

## Conserve energy

### **WHAT: Reduce energy use at church, at home and at work**

Science tells us that human use of fossil fuels is accelerating the warming of the earth's climate. This global warming threatens ecosystems and human settlements on many levels. By burning coal for electricity we release mercury, a potent neurotoxin, into the air. Particulate matter and pollutants from fossil fuels increase the incidence and severity of respiratory problems such as asthma. Ecosystems and people's livelihoods are threatened by oil and gas drilling and exploration. Reducing our use of energy is one of the most important things we can do to reduce our footprint on God's creation.

### **WHY: Our daily use of energy has great impacts on God's creation.**

**“As servants of the Truth, the truth we discern about present energy choices and our responsibility as Americans and Presbyterians can be summarized with deceptive simplicity. The era of cheap and abundant energy is over.”**  
*Speaking Truth to Power* Presbyterian Church USA, 1981.

Energy is one of God's gifts to be thoughtfully used to enhance the quality of life for all. We have seen energy as a moral issue for many years. We honor the Creator by making better choices around energy in our homes, in our congregation and at work. We support a more secure world and help create sustainable jobs by advocating for sound energy policies.

### **HOW: Here are some things you can do in your church, at your home or where you work:**

- Have an energy use audit of your building
- Insulate walls, roofs and crawl spaces
- Install energy-efficient windows
- Install a solar water heating system
- Turn off lights, TV, computers when not in use
- Install motion detectors to control lighting
- Turn water heater down to 125 to 130 degrees F
- Wrap water heater with a heater blanket
- Install water-saving faucet aerators and shower heads to save on hot water use
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs
- Tune up heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems so they run as efficiently as possible
- When replacing older appliances and furnaces, use newer energy-efficient models
- Promote and use public transportation; set up a transit information corner
- Facilitate car pooling to church, to meetings and to work
- Promote/do more teleworking (working at home using computers and telephones for communication)
- Recycle as much as possible; make it easier for others to recycle
- Purchase locally produced goods and foodstuffs to reduce energy use for transportation

#### **Benefits of saving energy**

<b>Planetary Benefits</b>	<b>Church/Personal Benefits</b>
Reduced resource use	Money savings
Reduced habitat loss	Cash incentives
Less air pollution	Tax rebates
Less water pollution	Healthier surroundings
Reduced global warming	Increased comfort



For more information, contact Jenny Holmes  
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**Provided by the Eco-Justice Team of the Congregational Support Network  
 Presbytery of the Cascades**

## *Caring for Creation: Good Earthkeeping Idea #6 – Conserve Energy*

### **Support and information resources**

**American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy.** <http://aceee.org>

**American Solar Energy Association.** [www.ases.org](http://www.ases.org)

**American Wind Energy Association.** [www.awea.org](http://www.awea.org)

**Avista Utilities.** Business and home energy analyses; rebates and energy efficiency incentives. 1-800-227-9187.  
[www.avistautilities.com](http://www.avistautilities.com)

**Bonneville Environmental Foundation.** [www.b-e-f.org](http://www.b-e-f.org)

**Bonneville Power Administration.** Energy efficiency programs, tips, education. [www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/](http://www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/)

**Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network, U.S. Department of Energy.** [www.eren.doe.gov](http://www.eren.doe.gov)

**Energy Ideas.** News and resources related to energy efficiency projects and programs in the Pacific Northwest.  
[www.energyideas.org](http://www.energyideas.org)

**Energy Trust of Oregon.** This is an independent, public purpose organization dedicated to sustainable energy efficiency and renewable energy generation. It is a top resource for congregations, businesses and households providing energy efficiency programs and renewable energy programs to customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power and Light, Cascade Natural Gas and NW Natural. It provides energy audits for homes, businesses and congregations. 1-866-ENTRUST. [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org)

**Energy Star.** A government-backed program helping businesses and individuals protect the environment through superior energy efficiency products and home and business improvement. 1-(888) STAR YES, (503) 595-4490.  
<http://www.energystar.gov>

**Interfaith Climate Change Network.** [www.protectingcreation.org](http://www.protectingcreation.org)

**NW Natural.** Portland (503) 220-2360. Outside Portland 1-800-422-4012 x2361.

**Oregon Department of Energy.** Information about renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy loan program and Oregon's energy tax credit programs. 1-800-221-8035. [www.energy.state.or.us](http://www.energy.state.or.us)

**Oregon Interfaith Power and Light.** Empowers congregations and their members to conserve energy and invest in clean renewable energy; also offers educational and consulting services, the Energy Pledge and information resources.  
[www.emoregon.org/oregon\\_interfaith\\_power\\_and\\_light.htm](http://www.emoregon.org/oregon_interfaith_power_and_light.htm)

For California go to [www.interfaithpower.org](http://www.interfaithpower.org).

For Washington go to [www.gwipl.org](http://www.gwipl.org)

**PacificCorp.** [www.pacificcorp.com](http://www.pacificcorp.com)

**Portland General Electric.** [www.portlandgeneral.com](http://www.portlandgeneral.com)

**Renewable Northwest Project.** [www.rnp.org](http://www.rnp.org)

**Salem Electric.** (503) 362-3601 [www.salemelectric.com/services/index.aspx](http://www.salemelectric.com/services/index.aspx)

### **Case Study: First Medford Saves Energy, Money and God's Creation**

In 2004 First Presbyterian Church of Medford faced the expensive challenge of replacing its central air conditioning system and a portion of its heating system. Since its buildings are well used by both community groups and the congregation, the prospect of saving money on monthly utility bills as was a strong reason not to delay the \$167,000 project.

Reducing energy use not only benefits a congregation's finances, but it is a much cheaper "source" of energy than building new power plants. Also, improving energy efficiency also reduces the amount of carbon dioxide, the major global warming gas, emitted into the atmosphere. Because of energy efficiency benefits everyone, are public funds available to help businesses, congregations and individuals undertake energy saving projects that they might otherwise delay because of up front costs. Most energy efficiency projects pay for themselves in energy savings from one to five years. In the case of First Church, members generously contributed gifts and personal loans to pay for much of the project. The rest of the funds came from two grants totaling \$70,000.00.

The first grant came through the [Oregon Department of Energy Business Tax Credit Program](#). In order to receive this grant the church secured Umpqua Bank as its [Pass-Through Business Partner](#). In return for giving the church a grant of \$35,000.00, bank receives a 5-year tax credit from the State of Oregon. It's second of \$35,000.00 came from the [Energy Trust](#), a private not-for-profit organization. This second incentive is available only to customers of PGE, Pacific Power, Northwest Natural, and Cascade Natural Gas. Contact your local utility to see what incentives they offer. To learn more about First Presbyterian's experience using incentives: Rev. Joyce DeGraff (541) 779-1711 (ext 102)

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