



**E-Conservation**  
power to control what you spend

# Energy Efficiency Advisor

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

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EXTENSION  
Partnership. Power. Growing Solutions.

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## Give Your Home A Rest During Summer Trips



Having officially reached July means that summer is in full-force. If you're like most Americans, you may be planning a trip to visit family, explore the state or country, relax on the beach, or perhaps all three!

If you and your family will be away from home for a while, make certain your home isn't using any unnecessary energy. Although small amounts will always be needed (for example, powering your refrigerator), you can take steps to ensure that energy usage is minimized while you are away. Use the checklist below to prevent your utility bill from taking a hit while you and your family are on vacation:

- Adjust your air conditioning (AC) thermostat so that the temperature is at a higher but reasonable degree. Remember, your AC does more than cool the air, it also dehumidifies. You don't want to turn it off completely, but you can turn it up a few degrees.
- Turn off ceiling fans. Remember, they cool people and not rooms.
- Close all blinds and curtains to prevent natural light from warming the home.
- If you will be gone for a significant period of time, turn your water heater down or to a vacation setting.
- Put lights on a timer. This will make it look like you are still at home, but also prevent the constant drain of energy by leaving lights on 24 hours a day.
- Unplug all appliances that use power in "standby modes", including televisions, computers and cable boxes. "Standby modes" can account for as much as 5 to 10 percent of your residential energy usage.

## In This Month's Issue:

Give Your Home A Rest

National Park and  
Recreation Month

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A Contractor

Marketing Green Homes

Use ResiSpeak Like A Pro!


## Join In On the Social Media Buzz!

Like what you're seeing in this newsletter? Then you'll like following us on social media even more as it provides the quickest Home Energy program updates, such as workshop announcements, new online resources, and interesting energy news.

 [Facebook](#)

 [Twitter](#)

 [Pinterest](#)

 [YouTube](#)

Also be sure to visit  
our [website!](#)

## Interesting Energy Reads

Recent content featured on  
Home Energy social media  
channels:

- On a non-residential energy note, be sure to check your tire pressure if you're driving to your destination. Having your tires properly inflated can raise your gas mileage up to 5 percent.

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## Go Out and Play in July!

This month marks National Park and Recreation Month, so it is a great time to explore your local park! Doing so gives you an opportunity to not only unwind from everyday stress, but also to practice healthy habits by incorporating fresh air and exercise in your day.



If you're new to the park scene or looking for ideas to make your trip more exciting, see our suggestions below:

1. Instead of taking your car, consider biking to the park for a good exercise option. Just make sure the route you take is bicycle-friendly!
2. The more the merrier when it comes to enjoying a park! Research online to see what kind of groups meet up at the park.
3. Don't stick to just one park, mix it up! Each park is unique and can offer a variety of new activities for you to try out.
4. Remember that going to the park is a great energy conservation strategy too! It saves from using electricity in the home and encourages youth and adults to adopt outdoor hobbies.

See the National Recreation and Park Association [website](#) for more on this month's theme.

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## A Guide to Hiring A Contractor



There are many things you can do to improve your home, but some tasks are better left to professionals. This is especially the case for tasks such as performing a blower door tests, inspecting crawlspaces, and assessing ducts for leaks.

Our website contains [helpful resources](#) for making decisions on picking the right contractor for the job. Below are a few suggestions featured from the resources on our site:

[Making All the Benefits of Multifamily Retrofits Count](#)

[Green Prisons: Energy Retrofits Deliver Value Beyond Energy Savings](#)

[Changing Minds to Change Lightbulbs \(Page 48 of Carolina Country\)](#)

[College Conference Joins As Official Partner of Green Sports Alliance](#)

[Can Offshore Wind Go From Eyesore to Power Player?](#)

## Make Sure You're Receiving the Energy Efficiency Advisor!

Receiving this e-newsletter from somebody else? Make sure you're on our recipient list so you can directly receive our e-newsletter along with other important Home Energy program updates!

If you would like to start receiving the *Energy Efficiency Advisor*, please send a request to [sdkirby@ncsu.edu](mailto:sdkirby@ncsu.edu)

"I am excited that I have ResiSpeak to allow me to review my utility data each month. It keeps us aware of how well we are using our resources."

Ruth Bryan,  
Home Assessment and  
Energy Retrofit Program  
participant,  
Raleigh, N.C.

- We recommend that you contact at least three professionals before deciding which one to go with.
- Talk with past clients of each professional for opinions on not only quality of work but also customer service. Home maintenance is not something to be taken lightly as you will want top-quality professionals to ensure your home is as comfortable and safe as possible.
- Perform your own mini-assessment and then ensure with your professional that his/her team will be able to address your concerns.
- While researching, ensure that your professional is properly licensed and certified. Having these credentials means that the auditor or contractor has had specialized training and/or has met standards set by the state or other certifying agency. Some such groups include Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) and the Building Performance Institute, Inc. (BPI). General contractors can be found through the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors.

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## Social Media Buzz: DOE Marketing Green Homes

Ever worry that if you install energy efficiency projects in your home, you might not see that the value is being appropriately reflected in the real estate market? The Department of Energy (DOE) plans to change that.



A recent Washington Post article reports that the DOE recently announced a program that will work towards spreading energy efficiency information throughout the real estate market. The DOE plans on doing this by partnering with groups who use this information and working with homeowners to determine actual costs of living in a home.

To read the entire article, click [here](#) and be sure to follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for more energy-related stories like this one. You can also read the [DOE Press release](#).

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## Use ResiSpeak Like A Pro!



Are you signed up for our energy assessment and retrofit program but having trouble using our utility data application ResiSpeak? Trying to figure out how to get properly registered or how to determine your energy usage? Our website has [useful resources](#) on how

you can get the most out of ResiSpeak experience so you know exactly how much energy you're saving!

See the [ResiSpeak guide page](#) on our website for helpful materials such as an online tutorial, frequently asked questions and more. Any other questions about the application can be submitted to the Home Energy program director [sarah\\_kirby@ncsu.edu](mailto:sarah_kirby@ncsu.edu)

Home Energy Program - <http://energy.ces.ncsu.edu/>