

March 2020 | Washington • Idaho

Landscaping for energy savings



Pleasing to the eye and energy efficient, landscaping can save money all year round.

Shade: Well-selected, well-placed deciduous trees can provide summer shade and allow incoming solar heat in the winter once they have dropped their leaves. These trees are best placed on the south and west sides of your home.

Windbreaks: The right combination of trees and shrubbery can provide a natural screen that protects your home from wind, noise and dust. Generally, rows of shrubs and evergreens placed on the north and west sides of your home are most effective.

Foundation Planting: Low trees and shrubs planted close to your home reduce wind currents and create a dead air space that helps reduce heat loss in the winter and buffers your home from hot outside air in the summer.

These techniques may not be feasible in rural forested areas due to fire safety and concerns. When planning your landscape, make sure to select utility friendly trees to plant near power lines. Also, avoid planting trees and shrubs near underground electric and natural gas lines and ground-level transformers.

Visit myavista.com/advice for other great energy efficiency tips.



I love my house!

Energy efficiency improvements make it even more comfortable.

When Lisa Leinberger started looking for her first house she carefully made a budget. Mortgage pre-approval in hand, she very quickly found a beautifully updated 1910 craftsman near Gonzaga Prep.

"I just fell in love. I love this house. I love everything about it," Leinberger said. She later did some research and discovered the home was built by a woman. "It is very feminine. I love all the light from the big windows."

She signed the mortgage papers in January of 2019—one of the warmest Januaries on record—and moved in right before a toe-numbing cold spell hit in February.

"I was a little surprised by what it took to warm up the place," Leinberger said. This didn't sway her love for the house, but she knew this old beauty had some undesirable features that could make a difference in how much energy she used. She turned down the electrical baseboard heaters in rooms she didn't use and went to an Energy Fair hosted by Avista to learn more about how to cheaply weatherize her first home.

She learned that up to 10 times as much energy dissipates through a single-pane window as compared to a wall and that covering single-pane windows with crimping plastic may cut energy consumption in half.

The plastic works like an extra pane, and low-cost kits with everything needed for installation can be picked up at most hardware stores.

Leinberger quickly got the hang of covering windows, and she immediately noticed the difference: the cold draft was gone.

Rope caulk is also an inexpensive, effective filler for gaps in vintage guillotine window frames, and other cracks.



Continued on back >>



<< Continued from front
I love my house!

Leinberger placed blankets along the bottom of the two exterior doors—a good quick fix when it comes to keeping cold air out, but also a tripping hazard.

Installing a low-cost doorsweep or draft stopper—a piece of plastic or rubber that’s easily mounted along the bottom of the door—is a much safer way to weatherize an old door.

Because fireplace chimneys suck warm air out of a home very quickly, it’s best to close them up for winter. Using inch-thick foam board cut to size is a simple fix that can be easily removed at a later time if the fireplace is needed for heating.

Being a first time homeowner can feel overwhelming, but Leinberger said these energy preserving measures are simple, affordable and are bound to make a big difference.

“Did I mention I love my house? With these quick, easy fixes I love it even more!”



Tools to help you save

Use our online tools to learn about the energy savings available for you.

Being aware of the energy you use can reduce costs and conserve our natural resources. There are many simple, low-cost steps to take to reduce energy waste. One of the easiest and most convenient ways to learn about energy savings is by visiting us online.

- Compare your bills: you can compare this month to last month or year over year. Also, get facts such as average daily use and temperature.
- Energy efficiency tips: outline top ways you can save energy by reviewing tips and tricks to reduce usage.
- Access a library of how-to videos, expert advice and information about energy topics.

To access these tools and explore ways to save, log onto your “My Account” on myavista.com today. Check out the “Compare Your Bills” tool and our Save Energy Section.



Don't even go there

Substations do you a service by stepping voltage down before electricity gets to your house.

But they aren't very hospitable places. The best thing you can do for your own safety is to stay away. Don't retrieve balls or kites that make it over the fence and teach your kids about substation dangers.

And with all the electricity going in and out of there, you can imagine that attaching your fence to a substation is a bad idea.

Substation gates are locked at all times. If you ever see something unusual at a substation, please let us know by calling (800) 227-9187.

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