



ECU

**SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL
ENGINEERING**

Energy Savings for Vacant Homes

How to best maintain reasonable energy consumption for an empty home

Homes have ongoing energy needs

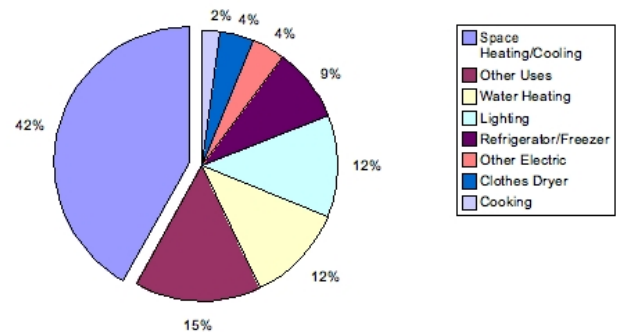
In order to maintain a home that's left empty from time to time throughout the year, measures must be taken to not leave an opportunity for eventual damage. Also, knowing what to turn off, what to keep on, and what to adjust will optimize your energy usage.

The impact of air conditioning

Most homes are left vacant during the summer months, perhaps the biggest energy consumer during that time is the air conditioner. To conserve energy, the thermostat on the air conditioner should be set to a higher temperature to reduce energy consumption. If the unit were to be turned completely off, there would be no way to regulate humidity in the house and mold would quickly grow. Mold and mildew can grow nearly anywhere if the humidity is 70% or higher. Furthermore, if the temperature of the house rises, another big energy consumer, the refrigerator, will work harder to keep its contents cold.

Where Does the Energy Go in a Typical Home?

Energy Information Administration, Annual Energy Outlook 2004



As is can be seen in the graph, HVAC (42%) and water heaters (12%) account for the most energy consumed in a home.

Energy saving tips to consider:

- Use power strips to avoid electronics using standby power
- Set thermostat to reasonable temperature (usually no more than 80 degrees)
- Turn off water heater
- Utilize programmable thermostats
- Turn down thermostat on hot tub (if applicable)
- Close all curtains and blinds to prevent home from being heated by the sun
- Make sure all windows and exterior doors are shut and have good seals



Resources

www.energystar.gov
www.lceec.net

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