

Halton Hills Hydro has some good energy-saving tips for the kitchen

By Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner
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Thanks to Halton Hills Hydro for helping out with today's article. Gerry asked them for some energy-saving ideas for the kitchen and here's what they suggest:

Heating:

1. Don't open the oven door to peek at what's cooking— use the light and look through the window instead. Each time you open the oven door, 20% of the heat escapes.
2. Keep a lid on your pots when possible. This keeps the heat in. (Cook's note— remember that green vegetables should be cooked with the lid off though, in order to keep them green).
3. Select the stove element that is the right size for the pot— a small pot on a large burner just wastes energy by heating the kitchen as well as the food!



4. An electric kettle uses half the energy of a stove element to boil water.
 5. For heating small quantities of food, microwaves are much more efficient than the stove, but for large quantities of liquids such as soups or stews, the stovetop element is twice as efficient as the microwave.
 6. When the oven is on, prepare more than one dish, even getting a head start on the next meal, so as not to waste the heat.
- Cooling:**
1. The ideal temperature for your fridge is between 2-5 degrees C. The fridge operates most efficiently in this range and keeps food

fresher, longer.

2. The ideal temperature for your freezer is -18 degrees C. Freezers are designed to be most efficient at this temperature.
 3. Vacuum the coils at the back of your refrigerator at least once or twice a year to keep them running efficiently.
 4. Freezers operate most efficiently when they are full— it takes less energy to keep solid objects frozen than air.
 5. Don't overload the fridge— it needs air circulation to operate efficiently.
- I'm going to add one more energy saving tip of my own: Take a look at the number/

size of fridges and freezers in your home do you really need them all?

For years we had a large chest freezer in our basement. One day we realized that we really didn't even know what was at the bottom of it, as we really only used the items on top. And, we aren't really that keen on frozen meat. So, we cleaned it out, shut it off and had it taken away.

Now we get by with the freezer compartment in our fridge. Forces us to be honest about our purchases and keeps the inventory circulating, plus the energy bill is lower! Have fun and keep cookin'!

Pork Tenderloin with Mushrooms

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 piece pork tenderloin
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 (10oz) can sliced button mushrooms (or fresh)
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 2 tbsp 35% cream
- 1 tbsp butter
- salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Rinse and pat dry the pork tenderloin. Sprinkle dried thyme, garlic, and salt and pepper on all sides of pork and rub in. Roast the pork in a preheated 350 F degree oven for approximately 40 minutes, uncovered. Let rest for 10 minutes.



Meanwhile drain mushrooms and reserve liquid. Sauté in butter for a few minutes. Add wine and mushroom soup to mushrooms. Mix until well blended.

Stir in fresh thyme, cream and salt and pepper to taste.

If sauce is too thick, add some mushroom liquid.

Slice pork and put in pan with sauce. Heat through.

Cook's note: You can substitute more mushroom liquid for wine if you like.

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ASK THE PROFESSIONAL

Q

My husband and I have separated and he is refusing to contribute to any of our two children's extracurricular activity expenses. Doesn't he have to help pay for them?

A

The Ontario Family Law Act provides that you and your husband should each contribute towards any special or extraordinary expenses for the children proportionate to your incomes. The special or extraordinary expenses are, however, to be reasonable and necessary. For instance, it should be an expense that is unusually high for a family in similar economic and social circumstances. Parents shouldn't be going into debt or looking to their new spouses to assist them with paying for expenses they can't afford. The higher the family's income, the more activities are usual and the fewer are extraordinary so there is no need for additional support over and above the regular child support payments. Some expenses such as swimming lessons may not be a special or extraordinary expense while cell phone expenses for children may be a special or extraordinary expense if it is used only for the child to communicate with parents and the general social use of the phone is restricted.

Some families agree on a cap of their contribution towards the special or extraordinary activity expenses particularly when one parent wishes to spend more money on activities that the other parent believes they can afford. Rather than have the child miss out on an activity they may agree, for instance, that a contribution by one parent towards such expenses will not be more than \$100.00 per month and if the other parent wishes to enroll the children in activities for which the parent would owe more than \$100.00 per month that parent will pay the extra expenses without any further contribution by the other parent.

Remember you may be able to claim a deduction of \$1,000.00 per year on your income tax return for the children's activity tax credit and \$500.00 per year for artistic, cultural, recreational or developmental activities.

I have a reduced hourly rate for a consultation if you wish to discuss any family law issues with me.

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or you.



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