



Turn Up Your Thermostat

Organizer notes:

- Encourage people to save more by turning off their air conditioners altogether, at least when they are not home. Or use the AC only for really humid spells.
- Many households stay comfortable in summer with minimal expense following a routine like this: At night, open windows and use a whole-house fan to draw in cool night air; in the morning, close windows before the air outside warms significantly; close shades and curtains before direct sun hits windows; if it is humid, turn on the air conditioning, set just one degree below the current indoor temperature, and run it for 20-60 minutes. If the house is kept closed, the humidity should remain low, and if it's shaded and well-insulated, it should stay cool enough for comfort.
- Suggest that people set aside savings from reduced electricity usage to invest in insulation, high efficiency appliances, or other future improvements.
- Set up a donation box to collect money for ceiling fans for students, elderly, etc. Ask for volunteers to help install fans.
- Enlist youth in coming up with creative ways to encourage/remind people to decrease air conditioning use. Start a campaign to ask store managers to raise their thermostats in the summertime.
- For extra incentive to participate, set up a raffle. Each household that sets its thermostat to 78 gets a ticket. For each degree over 78, award an extra ticket. Households that forego air conditioning altogether get 10 tickets. Suggested prizes: pool pass, fan, gift card for local hardware store, a Chillow Pillow (<http://www.smarthome.com/3203/Chillow-Sleep-Cool-Without-Cranking-Up-The-AC/p.aspx>)
- Make a bar graph showing how many members report setting thermostat at 78, 79, 80 or higher in the summer time. Display this prominently, to show that this is the new norm! A companion graph showing estimated cost savings may also be inspiring.
- Initiate a reading/discussion group based on a book such as *Losing Our Cool: Uncomfortable Truths About Our Air-Conditioned World (and Finding New Ways to Get Through the Summer)* by Stan Cox.

