



Contact: Trisha Tindall  
(704) 992-4114  
trisha.tindall@momentive.com

## **Cut Winter Utility Bills and Reduce the Carbon Footprint** **A Few Simple DIY Projects Can Save Homeowners Hundreds of Dollars**

**Huntersville, NC (October 1, 2007)** — Homeowners can cut their utility bills, enjoy a more comfortable home this winter and curb pollution with seven easy do-it-yourself energy upgrades. Unsealed windows and doors and other inefficiencies translate into higher utility costs and more harmful greenhouse gas emissions released into the environment.

The energy efficiency upgrades that follow are easy, inexpensive and can be completed in a couple of hours. By spending around \$100, a homeowner can expect to save hundreds of dollars in energy bills and reduce carbon dioxide emissions -- or their carbon footprint -- by up to 2,650 pounds per year<sup>1</sup>. The electricity generated by fossil fuels for a single home puts more carbon dioxide into the air than two average cars, so homeowners need to take immediate steps to decrease this waste.<sup>2</sup>

With the cold winter months approaching quickly, homeowners are already dreading the imminent increase in home heating bills. The housing stock is the oldest in U.S. history so many homeowners face a greater challenge because their homes are already less energy efficient.<sup>3</sup>

"The benefits of taking an afternoon to do these small tasks are countless," said Rodney Hawkins, General Manager of Momentive Performance Materials, an exclusive licensee of General Electric. "An inexpensive product like GE Silicone II\* caulk can make a home cheaper to heat, more comfortable because the heat is staying inside and the cold air outside, and protected from wet weather damage."

### **1. Seal your windows and doors.**

If you add up all the gaps and cracks in the average house it would equal an opening the size of a window.<sup>4</sup> Silicone caulk provides an exceptional airtight and watertight seal to keep warm air inside the home because it is not water based, so there is minimal shrinking or cracking. Acrylic caulk is water based and some acrylics shrink up to 25 percent. That shrinkage may leave cracks and gaps for air and water to move through. A typical home can be sealed with four tubes of high-quality caulk like GE Silicone II and weatherstripping.

<sup>1</sup> <<http://www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=3998>>

<sup>2</sup> <[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/save\\_energy.html](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/save_energy.html)>

<sup>3</sup> Hanley Wood Remodeler Research

<sup>4</sup> "Home Sealing." Energy Star. <[http://www.energystar.gov/ia/home\\_improvement/Home\\_Sealing\\_Brochure04.pdf](http://www.energystar.gov/ia/home_improvement/Home_Sealing_Brochure04.pdf)>

**2. Wrap your water heater with a water heater blanket.**

Water heating is the third largest energy expense in your home.<sup>5</sup> Gas water heaters should be insulated carefully - check the manufacturer's recommendations.

**3. Turn down your water heater thermostat.**

Adjusting your thermostat takes no time at all. Many manufacturers set the thermostats at 140 F, but 120 F is usually hot enough for all hot water needs.<sup>6</sup> You can save between three to five percent in energy costs for each 10 F reduction in water temperature.

**4. Install low-flow showerheads.**

High efficiency showerheads can cut hot water demand by an estimated 40 percent.<sup>7</sup> They are inexpensive and easy to install.

**5. Wash full loads of laundry – at a cooler temperature.**

About 80-85 percent of the energy used for washing clothes is used to heat the water.<sup>8</sup> Only wash full loads to use less water and switch the temperature setting from hot to warm to cut your load's energy use in half.

**6. Install an electronic thermostat.**

Many homeowners turn the heat on and off during the day in an effort to save money. According to experts, this on-and-off technique uses significantly more energy than maintaining a steady temperature. An electronic thermostat is easy to install and can cut down on energy costs and maintain a comfortable temperature.

**7. Use GE Energy Smart™ Light Bulbs.**

ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), such as GE Energy Smart™ CFLs, use up to 75 percent less energy than regular incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer.<sup>9</sup> At \$0.10/kwh, replacing a 60-watt incandescent bulb with a 13-watt CFL will save a consumer approximately \$38 in energy savings over the life of the product.

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<sup>5</sup> <[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/water\\_heating.html](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/water_heating.html)>

<sup>6</sup> <[http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your\\_home/water\\_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13070](http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/water_heating/index.cfm/mytopic=13070)>

<sup>7</sup> Tips on Saving Energy and Money at Home <[http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/monthly\\_tips.html](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/monthly_tips.html)>

<sup>8</sup> <<http://www.ferc.gov/Students/parents/parents.htm>>

<sup>9</sup> <[http://energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=cfls.pr\\_cfls](http://energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=cfls.pr_cfls)>

## DIY Return on Investment

**Energy Savings:** Hundreds of Dollars

**Carbon Dioxide Reduction:** 2,650 Pounds

Winter "Energy Upgrade" Tasks	Product	Approximate Cost (One-Time)
Seal windows and doors	GE Silicone II Window & Door Caulk (4 tubes) Weatherstrip Kit	\$25 \$4
Use less water in the shower	Low-Flow Showerhead	\$13
Control room temperature	Electronic Thermostat	\$30
Switch to a CFL bulb	GE Energy Smart™ CFL	\$4
Wrap water heater	Water Heater Blanket	\$19
Turn down water heater thermostat	N/A	\$0
Wash clothes on cooler temperatures	N/A	\$0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>~\$100</b>

NOTE: Energy savings are based on an average household energy bill of \$1,900<sup>10</sup> and calculations were made according to the category's percentage of the energy bill<sup>11</sup> and the corresponding percentage of energy savings if the task is completed.

For additional energy savings and how-to tips, and for information on sealing your home with GE Silicone II, visit [www.gehomes sealing.com](http://www.gehomes sealing.com).

### About the Company

Momentive Performance Materials Inc. is a premier specialty materials company, providing high-technology materials solutions to the silicones, quartz and ceramics markets. The company, as a global leader with worldwide operations, has a robust product portfolio, an enduring tradition of service excellence, and industry-leading research and development capabilities. Momentive Performance Materials Inc. is owned by an affiliate of Apollo Management, L.P. Additional information is available at [www.momentive.com](http://www.momentive.com). Momentive Performance Materials Inc. is an exclusive licensee of General Electric.

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<sup>10</sup> <<http://energyhog.org/adult/adults.htm>>

<sup>11</sup> <<http://www.buyenergyefficient.org/know.html>>