



**Hands On**  
NETWORK

## **Project: Operation Energy Save**

Operation Energy Save was created for individuals and community groups to help friends, family members and neighbors conserve energy by sharing a checklist of tips that have been proven to reduce energy costs.

### **Service Project Instructions**

1. Choose three friends and neighbors you plan to assist. (Of course you can help as many people as you like, but three is a great starting point.)
2. Schedule a quick energy-saving walk-through of their home(s) and use the Lend-A-Hand Checklist.
3. Leave a copy of the “Operation Energy Save: Easy Tips for Everyday Living” tip sheet so that they have a list of more ways to save on energy costs every day. You can access this piece here: <http://www.createthegood.org/sites/default/files/Energy%20Save%20Group%20FINAL%2010-14-09.pdf>
4. Remember, you can always print more copies,; The files can be found here: <http://AARP.org/createthegood/diy-toolkits>
5. Visit [AARP.org/CreateTheGood](http://AARP.org/CreateTheGood) to let us know how this project worked for you and offer suggestions for future ideas.

#### **Lend-A-Hand Checklist**

As you know, energy costs continue to rise - but you can do something to help others. Operation Energy Save is designed to assist you in helping those you care about save money and stay warm. Share this checklist with friends, family members and neighbors.

1. Close the heat vents and the doors in rooms that are not being used.
2. Make sure that all windows are fully closed. Lock double-hung windows to minimize drafts coming through older windows.
3. Shut fireplace dampers to prevent heated air from going up the chimney when

you are not using the fireplace. Be sure all that embers are extinguished.

4. Clean registers, baseboard heaters and radiators, and be sure that they are not blocked by curtains, furniture or carpeting.
5. Lower the temperature on the water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Reducing the temperature by 20 degrees can save you nearly \$50 a year.
6. Replace or clean furnace air filters. A clogged, dirty filter forces your furnace to work harder. A clean filter can save you 10 percent on your bill.
7. Remove window air conditioning units when the summer is over to prevent heat from escaping. If the unit can't be moved, cover it to prevent drafts. Professional assistance may be required to perform this task.
8. Use expanding foam (available in spray cans) to seal the gaps around pipes that connect to the house from the outside.
9. Install weather stripping or caulk around doors and windows, and place foam gaskets behind outlet plate covers on exterior walls. If there is a large gap at the bottom of an exterior door, install a door sweep.
10. Seal and insulate ducts and joints with a non-hardening sealant. Ducts running through unfinished spaces (attics, crawl spaces and garages) that are not properly sealed and insulated can add 25 percent to your home's heating bill. Professional assistance may be required to perform this task.

Thank you for making a difference in your community.

## Additional Resources

Learn more about how to seal and insulate your home by visiting

[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/insulation\\_sealing.html](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/insulation_sealing.html).

Learn more about how to conduct an energy audit by visiting

[http://www.energysavers.gov/your\\_home/energy\\_audits/index.cfm/mytopic=11160](http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/energy_audits/index.cfm/mytopic=11160)

Please visit [AARP.org/CreateTheGood](http://AARP.org/CreateTheGood) to discover more ways AARP can help you give back and to tell us about your experience with Operation Energy Save.

## Reflection

After your volunteer project, it is important to reflect on the experience – to think about what you did, what you learned from it and the impact it had. Here are some suggested activities:

- Tell your family and friends about something you learned and how you will continue to help others.
- Draw a picture, write a poem or create a jingle about the service activity.
- Write about your experience on your blog, Facebook account, or Twitter.
- If you're working with a group of volunteers to do this project, lead a group discussion with questions such as:
  - Why did you volunteer today?
  - What did you learn about energy efficiency and helping the community?
  - What is one thing you will remember most about this service activity?
  - How can you continue to make a difference in our community?