# Top 5 Money Saving Tips for Christmas

**Friday 29 November, 2013**

Nothing suggests the arrival of Christmas more than the warmth, glow and excitement of fairy lights.

But an extravagant Christmas light display can add as much as £100 to your energy bills throughout December, according to the Energy Saving Trust.

Additional lighting can also produce enough carbon dioxide to fill two double decker buses.

However, there are ways people can combat these costs and still enjoy a merry Christmas, according to Downlights Direct director Chris Horridge.

Horridge, a lighting and energy saving expert, has put forward the following advice on how to cut down on your electricity bills during the festive season.

**Put your lights on a timer**

"A survey by the Energy Savings Trust calculated that 63 per cent of Britons forget to turn lights off after they leave a room.

"Wasted light can have a huge effect on your household electricity bills.

"At Christmas time, many families place fairy lights around the home, both internally and externally, and these are often left running for long periods of time.

"In 2010, price comparison website GoCompare calculated that a display of 100 five-watt bulbs switched on for six hours a day over the Christmas period was the equivalent of 22.8 days of energy consumption for the average British household.

"Using a timer to better coordinate the length of time lights remain active means you can still enjoy the aesthetic charm of Christmas lighting without incurring huge and unnecessary costs.

"Companies like Danlers produce cost effective adjustable timers which turn lights on and off after a chosen period and are perfect for exterior lighting."

**Use LED fairy lights**

"Most fairy lights are LEDs. They are safer, more energy efficient, and can last for up to 100,000 hours.

"Although LEDs are initially more expensive, the money saved in lighting bills will more than pay for themselves in less than two years.

"LED bulbs are more aesthetically pleasing, particularly for outdoor lighting, as the coloured light is more intense.

"Because they are diodes rather than filament bulbs, they are less likely to break, and can therefore better withstand harsh British winters.

"More importantly, LED fairy lights can provide energy savings of up to 90 per cent.

"According to The Guardian, a set of 200 traditional lights will cost £2.40 per day if left on for 10 hours adding £75 to electricity bills throughout the month.

"A set of 200 LED lights will cost roughly 20 pence a day to run, which is £6.20 over the month."

**Only use the amount of light required**

"Changing our lighting habits is not easy. But at Christmas time, it pays to be responsible, so avoid using excess lighting wherever possible.

"For example, if you are reading a book over the holiday season, is it necessary to use the main light in the room when a smaller bedside light will suffice?

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"Is it necessary to have additional fairy lights running, particularly in areas of the home not being used?

"To help economise, the Energy Savings Trust suggest using a range of lights in one room with separate switches, rather than using a single dimmer for all of them."

**Use renewable energy sources**

"Solar powered LED fairy lights are ideal for anyone wishing to use Christmas lights outside.

"This type of lighting eliminates the need to connect to power mains within the home, thus reducing the health and safety impact considerably.

"For example, Everbright Solar Fairy Lights are designed to work during the winter months.

"Simply locate the solar panel in the appropriate position toward the sun and the lights will run for 10 hours when fully charged.

"They also come with a USB back up in which you can charge the battery through your computer.

"Utilising renewable energy sources is an extremely cost effective way of cutting down on your electricity bills but still enjoy a luminous Christmas."

**Get an energy monitor**

"Keep better track of your electricity consumption with an energy monitor.

"An energy monitor, which can cost between £20 to £100, will keep track of how much energy you are using around the home in kilowatts, the cost implications and carbon emissions.

"Some can even alert you when you have reached a maximum level of electricity consumption.

"These are great gadgets which will help you to make energy saving adjustments around the home.

"Smart readers are different and are used instead of your gas or electricity meter.

"A smart reader will calculate the correct amount of electricity or gas being used and send the cost directly to your energy supplier, eliminating the need for estimated bills.

"Contact your energy supplier for more information."

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