



COLD CLIMATE HOUSING RESEARCH CENTER

CCHRC

1000 Fairbanks St.
P.O. Box 82489
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708
(907) 457-3454
(907) 457-3456 Fax
www.cchrc.org

ENERGY FOCUS

Energy Savings Pays

By John Davies

Cold Climate Housing Research Center

Is your head swimming with all the talk about energy costs, weatherization, and energy rebates? Are you looking for a good, comprehensive source of information that explains the basics of energy use in your home and what steps you can take to save energy? If so, I recommend the ***Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings*** published by New Society Publishers for the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE).

You can use this guide in a number of different ways to help save energy. It will help you (1) consider ways to reduce your heating bills, for example by improving insulation levels or replacing windows, (2) evaluate whether replacing existing appliances such as refrigerators and electric hot water heaters can help save on your electric bill, (3) reduce energy use by operating existing appliances more wisely— such as maintaining the temperature of refrigerators and freezers at optimal levels and using the dishwasher’s energy saver setting, (4) decide whether you can reduce your energy costs by replacing major systems such as your boiler or furnace, (5) understand and evaluate the recommendations that an energy rater may have made for your house, and (6) calculate reductions in your carbon footprint from all of the steps you choose to take.

The book begins with a general discussion of the environmental impacts of energy use (and waste) in our homes and the monetary savings possible by reducing these impacts. The authors then present individual chapters on the building envelope (insulation, caulking, windows, and doors), ventilation, heating and cooling systems, water heating, food storage and cooking, dishwashing, laundry, lighting, home electronics, and other energy uses in the home. Each of these chapters has good introductions to how the different systems in our houses work, specific measures that we can take to improve or replace them, and many pointers to other sources of information.

The guide is brimming with informative tables and helpful illustrations. One of the best is the Home Energy Checklist for Action – this is a “best seller” available for free at the PORTAL (Portal on Retrofits, Training and Loans, located on Driveway Street, across from the old train station). The checklist gives some ideas of simple things that you can do **today, this week, this month, and this year.**

You can reference the guide at the Builder’s Resource Library in the Cold Climate Housing Research Center located at 1000 Fairbanks Street. The 9th edition of the *Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings* by Jennifer Thorne Amann, Alex Wilson, and Katie Ackerly is also available for purchase (\$10 - \$18) from the Alaska Building Science Network (<http://www.ABSN.com>), Amazon Books

(<http://www.Amazon.com>), American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (<http://www.aceee.org>), Gulliver's Books (<http://www.gullivers-books.com>), and New Society Publishers (<http://www.newsociety.com>).

John Davies is Research Director at the Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC). Visit CCHRC online at www.cchrc.org or call 457-3454 for more information.