

When Building a New Home:

Air Quality: Use no or low-VOC paints and products and include appropriate radon ventilation. Radon, an odorless radioactive gas, can accumulate in buildings. Radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer, leading to 21,000 cancer deaths per year. See www.tn.gov/environment/radon for more information and a free radon test kit.

Appliances: Install LED light bulbs which save energy, reduce heat, and last longer than incandescent alternatives. Look for energy efficient appliances, certified by ENERGYSTAR. Use Energy Guides - yellow and black labels provided on new appliances - to compare energy usage of comparable appliance models.

Energy: Install a smart thermostat so you can regulate your home's temperature and reduce energy use from your phone. Consider installing on-site renewable power sources or invest in alternative or renewable energy through your local power company. If you are considering an electric vehicle, install a 240V electric vehicle home charging station.

Insulation/Windows: Most jurisdictions require double-glazed windows and good insulation, which can save you 10-50% on heating and cooling bills. Save more by installing floor insulation and making sure your HVAC ducts and hot water pipes are insulated to reduce energy losses where you can't see them.

Landscaping: Incorporate native plant species, which are more likely to thrive. Consider going green by composting or home gardening, which reduces food waste going to the landfill and provides you with healthy foods grown at home.

Recycling/Waste: When setting up trash pick-up, ask about curbside recycling options or use county convenience centers. Recycling creates jobs and conserves resources. Consider using recycled or upcycled materials in your home like tile made from recycled glass or salvaged wood.

Water: Water-efficient plumbing fixtures provide ongoing savings and water conservation.

The content of this brochure, particularly estimated savings, is drawn primarily from *Shift Your Habit* by Elizabeth Rogers. This brochure provides a range of recommendations for conserving resources, saving money, and supporting sustainability through daily choices.

Contact Us

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For additional information and recommendations, see www.tn.gov/environment/srh



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Sustainability at Home:
Conserve Resources, Save Money

What can *you* do?



Water

Conserve earth's most precious resource — water. About 70% of the earth's surface is covered in water, but less than 1% is available for human use.

Conserve:

- Only run the washer and dishwasher for full loads, on cold. *Save over \$150/year.*
- Reduce the time you shower by just four minutes. *Save almost 4,000 gallons of water and about \$100/year.*
- Turn off the water while shaving and brushing your teeth. *Save about \$45/year.*
- Wash bathroom towels just once or twice a week, instead of after every use. You're clean after you shower, so your towel just needs to be hung up to dry. Washing towels just once a week can conserve water, energy, detergent, and extend the life of your washer and dryer. *Save about \$100/year.*

Upgrade:

- Upgrade faucets and shower heads with low-flow fixtures. *Save more than 6,000 gallons of water and about \$20/year per household.*
- Exchange your leaky toilet with a high efficiency model. *Save \$70/year per toilet on water costs and you may qualify for local incentives of up to \$150 for replacement – netting you a free toilet and ongoing annual savings.*
- Install rain barrels to catch water from your gutters, and use to water outdoor plants and gardens. *Save potable water!*

Energy & Transportation

Reduce your carbon footprint by making smart choices in personal transportation, appliance purchases, and energy consumption.

Conserve:

- Turn off lights when you leave a room. *Save \$35/year.*
- Check your windows and doors for airtightness; caulk or re-caulk and replace old weather stripping to reduce energy loss. *Save on your energy bill and extend the life of your HVAC.*
- Carpool with others or utilize public transportation to reduce the impact of each ride you take in the car. *This saves money on gas and reduces total pollution emitted by vehicles.*
- Consider fuel economy, fuel source, and efficiency when choosing transportation options. *Reducing use of petroleum products saves money and minimizes environmental impacts of transportation. See fuelconomy.gov for information on alternative fuels and fuel economy.*

Upgrade:

- Swap incandescent bulbs for LEDs or CFLs. *Save over \$100/year in energy costs and replace your light bulbs less often.*
- Use shades and blinds that are light colored with a tight weave to reflect light. *Opening shades and blinds to take advantage of natural light can save about \$100/year in energy costs. Opening blinds in winter can warm your home, and keeping shades closed in summer keeps your home cool.*
- Purchase new air filters every three months. *Save about \$80/year in energy costs, extend the life of your unit, and increase your home's air quality.*
- Install a power strip for your chargers and large electronics like baby monitors, mobile devices, computers, and televisions. *Turn off the power strip when devices are not being used to eliminate the ongoing "energy draw-down" of those devices.*
- Visit www.2escore.com to connect with an energy upgrade contractor certified by the Tennessee Valley Authority. *After a free home inspection, eScore contractors can work with you to perform energy upgrades that will conserve electricity and save you money.*



Food & Waste

Don't toss food; ~17% of Tennesseans are food insecure, but 40% of our food goes uneaten.

Conserve:

- Meal plan and use leftovers. *Save about \$10/week or \$520/year and reduce food waste.*
- Pack waste-free lunches: use a thermos and reusable containers instead of disposable containers and individually wrapped snacks. *Save up to \$500/year for each daily lunch taker.*
- Donate uneaten produce and unopened packaged food to local food banks. *Save food from going to the landfill and help those in need!*
- Use reusable dish towels and napkins instead of paper towels. *Homes using 2 rolls of paper towels a week save about \$180/year and reduce waste.*
- Use a faucet or pitcher filter and a refillable water bottle instead of buying disposable water bottles. *Save \$500/year and keep 30 lbs of plastic waste out of the landfill, assuming you spend \$10/week on bottled water.*

Upgrade:

- Compost food waste instead of trashing it. *Save \$20/year on artificial fertilizer, reduce excessive nutrients that make their way into water, and keep > 500 lbs/year per household out of the landfill. You may lower your waste bill, too! If you don't want to manage your own compost, a local company may pick it up at an average of \$35/month and return it to you for use as a fertilizer or soil amendment.*