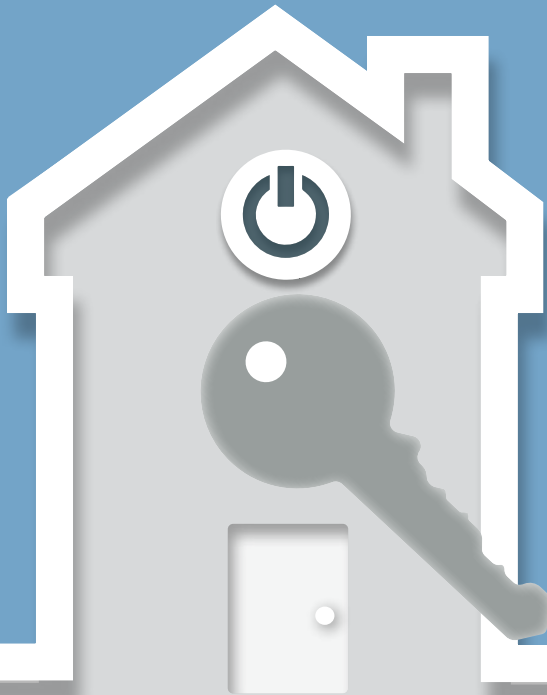


VACANT HOMES

A resource for operating
your home efficiently while you are away



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VACANT HOMES

Many homeowners in Southwest Florida reside elsewhere during the summer. Even if they are not operating appliances and consuming power, the house itself has ongoing energy needs. Circumstances may require extra humidity control, with a dehumidifier or a moisture-absorbing product such as Damp Rid. When using any of these measures, be sure to provide for drainage by setting them in a bathtub, basin or sink.

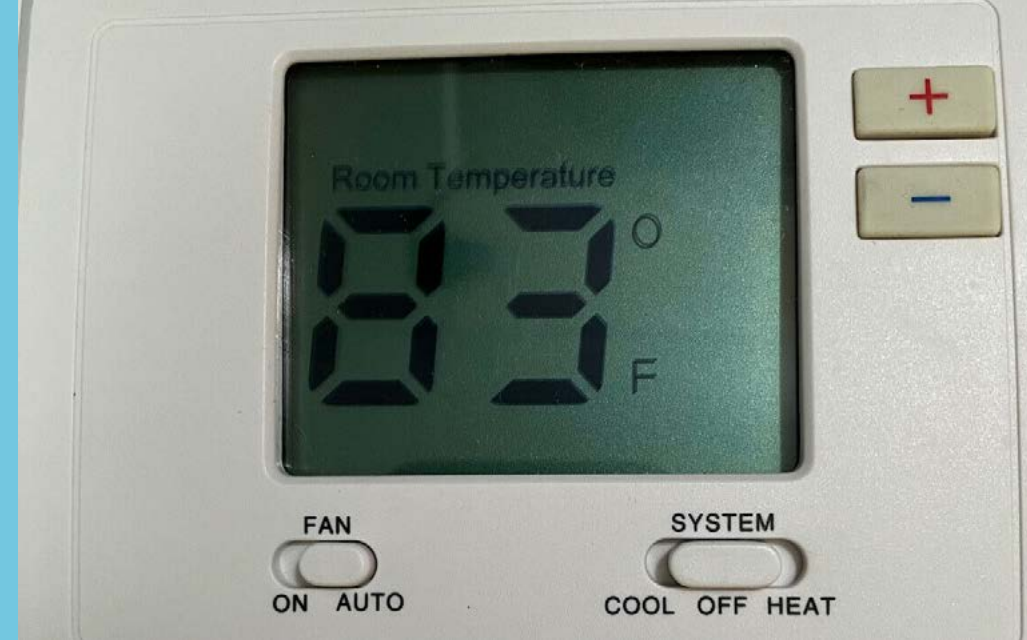
Some appliances, such as ovens and clothes dryers, are selective-use devices, consuming no power unless used for a specific task. Other appliances, such as refrigerators and pool pumps, are automatic and will continue to use power as long as they are plugged in. The chart below estimates the use of common automatic appliances.

A refrigerator uses far more electricity than most appliances. In fact, the high heat levels in an empty home will usually cause refrigerators to use more energy than they would in an active household. Significant savings can be generated by unplugging refrigerators in vacant homes; however, older units can sometimes fail in storage. If the unit is on, the freezer should be filled with ice containers and the thermostats set to their warmest possible settings (without compromising the food-storage integrity). This provides for the lowest possible cost, while at the same time safeguarding the continued operation of the refrigerator.

HUMIDISTATS

Humidistats, also known as de-humidistats, can be wired either parallel to or in series with the thermostat. These different wiring configurations call for slightly different humidistat set-up instructions. To determine your humidistat wiring configuration, take the following steps:

- Set humidistat to off.
- Set thermostat mode switch to cool and set fan switch to auto.
- Lower thermostat setting at least 10 degrees below room temperature. If your A/C cycles on, the humidistat is wired parallel to the thermostat. If the A/C does not cycle, your humidistat is wired in series to the thermostat.



APPLIANCE	kWh
Clocks	1.5
Pool pump 1 HP	
8 hr/day	336
4 hr/day	168
Refrigerator	
Frostfree 17-19 cubic feet.....	150-205
Frostfree 20-22 cubic feet.....	175-250
Frostfree 23-24 cubic feet.....	200-350
Freezer	
Frostfree 17-19 cubic feet.....	138
Frostfree 20+ cubic feet.....	250
Lighting	
(100 watt, 12 hr/day)	36
Water heater	
Nobody home.....	50
Typical 2 person use.....	195

Many unoccupied homes need a small amount of air conditioning every day throughout the summer for humidity control. Without daily air conditioning, high summer humidity can accumulate indoors and give rise to mold or mildew. Mold and mildew can grow nearly anywhere if the relative humidity is consistently 70 percent or higher. Most homeowners use one of the following techniques to guard against mildew problems.

- Install a timer on the A/C system, and set it to cycle the A/C for two hours every day. This provides the highest level of security against mildew growth.
- Install a humidistat on the A/C, and set it to cycle the A/C whenever indoor humidity exceeds 65 percent. This technique uses the least power. Please note that on new high-efficiency systems, a humidistat may be incorporated with the thermostat control system.
- Set your regular thermostat to 83 degrees Fahrenheit. This is the least efficient method and is recommended only for short or infrequent summer trips.



For vacant home: Set humidistat to 65 percent, set fan switch to auto, and set mode switch to cool. Set thermostat to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.



POST AT OR NEAR THERMOSTAT/ HUMIDISTAT LOCATION

Humidistat set-up instructions (for parallel-wired humidistats)

For occupied home: Set humidistat to off, set fan switch to auto, and set mode switch to cool or heat, as the situation demands. Set thermostat to desired temperature (recommended settings are heat = 68 degrees Fahrenheit and A/C= 78 degrees Fahrenheit).

For vacant home: Set humidistat to 65 percent, set fan switch to auto, and set mode switch to cool. Set thermostat to the highest possible temperature setting.

Humidistat set-up instructions (for series-wired humidistat)

For occupied home: Set humidistat to on, set fan switch to auto, and set mode switch to cool or heat, as the situation demands. Set thermostat to desired temperature (recommended settings are cool = 78 degrees Fahrenheit and heat = 68 degrees Fahrenheit).



For more information, please visit LCEC.NET