

Housing Programs & Services

NEWSLETTER

25 Ways to keep your home cooler

Information contributed by MSN Money and the Department of Energy's Energy Savers program.

Get the most from your AC

- Open windows and use portable or ceiling fans instead of operating your air conditioner. Make sure your ceiling fan is turned for summer -- you should feel the air blown downward. If you live in a relatively dry climate, a bowl or tray of ice in front of a box fan can cool you as it evaporates.
- Use a fan with your window air conditioner to spread the cool air through your home.
- Change air filters monthly during the summer.
- Use a programmable thermostat with your air conditioner to adjust the setting at night or when no one is home.
- Don't place lamps or TVs near your air conditioning thermostat. The heat from these appliances will cause the air conditioner to run longer.
- Install white window shades, drapes, or blinds to reflect heat away from the house. Close curtains on south- and west-facing windows during the day.
- Install awnings on south-facing windows. Because of the angle of the sun, trees, a trellis, or a fence will best shade west-facing windows. Apply sun-control or other reflective films on south-facing windows.
- Grown on trellises, vines such as ivy or grapevines can shade windows or the whole side of a house. Avoid landscaping with lots of unshaded rock, cement, or asphalt on the south or west sides. It increases the temperature around the house and radiates heat to the house after the sun has set. Deciduous trees planted on the south and west sides will keep your house cool in the summer.



Little things mean a lot

- Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents; they produce the same light at a fifth the energy and heat.
- Air-dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Use a microwave oven instead of oven.
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use. Plug home electronics, such as TVs and VCRs, into power strips, and turn power strips off when equipment is not in use.
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater; 115° is comfortable for most uses.
- Take showers instead of baths to reduce hot water use.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.
- Caulking and weatherstripping will keep cool air in during the summer.

Plan ahead: More costly but effective cooling measures are available as your home undergoes normal upgrades and repairs.

- A 10-year-old air conditioner, for example, is only half as efficient as a new one. A quick check of your air conditioner's efficiency can help you decide whether to call in a service professional. Use a household thermometer to measure the temperature of the discharge air from the register and the temperature of the return air at the return-air grill. (Keep the thermometer in place for five minutes to get a steady temperature.) The difference should be from 14 to 20 degrees, experts say. An air conditioner that's not cooling to those levels could be low on refrigerant or have leaks. A unit cooling more than 20 degrees could have a severe blockage.
- Using light shingles on a new roof can cut the amount of heat the house absorbs. Repainting in a light color, especially south- and west-facing exterior areas, helps as well.

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Notable News

Recycling is beneficial for everyone. Recycling 1) protects and expands U.S. manufacturing jobs; 2) reduces the need for landfilling and incineration; 3) prevents pollution caused by the manufacturing of products from virgin materials; 4) saves energy; 5) decreases emissions of greenhouse gases; 6) conserves natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals; and 7) helps sustain the environment for future generations. (source: EPA)

Try sorting your trash in different bins or bags and take advantage of the multiple outlets for recycling here in the City. There are bins available in the Parks and Recreation complex for paper, plastic, aluminum and metal cans. Have old computers, printers, and other electronic waste? Take them to Dollar Self Storage here in AJ. You can call the City to find out what is accepted at 474-5080.

Calendar

- September 6—Labor Day. City offices are closed.
- October 11—Columbus Day. City offices are closed.

Programs

Rehabilitate Your Home

The City invites homeowners to apply for grant funding through the Arizona Department of Housing to complete housing rehabilitation and replacement for eligible homeowners.

There are currently 15 grants or forgivable loans from \$10,000 to \$60,000 depending upon the homeowners' needs. Such items may include heating, air conditioning, plumbing, roofs, ADA accessibility, code violations and health and safety issues. If repairs to a manufactured home are greater than the value, a replacement may be considered.

Eligible applicants must be single family or manufactured owner occupied homeowners who have owned their home and property for a minimum of 1 year; reside within the City limits; and are at least 62-years old, have a disability or have children under the age of 18 living in the home.

Privacy is a priority, and recipients of the program and information

collected in the application process are held in strict confidentiality.

Funds are distributed on a first come, first served basis. For more information call Heather Patel at (480) 474-2635 or visit our website at <http://www.ajcity.net/rehab>

Annual Paint-a-Thon

Watching paint dry is not exciting, but applying it is! Especially if it's a fresh coat of paint to the exterior of a home for a low-income elderly homeowner in need. Teams are forming for the seventh annual Rock-n-Roll Paint-a-Thon. Families, businesses, churches, schools and social service and civic groups are encouraged to sign-up. Teams consist of 20-25 people and can be a great team building exercise, but individuals are also welcome. The event is held from 7-12 a.m. Saturday, October 23, 2010. Participants must be 14 and older and have parental consent. All participants receive a free t-shirt, water and lunch.

Applications are also available for qualified homeowners who meet the criteria of the program. Questions or volunteer inquiries please contact Heather at (480) 474-2635.

Busy Bee Home Maintenance Tips

Don't be a drip - fix that leak! Leaky faucets can waste thousands of gallons of water each year, like money down the drain. Repair or replace old or damaged fixtures. To check for leaks in your home, first you need to determine whether you're wasting water, then identify the source of the leak.

First, take a look at your water usage during a colder month, such as January or February. If a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, there are serious leaks. Second, check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter changes at all, you probably have a leak. Third, identify toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If any color shows up in the bowl after 15 minutes, you have a leak. (Be sure to flush immediately after the experiment to avoid staining the tank.) Finally, examine faucet gaskets and pipe fittings for any water on the outside of the pipe to check for surface leaks.

Shower power! A full bathtub requires about 70 gallons of water, but taking a five-minute shower saves water by using 10 to 25 gallons. Put a little timer or clock near your shower so you can see how fast you are. Save even more water, and money by installing a water-efficient showerhead.

For tips on how to fix leaks check out the EPA website at http://www.epa.gov/watersense/water_efficiency/howto.html

Bees Wishes



RESOURCES

The Apache Junction Landfill is offering Apache Junction residents another drop off opportunity this August at no cost. Any city resident can take one free load to the Landfill during the week of August 9th to August 14th. Be sure to bring proof of residency (such as a water bill). Also it is recommended that you 1) Contact your current trash provider for curbside bulk trash pickup options, 2) Provide for your own bulk trash pickup at any time. A resident can show proof of residency and their bulk trash can be dumped at the Apache Junction landfill for \$8.50. The Landfill's days and hours of operation are Monday through Saturday from 6:00 am to 4:00 pm. For further information contact the Landfill at (480) 982-7003 or the Public Works Department at (480) 982-1055.

HOUSING PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOALS:

1. Eliminate health and safety hazards in homes;
2. Benefit low to moderate income residents; and
3. Improve neighborhoods and encourage stability.



For proper water saving faucets and shower heads, visit your local hardware store for assistance. They can help you find the perfect match.

Housing Funnies

If you have a question or comment about anything written in this newsletter, please contact:
City of Apache Junction
Housing Division
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
Apache Junction, Arizona 85119
Phone: (480) 474-2635
Fax: (480) 474-5102
TDD: (480) 983-0095
www.ajcity.net
hpatel@ajcity.net