

Space age eco: the Aeris hanging fire from Cocoon Fires is a flueless bioethanol fire so doesn't need ventilation, a gas supply, any special installation or equipment. It uses high grade liquid bio ethanol so is eco-friendly & very clean, with no harmful gases, sparks or soot. £2,170 from gomodern.co.uk



Karen Chugg

BEING eco-friendly has never been easier - and we have never been more enthusiastic about it - especially if it means cutting those ever-growing energy bills. And whether it's smartphone connected thermostats or the latest in renewable energy, technology is fast catching up to our energy saving needs.

“As well as enhancing our living environment, technology and ‘home automation’ – lighting and heating control in particular - can really help save energy and reduce your bills,” explains Karen Chugg, director of Devon-based home automation company Intelligent Abodes. “Simply put, the technology allows you to use electricity more intelligently to fit in with your particular needs and avoid over consumption. Here are some of my favourite tips for helping to make your home more energy efficient:

SOME LIKE IT HOT

The new range of heat thermostats are great for saving energy. Thermostats such as Nest and Heatmiser, respond intuitively to your temperature requirements avoiding waste and allowing you to manage temperature more effectively whether you are there or away. I love Nest's ‘Auto Away’ feature with its built in sensors which can detect when no one is home and automatically turn down the temperature, saving more energy. You can also programme it remotely, say for example to turn the heating on when you are leaving work. It will also give you reports on how much energy you're using and suggest ways to help you increase savings – even changing your thermostat by a few degrees can make a huge difference.

Automated blinds can also help you manage the temperature in the home and therefore save energy – keeping the heat in during the colder months and keeping the space cool in the summer. Some ranges for example by Lutron, are made from sophisticated, specialist fabrics designed to support temperature control and can save 10-30% on heating and cooling costs.

NOT SO DIM...

Lighting control solutions such as Lutron, Vantage and Control 4 are stylish and easy to use. They offer ‘scene settings’ that suit the activity being undertaken in a particular

READY, STEADY, GO GREEN

Going green doesn't mean knitting your own yoghurt - it can also be high tech -as Devon expert KAREN CHUGG explains



Nest thermostat
(nest.com)



Go back to basics - keep your toes toasty with these Lambswool Tie Top Hot Water Bottles £55 from thefinecottoncompany.com



Bathrooms now come with a range of eco-features - with rimless toilets using a third less water. frontlinebathrooms.co.uk

space at a particular time – entertaining, working, relaxing, cooking etc. Selecting a particular setting with ease makes you more conscious about the lighting you are using, you therefore tend to adjust it more frequently, selecting settings with dimmed lighting when appropriate and turning it off when not required. One of the simplest and most effective ways to save energy is to utilise an electronic dimming solution, which uses less energy compared to a standard one. Every electronic dimmer will automatically save you 4-9% in electricity even when used at the highest setting! Dimming your lights by 25% can save you 20% in energy costs! And you can dim all types of lights including low energy sources such as LED lighting – double savings!

Ludlow Stoves have created a natty little briquette maker that converts old newspapers into an effective alternative to burning charcoal. Last around two hours. £18.50 ludlowstoves.co.uk



THREE WAYS TO USE TECHNOLOGY TO HELP KEEP YOUR HOME EFFICIENT

1. Installing a Home Control system which can be programmed to control your heating and lighting effectively and efficiently.
2. Installing an intelligent heat thermostat such as the Nest Learning Thermostat
3. Fitting dimmers to as many lights as possible.

AND WHEN YOU'RE OUT

It's all too easy to leave a room, or the house, especially on a bright day, with the lights left on...particularly if there are a number of you who share the space with - and some are less conscious of the bills than others! I love wireless occupancy sensors – they are simple to install and detect and react when a room is unused, turning lights off when spaces are vacant. Sensors can also automatically dim lights when enough daylight is present or use automated window shades, with the system adjusting electrical light levels so that the right amount of light is always present. This sort of energy conscious light management system can be set up in a single room or an entire building saving significant wastage and costs. Home control solutions, such as Rti, Vantage or Control 4, also allow you to automatically turn on appliances such as dish washers at the most energy efficient times. Their Remote Access Control means you can turn off all your lights wherever you are, from your mobile phone or tablet. These sort of systems will also offer an energy management option to allow you to monitor energy consumption and suggest options to further reduce consumption. ♦