

### Question 8.8

Does the article on this page have any tips you could follow today?

Why does an electric company care if your refrigerator is energy efficient?

Source: Pacific Gas and Electric Company newsletter, June 1991

## Slash Your Refrigeration Costs

It's possible to cut your refrigeration costs by up to half. How? By replacing your old refrigerator with an efficient new model and by keeping your refrigerator's coils clean.

And here's the best part: PG&E will pay you to save. That's right — you can receive a PG&E rebate of up to \$150 by buying an efficient refrigerator from a participating store between June 1 and September 30. Ask an appliance salesperson which models qualify.

A new refrigerator uses a lot less electricity than one just eight to ten years old. In fact, a super-efficient model can operate for half the cost of an older model. The most efficient can save you up to \$850 over its useful life, compared to a new model that just meets federal efficiency standards.

There's more to buying a refrigerator than choosing the color, size and features you want. Also consider the following:

- Choose a unit that's the right size for you and your family. Too large a unit will use more energy than necessary.
- Read the refrigerator's EnergyGuide label to find out its estimated yearly energy

cost compared to similar models.

### Clean Coils Cut Costs

Keeping refrigerator condenser coils clean makes good economic sense. A unit with dirty coils can cost 25 percent more to run than one with lint-free coils. Dirty coils may also reduce the life of the

refrigerator's compressor. under the front legs to protect the floor, then rock the refrigerator back and forth to move it out. Make sure you don't dislodge any water pipes or drip pans, if present.

- Plug in the refrigerator and turn it back on.

### More Tips to Help You Save

- Make sure the refrigerator's temperature isn't too low or too high. A temperature of 38 to 40 degrees is recommended; use a refrigerator or room thermometer. The freezer should be about zero to five degrees.
- If possible, turn off the heater that



Get \$50, \$75 or \$150 back on an energy-efficient refrigerator bought from a participating retailer June 1 through September 30.

refrigerator's compressor.

Clean coils at least once a year — every three or four months is better, especially if you have a pet that sheds a lot of fur. Here's how:

- Turn off refrigerator, then unplug it if possible.
- To clean bottom coils, carefully remove the toe grill covering them — just vacuuming the grill won't help. You'll need a long-handled narrow brush or refrigerator brush to reach all the coils under the unit. Pull the lint out with the brush and vacuum the lint off the brush as you go.
- If your coils are on the back of your refrigerator, you may need to move the appliance out a little. Put something

keeps condensation from forming on the panel between the freezer and the refrigerator door. In most of California, the humidity is so low that condensation isn't a problem. The switch is usually found inside the refrigerator compartment. Check your owner's manual for the proper setting. This step will save about \$.25 to \$1.50 a month.

- If you have a second refrigerator or freezer used only occasionally, unplug it or give it to charity. You could cut your annual electric bill by as much as \$175.
- Avoid clutter around the refrigerator to let the unit ventilate itself properly.