



10 ways to be naturally cool

You don't have to gobble up electricity to beat the heat as the mercury rises, writes **Graham Readfearn**

QUEENSLANDERS are using more electricity than ever before as air-conditioners and pool pumps crank up the power demand in the heat of summer.

During one hot spell last month, electricity demand hit an all-time high of 8722mW.

Power companies and the Government have urged people to think before they hit the "on" switch. What's more, one-third of all Queensland's emissions of damaging greenhouse gases come from burning fossil fuels for electricity.

So, with proposals to increase

electricity prices by almost 14 per cent next year, and concerns on climate change also rising, here are 10 ways to save money on your power bill, stay cool and go greener.

1 Energy company Origin says keeping your airconditioning unit's thermostat at 24C could save an average home \$10 a week through the summer.

2 Nobody likes ironing, but getting it all out of the way in one weekly session saves electricity, as well as your sanity.

3 Want to feel cooler? Wear natural fibres, loose-fitting clothes and fool your brain by watching movies or programs set in cooler climates.

4 Shading your windows from the sun keeps the heat out, improving comfort and lowering the need for fans and airconditioning. Follow the sun with internal blinds. External shading works best.

5 Refrigeration uses 12 per cent of an average home's power. Keep seals clean, dust around condenser

coils and know what you want before you open the door. Turn off under-used appliances.

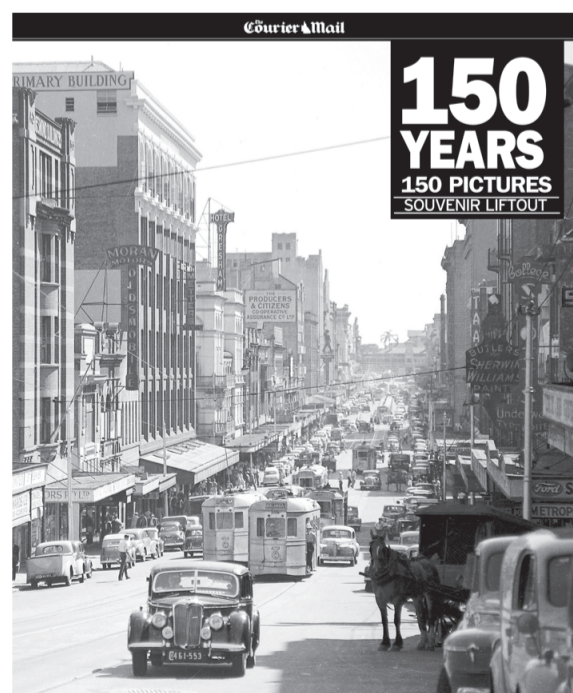
6 Ovens waste up to 90 per cent of the power they use. Microwaves and pressure cookers are more efficient.

7 Keep the air moving in your home by opening windows and doors and use ceiling or portable fans.

8 Switch lights off. It is a myth that leaving them on, rather than turning them off, is more economical.

9 Are you concerned about climate change? Visit www.greenpower.gov.au to find out how to get electricity from cleaner sources such as wind, solar and biomass from \$1 a week extra.

10 The Queensland Government's ClimateSmart Home Service identifies ways to save on power and includes a wireless energy monitor. More than 140,000 Queenslanders have used the service, which costs \$50 but is free with a rebate for Brisbane residents. Visit www.climate-smarthome.com.



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