

## Meet Some Frederick County Power Savers

**42% Savings over 6 Years**



A few years ago, this Frederick County household decided it was time to stop thinking like energy conscious citizens and start acting like them. For years they had known about the things they should be doing, but were they actually doing them? No! They had busy lives and becoming more energy efficient did not require them to be someplace or do something by a certain time, so they just never got around to it.

They lived in a 2,400 sq. ft. 1850's brick house with electric baseboard heat in each room, spotty insulation, and very drafty windows; they knew they had some big challenges, but they began with the basics:

1. They replaced all light bulbs with CFLs, put up a clothes line, insulated their hot water heater and pipes, and turned down the water temperature to 120 degrees;
2. They invested in an energy efficient refrigerator, ceiling fans, and insulation upgrades in their attic and basement;
3. They installed water-saving devices like a low-flow showerhead and a dual flush toilet conversion kit; and
4. They changed their behaviors –
  - While their TV and computer system had always been plugged into power-strips, they turned them all the way off every single night;
  - They hung all their laundry to dry outside in good weather and inside in bad. They used the dryer for just a few minutes to eliminate wrinkles in shirts and scratchiness in towels, and hangers as mini-clotheslines to economize on space.
  - To get around the uncertainty of estimated meter readings, they read their power meter each month and called it in to their utility. They tracked and graphed their monthly energy use and costs in a spreadsheet.

After one year their annual kilowatt hour (kWh) total was down 17%; after two years it was down more than 30%. By the sixth year, it was down 42%. Over the six years, they had saved the equivalent of 2.5 years of average energy use and nearly \$4,000 even though energy rates began increasing in 2008.

