



## Directions

1. Work through the survey by yourself or, if possible, with other family members.
2. For each item, mark the one answer that is most true for you and your family.
3. When you have completed the survey, input your answers at [ThinkEarth.org/suveys](http://ThinkEarth.org/suveys) to receive recommendations for more ways that your family can THINK EARTH.

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## Part 1: Conserving Energy

### 1. Heating Temperature

At what temperature is your heater thermostat usually set on cold days?

- 68 degrees or lower
- 69 degrees or higher
- Don't have a thermostat

### 2. Nighttime Temperature

Is your heater thermostat turned down or off at night when people go to bed?

- Yes
- No
- Don't have a thermostat

### 3. Heater Vents

Are heater vents closed in unused rooms?

- Yes
- No
- Don't have vents or unused rooms

#### 4. Furnace Filter

Is the furnace filter changed or cleaned periodically?

- Yes
- No
- Don't have a furnace filter

#### 5. Cooling Temperature

At what temperature is your air conditioner thermostat usually set during hot weather?

- 78 degrees or higher
- 77 degrees or lower
- Don't have a thermostat

#### 6. Insulation

How much insulation is in your ceiling or attic?

- 6 inches or more
- Less than 6 inches
- Ceiling space or attic is not accessible

#### 7. Windows and Doors

Are windows and outside doors kept closed when the heater or air conditioner is on?

- Yes
- No, not all the time

#### 8. Drafts

Does air leak in or out of any windows or doors even when they are closed? *(Not sure? See the Draftometer Test help box.)*

- No
- Yes

#### **Draftometer Test**

To check windows and doors for leaks, conduct the following test:

1. Cut a piece of thin plastic food-wrap about 4 inches wide and 6 inches long.
2. Tape the short edge of the plastic along the edge of a pencil.
3. Hold the draftometer near the edges of closed doors and windows. If the plastic moves, then air is leaking in or out.

#### 9. Shaded Windows

Are the windows on the sunny side of the house shaded during hot weather, either by trees or blinds or other window coverings?

- Yes
- No

## 10. Water Heater Temperature

At what temperature is your water heater set?

- 130 degrees or lower ("medium" or "low" or "conservation")
- More than 130 degrees ("high")
- Don't have a water heater, or it is not accessible

## 11. Light Bulbs

What type of light bulbs are in most of the light fixtures or lamps in your home? *(Not sure? See the Light Bulbs help box.)*

- Fluorescent or LED
- Incandescent

### Light Bulbs

Fluorescent light bulbs will likely be either long tubes or oddly-shaped, curling bulbs (sometimes within a solid dome cover). LED (light emitting diode) bulbs are solid bulbs—globes or tubes—made from a cluster of many small bulbs encased in a diffuser. Incandescent bulbs are round with filament wire inside. Both fluorescent and LED bulbs stay cool when lit, as opposed to incandescent bulbs, which get very hot.



## 12. Computers

Are home computers, monitors, and printers turned off when they are not being used, such as when the family goes to bed?

- Yes
- No
- Don't have a home computer

### 13. Energy Vampires

How many energy "vampires" are in your home? (See the *Energy Vampires help box*.)

- 5 or fewer
- More than 5

#### Energy Vampires

Energy "vampires" are appliances and electronic equipment that constantly draw power when plugged in, even if turned OFF. Look for appliances/equipment that have remote controls and that feature a continuous digital display, such as glowing clocks or "on" lights. Energy vampires can include:

- TVs
- DVD players
- DVRs
- cable boxes
- audio equipment
- stoves
- microwaves
- coffee makers
- chargers
- computer equipment

### 14. Lights and Appliances

Are lights, televisions, stereos, and other electric appliances turned off when they're not being used?

- Yes, most of the time
- No, they are often left on when not being used

### 15. Cooking

How are small meals and snacks cooked or heated?

- In a microwave or toaster oven
- In a large oven
- Don't have any type of oven

### 16. Age of Major Appliances

How old are your major appliances (refrigerator, water heater, furnace, air conditioner)?

- All are less than 15 years old
- Some are more than 15 years old
- Don't own major appliances

## 17. Family Cars

How many miles per gallon do most of the cars in your family average?

- More than 30 miles per gallon
- Less than 30 miles per gallon
- Don't own any cars

## Part 2: Saving Water

### 18. Indoor Faucets

Do family members leave the water running when brushing teeth, shaving, or doing dishes?

- No
- Yes, some people leave the water running

### 19. Showers

How long do family members spend in the shower?

- 10 minutes or less
- Some people spend longer than 10 minutes

### 20. Showerheads

Are the showerheads in your home low-flow, putting out less than 2 ½ gallons per minute? *(To find out, see the Showerheads help box.)*

- Yes
- No, showerheads put out more than 2 ½ gallons per minute

#### Showerheads

Here's how to find out the water output for your showerhead:

1. Get a bucket, a watch with a second hand, and a measuring cup.
2. Hold the bucket under the showerhead and have someone turn on the water at full pressure for 15 seconds.
3. Measure how many cups of water are in the bucket and multiply the number of cups by 4 (to calculate how many cups per minute).
4. Convert the number of cups to gallons (16 cups in a gallon) to determine how many gallons flow per minute.
5. Go water some plants so you don't waste the water!

### 21. Toilet Trash

Is trash (e.g., tissues, hair, paper scraps, etc.) sometimes flushed down toilets?

- No
- Yes

## 22. Toilet Type

What type of toilets are in your home? *(To find out, see the Toilet Type help box.)*

- Low flush or high efficiency (fewer than 3 gallons per flush)
- Regular (more than 3 gallons per flush)

### Toilet Type

First look under the tank lid or just behind the seat. If the toilet type ("low" or "ultra-low" or "high-efficiency") or the gallons-per-flush ("gpf") is not indicated, here's how to find out:

1. Get a pitcher or bucket that shows measurement in cups/quarts/gallons.
2. Turn off the incoming water behind the toilet.
3. Mark the water level in the tank with tape or a grease pencil.
4. Flush the toilet.
5. Use the pitcher to refill the tank (not the bowl) to the mark you made, noting how much water is needed (16 cups = 4 quarts = 1 gallon).
6. Add ½ gallon to the total (the amount that fills the toilet bowl).
7. If your toilet uses fewer than 3 gallons per flush, it is a low-flush, maybe even an ultra-low flush or a dual flush/high efficiency toilet, which uses only about 1.5 gallons. More than 3 gallons indicates a regular older toilet.
8. Don't forget to turn the water back on.

## 23. Dishwasher and Clothes Washer

Are the dishwasher and clothes washer used only when full most of the time?

- Yes
- No, small loads are often run
- Don't have a dishwasher or clothes washer

## 24. Watering Time

When does the lawn or garden usually get watered?

- Mornings or night
- Afternoons or evenings
- Don't have a lawn or garden

## 25. Overspray and Runoff

If sprinklers are used—either built-in or attached to the hose—does a lot of the surrounding pavement get wet?

- No
- Yes, a lot of water lands on or flows onto the pavement
- Don't use sprinklers

## 26. Sprinkler Type

If you use automatic sprinklers, what type are they? *(Not sure? See the Sprinkler Type help box.)*

- Rotating nozzle
- Conventional fan spray
- Don't have automatic sprinklers

### Sprinkler Types

A rotating nozzle sprinkler projects streams of water while the sprinkler head rotates. The conventional sprinkler head sprays a fan of water across the lawn.

## 27. Seasonal Watering

Is the time spent watering the lawn or garden changed depending on the season and weather?

- Yes
- No, watering time stays the same year round
- Don't have a lawn or garden

## 28. Mulch

Do most of the trees and other plants in your yard have mulch around them? *(Not sure? See the What's Mulch? help box.)*

- Yes
- No
- Don't have a yard

### What's Mulch?

Mulch covers the soil but allows water to permeate and slows evaporation. Mulch might be wood chips, shredded bark, sawdust, straw, grass clippings, or rubber shavings.

## 29. Clean-Ups

How often is the hose used to clean driveways, patios, sidewalks, or other pavement areas?

- Never or rarely
- Often or sometimes
- Don't have pavement areas to clean

## 30. Car Washing

When you wash a car at home, is the hose turned off when the water isn't needed?

- Yes
- No, the hose is usually left running onto the pavement
- Don't wash car at home

### 31. Pool

Is the swimming pool and/or hot tub covered at night and at times when it isn't being used for extended periods?

- Yes
- No
- Don't have a pool or hot tub

### 32. Water Leaks

Do any faucets, pipes, or toilets leak? *(To learn how to check for leaks, see the Leaks help box.)*

- No
- Yes, there are some leaks



#### Leaks

There are several ways to check for leaks. Before doing any of them, turn off all faucets.

1. Find your water meter and watch the dial or the small triangular flow indicator for 5 to 10 minutes. If the meter moves, you've got a leak.
2. Look at all faucets and pipes, inside and outside your house: Are any dripping water? Are there any damp spots underneath them?
3. Put a few drops of food coloring in the tank at the back of the toilet; wait a few minutes to see if any of the color appears in the bowl. If so, you have a toilet leak.

## Part 3: Reducing Waste & Pollution

### 33. Disposable vs. Reusable

How often does your family use disposable "throw away" products (paper or plastic plates, cups, utensils) instead of ones that can be reused?

- Almost never
- Fairly often

### 34. Paper Towels and Napkins

When you use paper towels and napkins, do you usually take only as many as you really need?

- Yes
- No, I often take more than I really need



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### 35. Unwanted Items

What does your family do with usable items that you no longer want (clothes, books, toys, furniture)?

- Donate or sell them
- Throw them in the trash

### 36. Recycling

Does your family recycle used newspapers, metal cans, plastic and glass bottles, cardboard boxes, etc.? (*See the Ways to Recycle help box.*)

- Yes
- No

#### Ways to Recycle

You can recycle by:

1. putting trash in separate containers for recyclable and non-recyclable waste for your trash company to pick up.
2. putting all waste in the same container if your trash company sorts and recycles your trash.
3. saving recyclable materials and taking them to a recycle center.

### 37. Yard Waste

What does your family do with grass clippings and other yard waste?

- Compost or put in a separate container for collection
- Put into the regular trash can
- Don't have yard waste

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### 38. Environmentally-Friendly Products

Does your family use products (e.g., cleaners, polishes, paints, solvents) that are safe for the environment? (*Not sure? See the Environmentally-Friendly help box.*)

- Yes, all or almost all products are environmentally-friendly
- No, many products are not safe for the environment

#### Environmentally-Friendly

Environmentally-friendly products do not harm people or the environment in their production, use, or disposal. Such products will not have words on the label such as "hazardous," "toxic," "poisonous," and "dangerous." Products that are safe for the environment are often derived from natural ingredients.

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### 39. Hazardous Wastes

How does your family usually dispose of hazardous waste products? (See the *What's Hazardous?* help box.)

- Take to special hazardous waste disposal sites in our community
- Put in the regular trash can or dump into the street gutter or pour down house drains

#### **What's Hazardous?**

Hazardous waste includes products that can harm people or the environment. Look for labels that have warnings or cautions, or for words such as “hazardous,” “toxic,” “poisonous,” and “dangerous.” Hazardous waste includes:

- used motor oil
- paint
- cleaners and solvents
- batteries
- ink cartridges
- antifreeze
- medicines
- electronic equipment

### 40. Litter

Do you or any family members ever throw trash—including food wrappers, paper, straws, drink cans—on the ground?

- No, never
- Yes, some family members litter

### 41. Carpooling

Do members of your family carpool or take public transportation to school or work on most days?

- Yes
- No
- Don't travel by car or public transportation

### 42. Driving

How do family members usually get to places that are close to home?

- Walk, bike, or skateboard
- Drive in a vehicle

### 43. Trip Links

Do you combine several errands into one car trip instead of separate trips?

- Yes
- No

#### **44. Yard Work**

What type of yard equipment does your family or gardener use?

- Manual or electric equipment (mower, blower, broom)
- Gasoline-powered mower or blower
- Don't have a yard

#### **45. Barbequing**

What type of barbeque does your family have at home?

- Electric or natural gas
- Charcoal or wood
- Don't have a barbeque

#### **46. Wood Burning**

Does your family burn wood in a fireplace or wood stove?

- No
- Yes
- Don't have a fireplace or wood stove