

Over a third of British households miss out on bill savings by not changing home energy use

- new research reveals 9.7 million households have not taken steps to change their home energy usage, despite the opportunity of saving hundreds of pounds and helping cut their contribution to global warming
- even one small change such as only filling the kettle with as much water as you need has the potential to save households £1.1 billion and stop 2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere
- Citizens Advice and Energy Saving Trust join forces, backed by Business and Energy Secretary Andrea Leadsom, to help close the knowledge gap and inspire households to take small steps to save their family money and help the country on the road to net zero by 2050

New research marking the start of Big Energy Saving Week 2020 (20-26 January) has revealed a significant gap in consumer understanding about managing their household energy use and the simple steps people can take to reduce their carbon footprint.

The survey, conducted by Citizens Advice and Energy Saving Trust, shows that over a third (36%) of British households have not made changes to their energy usage at home in recent years. That's 9.7 million households that experts say need more help and encouragement with ways to save money and reduce their household emissions.

Almost three-quarters (73%) of people are surprised to hear the extent British homes contribute to global warming. British homes are responsible for around 25% of carbon emissions, making them one of the biggest contributors to the UK's greenhouse gas emissions.

Head of Consumer Advice at Energy Saving Trust, Laura McGadie, said:

Our research shows that while great strides have been made by some households, more can be done, and by more people. If every household in Britain made just a handful of energy saving changes, the combined impact could make a big difference to our finances and the environment. We are committed to inspiring everyone to make small changes to their energy saving habits this Big Energy Saving Week 2020 – particularly those who will benefit most from the money they could save.

The vast majority of households (87%) think small changes will make little or no difference to their finances. A third of respondents (31%) don't consider managing their energy use as a priority or think it would cost them something to control it (19%).

However, new analysis by the Energy Saving Trust has found that 4 simple changes alone have the potential to save households around £100 a year – and help towards the UK reaching net zero emissions by 2050:

1. Turning your thermostat down by 1 degree would save households £800 million and cut 3.3 million tonnes of carbon emissions every year
2. Changing your all your lightbulbs to LEDs would save households £230 million and 430 thousand tonnes of carbon emissions every year
3. Turning appliances off rather than keeping them on standby would save households £690 million and curb the release of 1.3 million tonnes of carbon emissions
4. Only using the right amount of water in your kettle would save households £1.1 billion and stop 2 million tonnes of carbon emissions being released annually

The total carbon savings if households took these 4 simple steps would be the equivalent of taking around 3 million cars off the road.

Business and Energy Secretary, Andrea Leadsom, said:

You'd be surprised at what small steps can make a big difference – both to energy bills and to your contribution to climate change. During Big Energy Saving Week, I'd urge everyone to contact the Simple Energy Advice Service to see what they can do – whether it's changing lightbulbs, switching provider or turning down the thermostat when away from home – to cut their emissions, and their bills.

Chief Executive of Citizens Advice, Gillian Guy, said:

This year Big Energy Saving Week is all about how we can make small changes to our everyday lives that help save money and have a positive impact on the environment.

Our homes are responsible for nearly a quarter of British carbon emissions, so this is a great opportunity to really make a difference. Reducing the amount of energy we use cuts our household bills, so going greener can help you keep out of the red.

A quarter of British households say being given hints and tips would motivate them to make energy saving changes. To help, Citizens Advice, Energy Saving Trust and BEIS are launching an expert-approved list of [20 ways to save](#)

[\(2.10MB\)](#) as part of Big Energy Saving Week 2020, urging people to take their first step or do more on their energy saving journey. Consumers are also encouraged to contact the [Simple Energy Advice Service](#) for information and support.

More than 460 events will also be taking place across the country at various locations, including Citizens Advice centres, aimed at helping people get advice, save money and reduce their carbon footprint.

Big Energy Saving Week 2020 (20-26 January) is brought to you by Citizens Advice, Energy Saving Trust and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and is aimed at empowering people to save energy and money and reduce their carbon footprint by offering easy everyday actions the British public can take.

The new and expert endorsed [20 ways to save \(2.10MB\)](#) list aims to inspire positive changes throughout the week.

Consumer research is based on 2,001 British adults between 17-18 December 2019 by Censuswide on behalf of Energy Saving Trust, Citizens Advice and BEIS. The 9.7 million figure is 36% of 27,056,107 British households.

Financial and carbon dioxide savings are based on weighted average savings for Great Britain which takes into account the housing stock mix and heating fuel mix where applicable. (Correct as of January 2020).