

# 17 The Energy Myths Book

Myths and facts about energy.

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*by Ralph Hedlin, Economic Consultant.*

**Shell**  **helps**

## About the author

Economist and newsman, Saskatchewan-born Ralph Hedlin is a well-known economic consultant and energy policy advisor to corporations and governments. "There is a serious energy problem in Canada" says Hedlin, "and I feel Canadians have been exposed to a lot of misinformation about it. It's time the myths were set straight."



## Myth:

There is very little I can do about the energy situation in Canada.

## Fact:

Not true! By simply practising common sense measures in the home, at school and at work, you and your family can do much to help conserve energy. Developing good conservation habits won't lower your standard of living. Some, like insulating your home, save you money. And others, like hiking and biking instead of driving, can improve your health!

## For example

Leo and Johanna Schmida, retired senior citizens in Thornhill, Ontario turned their thermostat down from 21°C to 10°C (70°F to 50°F) while they were away for the winter of 1980-81. Their total heating bill for the 2 months they were away? Just \$103.71, a saving of about \$100. This is one of many simple conservation measures which cost nothing to implement and result in a sizable saving.



In October, 1979, Sally Jones of Mississauga, Ontario had her 2,240 sq. ft. ranch style house insulated through the C.H.I.P. program sponsored by the federal government. The cost of insulating the house at that time was \$383.00. Cost to Sally? Only \$33! C.H.I.P. paid \$350 of the costs. And here's the best part. Sally's heating bills were immediately reduced \$400 in the first year. Which means her investment will pay for itself many times over.

Happily, there are many such stories all over Canada as people become more energy-conscious. For more information about the government's C.H.I.P. program, write:



## How to involve your children in energy conservation

Your children should be taught now to conserve their energy legacy for the future. A few things you can do:



**1** Drive them less and encourage them to walk or take bikes to activities.

**2** Reward their efforts with stars for:

- turning off lights and air conditioners when not in use
- cutting back on hot water
- switching from baths to showers

## Myth:

Washing clothes in cold water doesn't save enough to make it worthwhile.

## Fact:

If you wash and rinse with cold water, you can save 24¢ per load. Rinsing with cold only, 16¢ per load. Assuming an average family, with 4 loads of wash per week, we are talking savings of about \$30 to \$50 a year. Enough to buy some children's shoes, part of a week's groceries or a nice dinner out. Thought of in these terms, it certainly *is* worthwhile!

## Myth:

Storm windows or any form of double glazing could reduce heat loss a little bit.

## Fact:

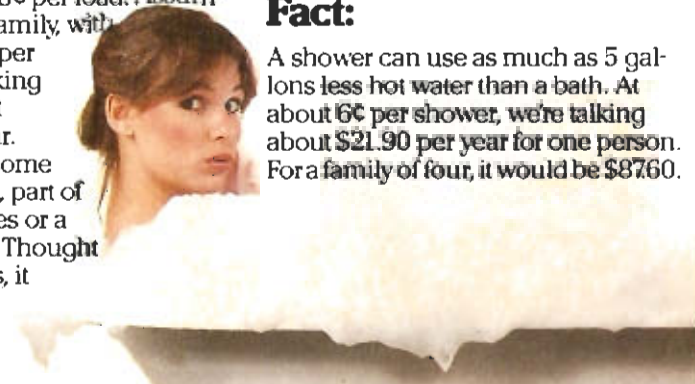
A little bit? No. *You could cut your heating bill 20% with well-fitting storm windows!* That's \$100 on a \$500 fuel bill—a tidy sum which you could apply to your vacation trip. A further 20% savings in total fuel oil for heating could save Canadians 18 million barrels of oil a year.

## Myth:

A shower usually uses more water than a bath.

## Fact:

A shower can use as much as 5 gallons less hot water than a bath. At about 6¢ per shower, we're talking about \$21.90 per year for one person. For a family of four, it would be \$87.60.



## Drivers can really save!

Choose the smallest car that fills your needs. Combine errands whenever possible. Drive at a steady speed (preferably 80 km/h or 50 mph on the highway). Have your engine tuned regularly. Keep tires properly inflated. Avoid needless idling, stop-and-go driving and jack rabbit starts.

You'll find more great tips in Shell's Driving Economy Book. Try them and I promise you, you'll notice a big difference!



### Myth:

It's only home-owners who can practise energy conservation.

### Fact:

Wrong again! The truth is, energy belongs to everyone. Using it up faster than it can be produced eventually affects us all.

Here's where you can help:

### At work

It's a simple matter to turn off hot water, turn down heat and air conditioners at work. And it costs you nothing to turn off machinery, electric typewriters, calculators and other equipment when you leave your work-place.

### When you rent

Careless use of energy eventually reflects on your monthly rent. Turn down heat, turn off appliances not in use, buy insulating drapes, shower instead of bathing and go easy on hot water.

### Condo owners

You cannot afford to waste energy, either. True, energy cost increases will be shared with other people, but as costs rise, your share may become considerable. As a condo owner, you

can promote energy-saving directives to your building management.

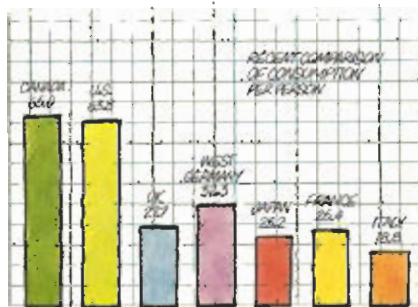
### Myth:

Canadians consume about the same amount of energy as other industrialized countries.

### Fact:

Wrong! Canadians consume *more* energy per person than people in any other developed country!

We may think we have good reasons for this. Our country is big. Our climate is cold. But other countries have these characteristics, too. The fact is, we use a lot of energy because it has been relatively cheap here. Higher prices have encouraged other nations to use less.



## \$14 million leaves Canada every day to pay for foreign oil!

Think about it. It adds up to more than \$200 per year for every man, woman and child in Canada!



The problem is that at the present time, Canada only produces 80% of its crude oil needs. The other 20% is imported from other countries. Political instability in some of these countries means our supply sources are unreliable. Also, imported oil is becoming more expensive as time goes on.

Since taxes help pay the bill for imported oil, it makes sense to use less of it. We can do this by conserving, and by finding more oil here in Canada.

### Myth:

In Canada we have more than enough energy to meet our needs.

### Fact:

Not quite! Canada has the *potential* to supply all its own energy needs. And we do have plenty of natural gas, hydro, nuclear power, coal and uranium. Where we fall short is in oil. If we could supply our own demand for oil, the \$14 million which leaves the country every day would stay here to be put to work in Canada's economy, providing jobs and industrial growth.

### Myth:

As long as we know the oil is there,

we have nothing to worry about. We'll tap it when we need it.

### Fact:

That's not the way it works. You can't run your car on oil that is locked in the Alberta tar sands or underneath the ice of the Arctic. These energy sources involve expensive exploration, development and transportation, which takes time. If our country made a serious commitment today to oil self-sufficiency, we would still take 10 years to achieve it.





## Gasoline rationing?

It could happen here. The government has already planned a rationing program just in case. Imagine how it would affect your lifestyle. When gasoline shortages occurred in the U.S. in 1979, the message was clear: *Find more oil and use less.* We must work towards oil self-sufficiency *now* for the *future*.

### Myth:

Exploration and development only create jobs in the provinces with oil and gas.

### Fact:

Wrong. A large project produces a 'ripple effect' in the economy by creating a demand for goods and services elsewhere in the country. For example, steel needs for an Alberta pipeline were supplied by a steel company in Welland, Ontario. Engineering services were provided by an engineering company in Montreal.

Thus, these large projects not only ensure our supplies for the future and put us on the road to oil self-sufficiency, they also put a lot of Canadians to work.

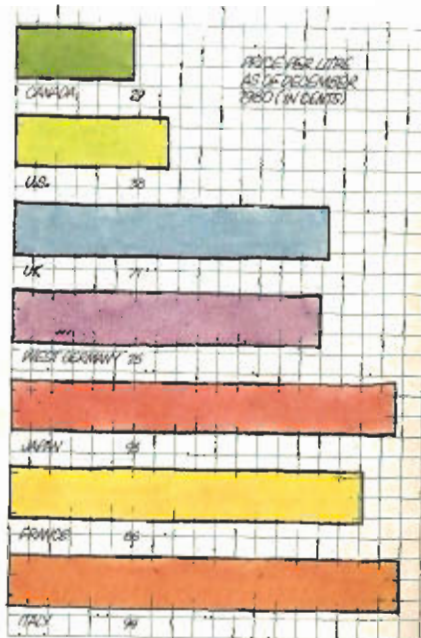
### Myth:

The price of gasoline in Canada is comparable to what you'd pay in other countries.

### Fact:

Right now, Canadians pay less at the pumps for gasoline than any other

western industrialized nation. This price chart will give you some idea of how much less. But this is deceptive, because the cost of imported oil is subsidized by the federal government—partly with your tax dollars. So while you may not pay it at the pumps, you are still paying more than you think.



## Interpreting the facts

As a consumer, you could be affected by any future shortages. And it is likely that you will pay more for energy as the cost of importing oil increases. Since Canada is not yet self-sufficient in oil, and as it is often not practical to substitute other energy sources, it has become important to use less oil and to find more.



### Myth:

We don't need to worry about shortages of oil because there are alternate sources of energy such as the sun, wind and recycling, which will solve our energy needs.

### Fact:

Don't count on it! It is estimated that alternate energy forms, such as solar energy, will provide 5% or less of our total needs by the year 2000. Even if they were widely available, they would cost more than imported oil for most applications. And their use in industry and transportation would often be impractical. This means that we must rely on oil, gas and coal to supply our needs for some time.

### Myth:

To do all the things conservation people say I should do to my house would cost more than the savings.

### Fact:

You *will* save money in the long run, and your conservation measures could add to the value of your house. But before you do anything, you

might want to estimate an amortization period, say 5 years, and decide if it's worthwhile. The federal government has designed a program to help you with this. If you complete a questionnaire about your home, ENERSAVE will send you a free computer analysis of what needs to be done, along with a cost estimate and a suggested amortization period.

Write to them for more information:

Enersave,  
Box 4510,  
Station "E"  
Ottawa,  
K1S 5K3.

Or call  
1-800-267-9563  
toll-free.



## What Shell is doing

At Shell, we practise what we preach. The search for oil and gas is a continuous process, and a very important one. But conservation is also important in the daily operation of our business. For example, we use energy-saving lamps in our buildings, automatic controls for thermostats and insulation on our steam lines.



## Let Shell help you conserve energy!

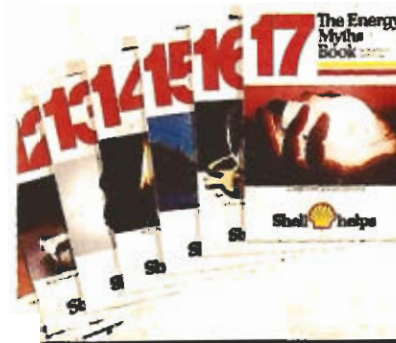
Shell has a wide range of quality products designed to help you get better mileage and save money. Your Shell dealer will tell you which is the proper octane of gasoline for your car. Ask him about Shell's energy-saving Super Plus motor oil and Shell X-100 radial tires. You may notice a significant difference in your fuel bills.



## Shell can help with more energy tips

You'll find many more energy-saving tips in earlier Shell booklets! Ask your Shell dealer for the ones you don't have. Or write to: "Shell helps", P.O. Box 7092, Adelaide St. Post Office, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2K7.

Pour obtenir la version française de ce guide, veuillez écrire à "Aide-toi, Shell t'aidera!", Shell Canada Limitée, C.P. 430, Succursale B, Montréal, Québec H3B 3K2.



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