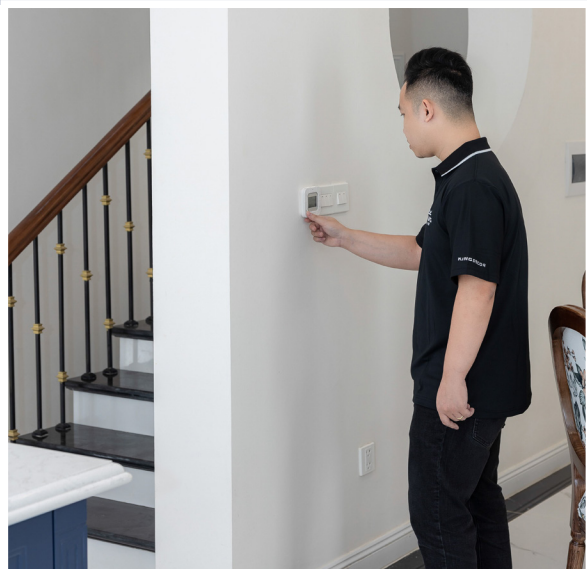




Small Thermostat Tweaks, Big Energy Savings



When it comes to cutting summer energy bills, the simplest adjustment often yields the biggest payoff: raising your thermostat by just a few degrees. While winter energy savings are commonly estimated at 1% to 3% per degree, summer cooling dynamics work differently, offering significantly higher potential savings.

Why Changing the Temp Matters So Much

Air conditioning costs stem from several factors, including conductive heat gains, humidity (latent load), sunlight exposure, and internal heat generation. Raising your thermostat directly targets **conductive heat gain** by shrinking the temperature gap between the outside air and your indoor environment.

- **The Percentage Impact:** If it is 90°F outdoors and your thermostat is set to 75°F, you are managing a 15-degree difference. Raising the temperature by just 2 degrees reduces that total temperature load by over 13%.
- **Slashing Cooling Hours:** During milder summer days—when outdoor temperatures are only slightly above your indoor target—a higher thermostat setting completely eliminates the need for air conditioning during those hours.

What the Data Shows

Real-world weather patterns illustrate how quickly savings add up for the average home:

Moderate Climate Example (Indianapolis, 2003):

Raising the thermostat from 75°F to 77°F eliminated 261 cooling hours—a 25% reduction in total annual run time. Conversely, dropping the temperature from 75°F to 72°F increased cooling time by up to 42%, potentially adding 40% to 50% to summer energy costs.

Warmer Climate Example (Atlanta, 1998):

With double the annual cooling hours, dropping the thermostat from 75°F to 72°F added roughly 34% to cooling bills.

4 Top Recommendations for Summer Cooling

While factors like high humidity or large, unshaded windows can reduce the relative impact of thermostat adjustments, these four high-impact strategies offer the most effective way to manage summer cooling costs:

- 1 **Block Solar Heat:** Keep window coverings drawn to shade interior spaces from direct sunlight.
- 2 **Nudge the Thermostat Up:** Aim for a setpoint a few degrees higher than usual.
- 3 **Insulate Ductwork:** Ensure attic ducts are properly insulated to prevent cool air loss.
- 4 **Upgrade Aging Equipment:** Replace outdated, low-efficiency air conditioners with modern high-SEER systems.



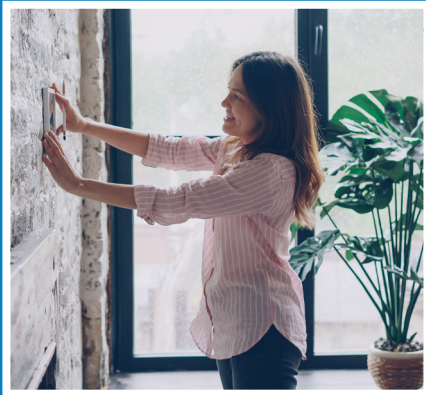
Back to School, Back to Savings

As daytime routines shift and the house clears out, a few quick tweaks can make a big difference on your monthly IMU bill.



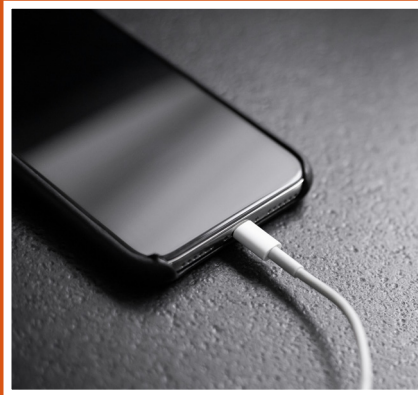
Daytime Thermostat Bump:

Raise your thermostat 7–10° higher while the house is empty during school hours to save up to 10% annually.



Unplug “Phantom” Power:

Plug laptops, gaming gear, and TVs into smart power strips and switch them off before heading out the door.



Cold-Water Laundry:

Wash uniforms and school clothes in cold water. Heating water accounts for 90% of a washing machine’s energy use!



Did You Know?

LED lightbulbs use up to 75% less energy and last up to 25 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. Swapping just 5 of your most-used light fixtures can save around \$75 a year!

CONTACT IMU

210 West 2nd Ave.
Indianola, IA 50125
(515) 961-9444
Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

IMU RESOURCES

Online bill pay: my.imufiber.com/ebill/login
Report outage: indianola.com/outages
IMU board meetings: youtube.com/@indianolamunicipalutilities
Work for IMU: indianola.com/careers