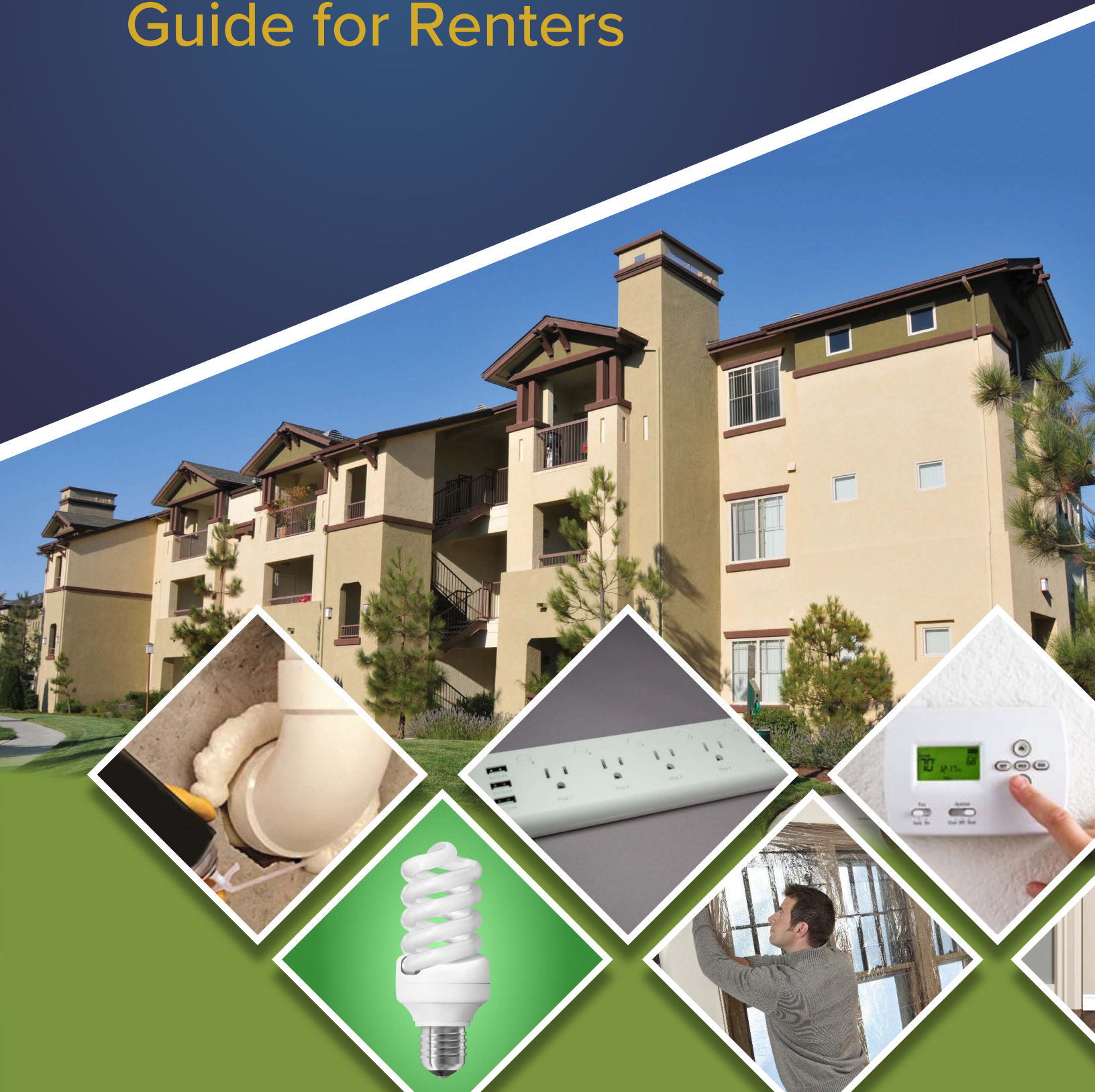


# UTAH'S

## Energy Efficiency Guide for Renters



UTAH OFFICE OF  
ENERGY DEVELOPMENT



# About this Guide

This Guide was authored by Utah Clean Energy in collaboration with the Utah Governor's Office of Energy Development (OED).



Energy efficiency means using less energy to do the same things - from lighting your home, to keeping your home's temperature comfortable.



Approximately one-third of Utahns are renters and want to be comfortable in their homes while keeping utility bills low. But, renters may face challenges with implementing energy efficient actions because they don't own their home or apartment. As a renter, it may seem like your energy options are limited when it comes to improving your home or apartment, but there is a lot you can do!

While significant property changes like retrofits can only be done by your landlord, there are plenty of actions you can take to lower your energy bills, reduce your environmental footprint, and improve our air quality. This guide outlines these actions and provides additional tips and local resources to help you make your home or apartment more energy efficient.

*Disclaimers: Consult your lease and talk with your landlord before implementing any energy efficiency improvements to make sure you don't break the conditions of your rental agreement. References are provided for education purposes only. Inclusion of private websites or products does not imply endorsement of a specific product or company.*

# Energy-saving Actions for Renters

Each action is marked with symbols to demonstrate how easy it is to install and the potential energy savings.

●○○ Easy   ●●○ Medium   ●●● Hard  
\$\$\$ Small   \$\$\$ Medium   \$\$\$ Large

Ease of installation and potential energy savings were developed by Utah Clean Energy and Community Climate Solutions during the SCPW Challenge.

## LIGHTING & HOUSEHOLD DEVICES

**Swap your current or replace old light bulbs with LEDs.** ●○○ \$\$\$

Each bulb replaced can save you up to [\\$12 per year](#). Check out the kelvin rating of LEDs to find the lighting that you prefer. Bulbs emitting a warm light have a rating of 2700K, while those emitting a cooler, white light have a rating of 4000K+.

**Turn devices, such as gaming systems, off when not in use.** ●○○ \$\$\$

This easy action can save [\\$70 per year](#). Turn off the TV and other entertainment devices when not in use and post a note to help you remember.

**Use smart power strips.** ●○○ \$\$\$

Many appliances, cable boxes, gaming systems, and other devices use energy whenever they're plugged in, even if they're not being used. Smart power strips reduce electricity use by automatically shutting off power to these devices. This can save up to [\\$50 annually](#). **Tip:** Calculate how much money you're losing to [vampire loads](#)<sup>1</sup> around your home.



1. Electric power consumed by appliances while they are switched off or in standby mode.

## HEATING & COOLING

### Insulate your water heater tank with a water heater blanket. ●●○ \$\$\$

It costs about \$30 to insulate a water heater tank. This can lower your annual heating expenses by seven to 16 percent. Check out this [step-by-step guide](#) from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

### Insulate accessible hot water pipes. ●●○ \$\$\$

This can help heat up your water faster and cut an extra three to four percent off your annual heating expenses. To learn more, [read this guide](#) from the DOE.

### Ditch the space heater. Bundle up and reduce drafts in your home instead. ●○○ \$\$\$

If you regularly use an electric space heater during colder months, you could be running your energy bill up to \$140 every year! [Calculate your personal usage here](#). Is your home drafty? Check out the “Reduce Air Leaks that Cause Drafts” section below to find ways to better insulate your home.



### If you have access to your water heater, turn the temperature down to 120°F. ●○○ \$\$\$

This action will still produce plenty of hot water and can save you up to [\\$30 annually](#).

### Use an evaporative cooler (also called “swamp” coolers) if one is present in your home or apartment. ●●○ \$\$\$

Evaporative coolers use up to 75 percent less electricity than central air conditioners. **Tip:** Open your windows a little bit when cooling the room in order to allow proper air flow. Check out [this Catalyst magazine article](#) to learn more about evaporative coolers and get started!

### Consider buying a portable evaporative cooler (also called “air coolers”) that can be moved from room to room. ●●○ \$\$\$

The units are great for homes without central air or for those with A/C if you want to avoid high summer electricity bills. Portable air coolers are available for around \$150 at many [home improvement stores](#).

### Turn down your air conditioner and use fans and close curtains on sunny afternoons to stay cool. ●○○ \$\$\$

If you put up medium-colored draperies with white plastic backings in south-facing windows, you can reduce the amount of solar energy that your home absorbs in the summer [by 33 percent](#).

### Install a programmable thermostat. ●●○ \$\$\$

You can save up to [\\$50 a year](#) on utility bills by scheduling your thermostat for different seasons. *While you're at home:* in the winter set your thermostat to 68°F and in the summer set it to 78°F. *While you're away:* Set your thermostat seven to 10°F lower in the winter and higher in the summer.



### Replace your air filter regularly. ●○○ \$\$\$

In addition to prolonging the life of your heating and cooling systems, this action supports healthier air flow throughout your home. **Tip:** Change your furnace filter every three months. If you live in a region prone to poor air quality, you should change it monthly.

### Keep areas around vents or baseboard heaters clear of furniture or items that may block air flow. ●○○ \$\$\$

This action will help keep the heating and cooling system(s) running more efficiently and help it last longer.

## REDUCE AIR LEAKS THAT CAUSE DRAFTS

These renter-friendly actions all improve the comfort of your home and reduce energy bills, though the savings will vary. Most of the materials noted here are easy to find at your local hardware store, and all can be purchased online.

**Tip #1:** Look for air leaks during cold months when heat inside the home is naturally drawn to the cold outdoors. A simple way to find air leaks is to hold your hand near suspected air leaks and feel for air movement, or hold a burning stick of incense near possible gaps and watch the direction the smoke blows.

**Tip #2:** Schedule a [ThermWise In-Home Energy Plan](#), which includes a “blower-door test” to find air leaks.

**Tip #3:** Watch OED’s latest [energy efficiency video](#) to learn more tips and tricks.

### Ensure your doors have proper weather stripping. ●●○ \$\$\$

If you see light or feel air flowing through the space between the door and the door frame, or around windows, it needs new weather stripping. Make sure to install weather stripping that is thick enough to completely fill the gap.

### Seal air leaks with caulk or spray foam. ●●○ \$\$\$

Examine exterior walls and look for gaps around electrical wiring or plumbing pipes that go through the wall. Check out [this guide](#) on how to properly seal air leaks around your home.



### Use door draft blockers. ●○○ \$\$\$

Door draft blockers prevent air from flowing in to or out of your home. Alternatively, you can place a rolled-up towel at the foot of an exterior door.



### If you live in a home with a fireplace, install a chimney/fireplace plug to keep heat in your home during the winter. ●○○ \$\$\$

It’s easy to install and can be removed if you want to build a fire. Watch [this video](#) for a demonstration about how to install a chimney/fireplace plug. *Inform your landlord of any energy efficiency improvements that may not be visible and may pose a hazard to a future tenant.*

### Install foam gaskets behind light switches and outlet boxes on exterior walls. ●○○ \$\$\$

Check out [this video](#) on the quick installation process.



**Use window film on drafty single-pane windows in winter.** ●○○ \$\$\$

Check out [this guide](#) on how to properly install window film.



## LAUNDRY

**Wash clothes in cold water.** ●○○ \$\$\$

Washing clothes in cold water not only saves energy, it also helps your clothes last longer. By making this easy switch, you can save over \$40 annually with an electric water heater or [over \\$30 annually](#) with a gas water heater.

**Air dry laundry.** ●○○ \$\$\$

This action reduces wear on clothing, keeping your clothes looking newer and also saves you money on your energy bill!

**Wash and dry full loads.** ●○○ \$\$\$

This reduces the number of loads you wash and dry, reducing both energy and utility expenses.

**Clean out the dryer lint trap after every load.** ●○○ \$\$\$

Cleaning out the lint trap to your dryer dries laundry faster and more efficiently. It also minimizes a fire hazard!

**Avoid over-drying laundry by setting the timer for shorter drying cycles.** ●○○ \$\$\$

Running your dryer an extra 15 minutes per load can cost you an extra [\\$30 annually](#), not to mention time.

## Utility Incentives/ Rebates for Renters

Utah has utility-sponsored energy efficiency incentive programs that you can take advantage of to conserve energy and save money!

**Rocky Mountain Power's Wattsmart program**

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[www.wattsmart.com](http://www.wattsmart.com)

Rocky Mountain Power customers can submit a request to have a [FREE "Wattsmart Starter Kit"](#) delivered to your home. The kit includes four LED light bulbs and other small energy-saving measures.

**Dominion Energy's ThermWise program**

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[www.thermwise.com](http://www.thermwise.com)

Dominion Energy customers can complete a Mail-In Home Energy Plan yourself or schedule a time for a ThermWise Expert to come to your home and complete an [In-Home Energy Plan](#) for only \$25.

## State and Local Government Programs for Low-income Renters

If your household income is at/below 200 percent of the federal poverty line, you may be eligible for home safety and efficiency improvements through the State of Utah's [Weatherization Assistance Program](#).

If your household income is at/below 150 percent of the federal poverty line, you may be eligible for help paying your utility bills through the State of Utah's [Home Energy Assistance Target \(HEAT\) program](#).



## Landlords: Actions, Programs, and Best Practices for home or building owners.

Are there energy efficiency upgrades you want to make to your home but can't? Talk to your landlord about the following programs that incentivize them to make these upgrades.

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

Upgrading appliances will not only improve the value of your property, but also attract more potential renters.

#### Replace existing light bulbs with LEDs.

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Upgrading lighting with LEDs will mean replacing light bulbs less frequently since they are rated to last 10 to 15 years. Bulbs emitting a warm light have a rating of 2700K, while those emitting a cooler, white light have a rating of 4000K.

#### Install an evaporative cooler (also called “swamp” coolers).

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Evaporative coolers use up to 75% less electricity than central air conditioning. Look into rebates or incentive programs offered by your local electric utility on evaporative coolers. Check out this [Catalyst magazine article](#) to learn more about evaporative coolers!

#### Install a programmable thermostat.

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By installing a programmable thermostat, your tenants can better control temperature settings based on the time of day. This action can save [15 percent](#) on annual heating and cooling costs.

#### Upgrade dryers with Energy Star rated appliances.

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Newer dryers have a moisture-control sensor that notifies the dryer to shut off when the clothes are actually dry. This helps avoid over-drying clothes, which can save [20 percent](#) or more on this energy-intensive home appliance!

## MAINTAINING YOUR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

#### Replace the air filter regularly.

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In addition to prolonging the life of your heating and cooling systems, this action will also maintain healthier indoor air quality for your tenants. Change the furnace filter every three months. If you live in a region prone to poor air quality, you should change it monthly.

#### Insulate your water-heater tank with a water-heater blanket.

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This can reduce annual heating expenses by seven to 16 percent. The upfront cost is around \$30 to insulate a water heater tank. Check out this [step-by-step guide](#) from the DOE.

#### Insulate accessible hot water pipes.

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This can cut an extra [three to four percent off annual heating expenses](#).

#### Turn the temperature of the water heater down to 120°F.

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This will avoid dangerously scalding hot water and can [save \\$10 annually](#).

## INSULATE AND REDUCE AIR LEAKAGE

As a landlord, there are many opportunities that increase your property's attractiveness to potential renters, protect your investment over time, and save both you and your tenant money on heating and cooling costs. Improving the insulation and reducing air leakage of a property provides greater comfort year round. Proper insulation will reduce the energy needed for heating in winter and cooling in summer, saving money on energy-related expenses.

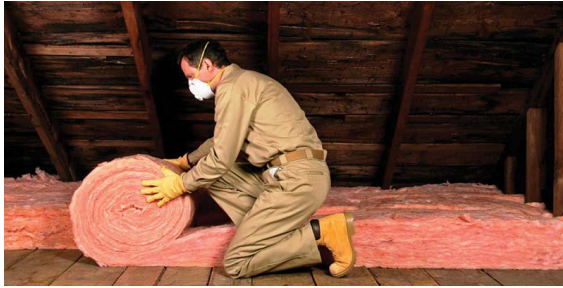
#### Seal air leaks with caulk or spray foam.

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Check out [this guide](#) on how to seal air leaks.

### Weatherize and insulate the attic, if applicable. ●●● \$\$\$

This can deliver cut annual heating costs by up to [30 percent](#).



### Insulate floors and exterior walls. ●●● \$\$\$

●●● \$\$\$

This can cut annual heating and cooling costs by up to [20 percent](#).

### Ensure your doors have proper weather stripping. ●●○ \$\$\$

Do you see light through the space between the door and the door frame? If you put your hand close to that space, can you feel cold air flow through? If so, you need some new weather stripping to stop it!

### Replace any drafty single-pane windows with double-pane windows. ●●○ \$\$\$

Replacing drafty windows can save [20 percent](#) or more on annual heating and cooling costs.

### Install foam gaskets behind light switches and outlet boxes on exterior walls to stop air leakage. ●○○ \$\$\$

Check out [this video](#) on the installation process.



## UTILITY AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS FOR LANDLORDS

Consider a whole-building retrofit for a multifamily building. Both of Utah's largest utilities offer incentives for this:

- [Rocky Mountain Power Incentives](#)
- [Dominion Energy Incentives](#)

Replace appliances with ENERGY STAR options and check out rebates and incentives offered through [Rocky Mountain Power](#) and [Dominion Energy](#).

Schedule an [In-Home Energy Plan](#) through ThermWise and have an Energy Expert complete a home energy evaluation for only \$25.

Get financing for multifamily building energy upgrades through [Utah's C-PACE program](#).

## BEST PRACTICES FOR LANDLORDS

### Energy Aligned Leases

"Split-incentive" issues between renters and landlords can block landlords from making efficiency upgrades as well as discourage renters from conserving energy. These issues arise when those paying the utility bills are different from those responsible for making capital investments on the property.

One way to address the split-incentive issue can be to incorporate language into a lease agreement stating that the tenant will agree to an increase to the monthly rent that is equal to the energy savings that result from energy efficiency improvements. Through this win-win model the rent increase is offset by the utility cost savings.

### Finding a good contractor

Worried about finding a good contractor? For guidance, check out this [Federal Trade Commission resource](#) detailing how to go about finding and hiring one that fits your needs.



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