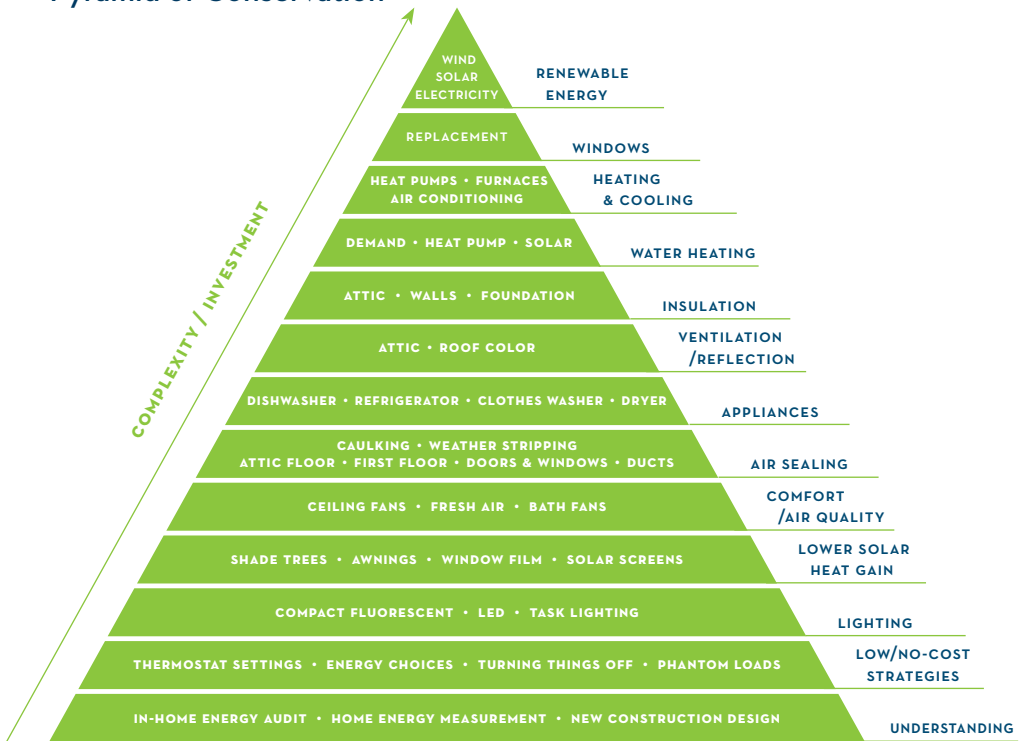


Pyramid of Conservation



Source: MN Power

Install a programmable thermostat. These devices cost around \$75 and you can install them by yourself, without hiring a contractor. They can lower a home's annual energy bills by as much as 10 percent by automatically turning the thermostat down 10 to 15 percent during the sleeping hours. It's important to find a model with clear controls. Some models on the market are so confusing that you could program them incorrectly. Indeed, a 2011 study by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that half of homes surveyed had their thermostats set in such a way that they were inadvertently overriding any programmed temperature adjustments. But there are models on the market that make it easy to save—look for larger screens and easy-to-follow instructions and controls with arrows and clear prompts, rather than vague symbols.