



Energy & Water Efficiency Checklist for Renters

Energy Efficiency

- Insulation/Weatherization:** Check for strong drafts or any holes or gaps around the doors, windows, outlets, pipes or fixtures. Well-insulated and sealed rental units are more comfortable and use less energy to heat and cool.
- Heating and Cooling Systems:** Investigate the age and condition of the unit's heating and air conditioning systems. Older systems are often less efficient and more costly to run. Check the condition of the air filter. If it is very dirty, that could be an indicator of the condition of the coils as well. Dirty coils in the air handler will greatly reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of an HVAC system.
- Thermostats:** Check to see if the thermostat is level, free of dust and firmly attached to the wall. If not, ask the property owner if he or she would be willing to repair or replace it with a programmable thermostat before you move in. Proper use of a programmable thermostat is one of the easiest ways to save energy and money.
- Appliances:** Ask about the age of and maintenance routine for the major appliances, such as the refrigerator, dishwasher, washer/dryer, air conditioners, stove, and water heater. Older models or those in poor repair will use more energy than newer ENERGY STAR® models.
- Water Heater:** Ask the property owner what the water heaters temperature is set to. Settings above 120° Fahrenheit will not only will a cost more, but the hot water could also scald you.
- Lighting:** Check to see if there are Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) used in the unit. If not, ask the property owner to change them out or if it is okay for you to do it. Although CFLs are more expensive than standard light bulbs initially, they cost much less to operate and last 10 times longer.

Water Efficiency

- Low-Flow Fixtures:** Faucet aerators, low-flow showerheads and other kitchen and bathroom efficiency fixtures are generally inexpensive and one of the most cost-effective water conservation measures. Ask the property owner if these fixtures are already installed, and if not, ask if he or she is willing to install them before you sign the lease.
- Leaky Fixtures and Pipes:** Take notes of any leaks in the fixtures, faucets, showerheads, pipes, or toilets. Have the property owner fix them before the move-in date. Leaks can waste significant amounts of water, lead to mold or mildew issues, and cause higher utility bills or overages of the utility allowance.

Safety and Other Considerations

- Carbon Monoxide and Carbon Dioxide Detectors:** If the rental unit has natural gas appliances, make sure there is a carbon monoxide detector installed that meets Underwriters Laboratory standards. Detectors should be tested monthly.
- Other:** Check for the presence of a fire extinguisher, and make sure there is no loose carpeting, loose sockets, exposed wiring, damaged walls, cabinets or fixtures, or other hazards in and around the unit.

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