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Holiday Energy Saving Tips in the **Kitchen**

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While almost everyone knows they can save electric energy during the holidays by decorating with LED lights, most people do not consider the great energy-saving opportunities they have with another seasonal tradition: **EATING!**

There are several ways to avert unnecessary energy use in the kitchen. **Consider a few of these tips:**

Refrigerators

- ◆ Refrigerators and freezers get a real workout over the holidays. They are some of the larger energy consumers in your house .
- ◆ Help your refrigerator and freezer to operate efficiently by keeping the doors closed as much as possible.
- ◆ Keeping your refrigerator and freezer full during the holidays is easy and energy efficient. But be careful not to cram them so full that cool air cannot properly circulate around the food.

Ovens

- ◆ As a general rule, unless you are baking breads or pastries, you usually do not need to preheat.
- ◆ Do not open the oven door to take a peek! Instead, turn on the oven light and check on the cooking through the window.
- ◆ Self-cleaning ovens use less energy for normal cooking because of the higher insulation levels built into them. Consider using the self-cleaning feature right after using your oven, to take advantage of the residual heat.

Stovetops

- ◆ When cooking on the range top, match the size of the pan to the heating element.
- ◆ Clean burners and reflectors provide better heating while saving energy. If you need new reflectors, buy quality ones. The best in the market can save as much as one-third of the energy when compared to dull, non-reflective pans.

Other Ways to Cook

- ◆ Do not overlook alternative cooking appliances during the holidays. Fast and efficient microwave ovens use around 50 percent less energy than conventional ovens, and they do not heat up your kitchen. They are especially handy and energy efficient when heating leftovers.
- ◆ Slow cookers (crock-pots) are perfect for many dishes. On the average, they will cook a whole meal for a certain amount of electricity.
- ◆ If you are baking or broiling small food items, a toaster oven is ideal because they use, on the average, one-third the energy of a bigger oven.

