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EC73-2025 Energy Conservation in the Home : There is an Energy Crisis

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Energy Conservation in the Home

There is an ENERGY CRISIS

Extension Service
University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture Cooperating with the
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There is an ENERGY CRISIS!

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Do You Know?

- American households use 30% of the energy consumed in the nation.
- The United States has only 6% of the world's population, but consumes 33% of the world's energy.
- The average American family uses 12 times more energy per day than the average daily world energy consumption.
- The public demand for energy in the United States is expected to grow rapidly through the end of the century. Based on a 3.6% annual growth rate, a recent study by the U.S. Department of the Interior projects almost a tripling of energy consumption by the year 2000.
- Aithough the share of total energy consumption supplied by each fuel may change, the actual amounts of each energy source which will be required to meet these demands will be far more than current levels.
- An effective means of helping meet the growing energy demands of the American people is to make the most efficient use of energy in our society and to waste as little as possible of human and fuel resources.
- The crucial period is NOW. Energy has been so readily available and so cheap that Americans have given little or no thought to the vast amounts of energy being used, the depletion of supplies, and the amount of waste. It is reported that the U.S. wastes fully

50% of all the energy it burns. Economies in energy consumption can be achieved in homes, transportation, agriculture, business, industry and government.

• The energy bargain in America has been fantastic. The average price for a gallon of gasoline in the U.S. in 1972 for example, was just 37 cents vs. 99 cents in Italy, 81 cents in France and 77 cents in West Germany.

• The era of energy abundance and cheap fuel has ended. Factors such as environmental costs, rising labor and equipment costs, and the need to attract venture capital, will be reflected in prices. The nation's fuel bill is going up. The cost of electricity is expected to rise 34% in the next five years. Natural gas prices may have to rise 2% a year for several years but the National Petroleum Council says that they might leap as much as 250% by 1985 with oil prices jumping as much as 125%. Drastic measures must be taken to curb the outgo of energy.

• Will drastic measures help? A study prepared for the House Committee on Science and Astronautics concluded that demand will drop 1.5% for each 1% increase in the price of electricity.

• How long will U.S. fuel reserves last? Estimates are:

Oil - 52 billion barrels --- 10 years.

Natural gas - 3,000 trillion cubic feet --- 11 years.

Uranium - 450,000 tons --- 13 years.

Shale oil - 160 to 600 billion barrels (recoverable only if crude oil prices rise 150%) --- 35 to 120 years.

Coal - 1.5 trillion tons --- 500 years.

(Source: U.S. Geological Survey Proven Recoverable Reserves.)

• To relieve the situation, scientists are working on such technological marvels as fast breeder-reactors, liquid hydrogen and coal gasification. Possibilities for the use of solar energy are being explored. However, the effects of this research on fuel supply will not be reflected for many years.

Ways to Trim Energy Demand

The U.S. Government suggests these ways to trim the energy demand:

• Force air lines to fly more fully loaded planes, meaning fewer flights for those accustomed to frequent schedules.

• Subsidy and tax programs to force short-haul passengers out of airplanes and cars onto railroads, which can move them the same distances with far less fuel.

• Increase gasoline taxes sharply, which would tend to discourage purchase.

• Restrict the engine size on future cars.

• Outright rationing (the Office of Emergency Preparedness refers to this method however, as a "highly unpalatable last resort").

• Introduce a "super-daylight saving time" - move the clocks ahead one hour in the winter and two hours in the summer. This would assure less use of energy during the dark hours.

• Interest in a Truth-in-Energy bill. This would require that household appliances be labeled with the amount of energy they consume with the hope of encouraging manufacturers to make their products operate as efficiently as possible.

What can we as consumers do to relieve the problem and help avoid the more drastic measures proposed to curb energy use?

Circulars are available describing ways consumers can conserve energy in the home. Contact your County Extension Office for:

EC 73-2025 Energy Conservation in the Home--There Is an Energy Crisis!
EC 73-2026 Energy Conservation in the Home--Kitchen
EC 73-2027 Energy Conservation in the Home--Inside the House
EC 73-2028 Energy Conservation in the Home--Building and Remodeling
EC 73-2029 Energy Conservation in the Home--Cooling
EC 73-2030 Energy Conservation in the Home--Heating
EC 73-2031 Energy Conservation in the Home--Outside the House