

Energy book is a money-saver

By MARGARET MILLER

Ecology, economy and Betty Shaw make a great team.

In fact, they are linked forever in a new book that should save a lot of people a lot of money and at the same time be good for everyone's environment.

For Mrs. Shaw, a Redford Township resident, the book titled "Utility Bills Can Cost Less" and now on sale in Redford, Livonia and Birmingham is just the latest result of an interest in environmentalism that began with the first Earth Day in 1970.

But it is, she feels, the most important part of energy-saving to a great many people.

The founder and long-time director of the Redford Recycling Center said she compiled her book of ways to save energy costs because in recent years she has noted a change in people's attitudes.

"It used to be that saving resources was paramount in people's minds," she observed. "But now, with inflation, there is more and more interest in doing things to save money."

"And this is possible—paying less for utilities without changing the quality of life."

Mrs. Shaw said that as head of the recycling center she frequently was invited to appear before local groups, and these visits convinced her that knowing how to beat the high cost of energy was of great importance, especially to the senior citizen and the young person.

"People on fixed incomes, people trying to build or buy houses, people with children to educate, people living alone all seemed to feel utilities were costing too much," she added. "I knew I had the kind of knowledge that could help, and I wanted to put it together."

And thus a new how-to-save book came into being.

It is on sale for \$2.95 in the Birmingham Book Store, 263 Pierce, or may be ordered by sending \$3.25 to Utilities Book, Box 39161, Redford 48239.

"THIS BOOK is written from the angle of saving money on utility bills," Mrs. Shaw explained.

The main point I try to get across is that there are two factors involved in the utility bills we pay—the rate that is charged and the number of units used.

"People can't do much about the rate other than appear at hearings when these rates are set by the Public Service Commission. Most don't do that; they seem to prefer to sit back and trust the commission to represent them."

"But we can do something about the number of units used, and when we concentrate efforts in this area we can see results."

THIS NEW AUTHOR has covered in her slim, green volume all four utilities—water, electricity, natural gas and telephone.

"It's the only book I know of that takes in all four," she said.

She said that after she decided to try to write the guide to energy saving, the first thing she did was write to 45 utility companies she plucked out of the hundreds listed in Moody's Business Directory.

"I asked a lot of questions about their business procedures and whether they encourage programs of conservation for customers," she continued.

"The response really surprised me. I was flooded with information and that convinced me that the utility companies also are interested in helping people save."

In her book, Mrs. Shaw stresses the need to understand how various utilities are operated and how charges are made.

"For instance," she pointed out, "Many people don't know that in Redford Township the rate of charges for sewage disposal is tied in with the amount of water used."

But the thing she stresses in conversation and book is that the people should keep in mind the relationship between energy use and energy cost.

"You just have to make a connection in your mind between turning on a light and paying for electricity," she said. "I try to get people to stop and think."

SEVERAL IDEAS for decreasing energy costs she lifts out of her new book. They are all things, she pointed out, that do not in any way reduce the quality of life.

Get a better understanding of how the hot water system works and use this knowledge to save money. When you turn on the hot water tap, first cold water must run off, and then the high energy-consumer water heater must work to replace what has been run off. So if you want just a little water to rinse your hands, use the cold tap.

Keep in mind the fact that the refrigerator is a big user of electrical energy. Open its door as little as possible. Don't stand wondering with the door

open what it was you wanted to get out.

Learn to get the most value out of the energy you use. For drying clothes, use the sun in the summer, and in the winter hang them in the basement to provide humidity for the house. (But Betty Shaw uses her dryer for a load of towels summer and winter because they are softer that way. "That's what I mean by quality of life," she explained.)

A few other hints she has included involve keeping lots of plants inside to add to provide humidity, using an automatic timer on the thermostat and using a timer beside the telephone to keep conversations from running on and on.

PUTTING TOGETHER a work like "Utility Bills Can Cost Less" caused some interesting and funny moments for this first time author.

"When I decided to try it, I didn't tell anyone," Mrs. Shaw said. "I wanted to be sure I could complete it because it seemed such a big project."

"I'm no typist," she went on, "but I decided if it was going to be done the way I wanted I would have to do it myself."

"I rented an IBM Selectric and typed the 95 pages with my two fingers. One page I had to do over 17 times before I got it without mistakes. I finished the day before the month was up, and the book would go up with all the type and pictures in the right place."

An erg saved, she points out, is a penny earned.



Betty Shaw, author of a book about saving money on utility bills, demonstrates how careful use of water (turning on the cold tap instead of the warm in this case) can make a big difference in the cost of water heating. (Staff photo by Art Emanuel)

Heritage day to be Feb. 22

Prizes, bargains and costumed ladies will be the highlight of the annual Heritage Day sponsored by the Historic Memorials Society from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 22, in the Grosse Pointe War Memorial Ballroom.

On sale will be antiques, attic treasures, boutique specialities and books collected by members, who also will contribute homemade bread, canned goods and other foods to the sale.

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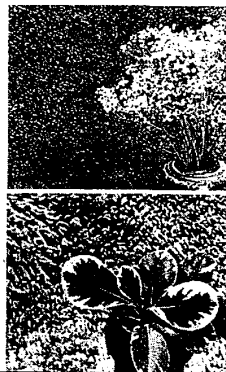
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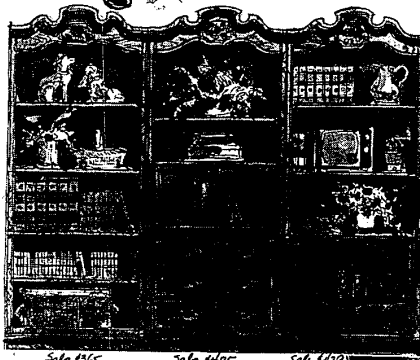
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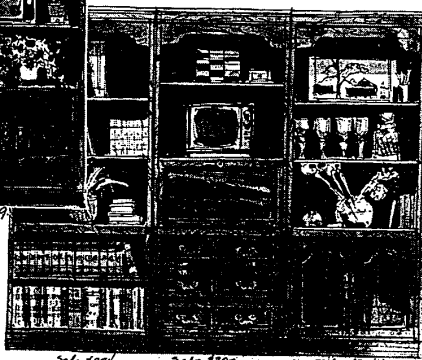
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