

"\$AVE A BUNDLE" ON UTILITY BILLS

You know there are steps you can take to lower your utility bills. But you probably DON'T realize how quickly your small changes can add up!

Danny Lipford, host of "Today's Homeowner," shared tips on The Early Show.

The average home energy bill runs about \$2,000 a year, according to Danny. He showed how to CUT AS MUCH AS \$925 from that bill! While you may have heard some of his suggestions before, you probably don't realize just how much you can save by following this advice.

He calls his plan ACT: The acronym stands for "Adjust" "Change" "Take Initiative."

ADJUST

This part of the plan is all about making small adjustments in the temperature of your home and your water ... These are the 2 items that comprise the bulk of your utility bills.

* Adjust Thermostat - Save \$150/yr

Almost half of the money you spend on utility goes to heating and cooling costs. Turn thermostat down in winter, up in summer. Every degree you turn the thermostat down in the winter or up in the summer saves 2%-3% on energy bill. Changing it by 4° can save over \$150/year. Lower thermostat when not at home and when asleep at night to save even more.

* Install programmable thermostat - Save \$50-\$100/yr

You can get one of these for around \$60 - \$80 which means it will pay for itself within a year!

* Lower Hot Water Heater - Save \$50/yr

Heating water is the 2nd largest user of energy in the home. Turning the water heater down to 120° can save 7%-11% on water heating bills, up to \$50/year.

CHANGE

This step of Danny's action plan is all about making small changes in your habits around the house.

* Unplug Electronics - Save \$200/yr

You may think about unplugging your TV when you go on vacation, but how about unplugging your phone/i-Pod/blackberry chargers every day? Bet you didn't realize this would save you so much!

* Computer on Standby - Save \$75/yr

Set energy saving options on computers to put on standby when not in use: Computers use 80% less electricity on standby.

* Wash Clothes in Cold Water - Save \$60/yr

TAKE INITIATIVE

Saving money can take a bit of time and effort ... Add the following to your to-do list and watch the savings add up.

* Caulk cracks and weather-strip doors/windows - save \$200/yr

* Install low-flow showerheads - Save \$50/yr

Low-flow showerheads can save up to 10,000 gallons of water a year and \$25-\$50/year in the energy spent heating water.

* Clean dryer filter - Save \$40/yr

A dirty lint filter can make your dryer used up to 30% more energy. Cleaning it regularly can save up to \$40/year.

Looking for another quick way to cut your heating and cooling bill? Danny says many people don't realize they should insulate their light switches and outlets, especially if their home is over 10 years old. No need to insulate those on a home's interior walls; but if the switch or outlet is on one of your home's exterior walls you can likely feel the cold air seeping inside. For literally a few cents you can buy foam gaskets that fit right behind your switch plates. No need to turn off the

electricity to do this. Danny will have some of these pieces of foam on set, and will show us how easy they are to install.

FOR MORE ON THIS, CHECK OUT THIS ARTICLE ON DANNY'S WEBSITE:

<http://www.dannylipford.com/diy-home-improvement/heating-and-cooling/easy-ways-to-save-energy-in-your-home/>