-458-1162 or in our Columbus store.

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