



# Senior Savers

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**Colorado Interfaith Power and Light (CoIPL) is launching a program called Senior Savers to help the 55+ population save money by reducing their energy use. CoIPL will present approximately 100 one-hour workshops over the next year that will teach seniors about energy efficiency, conservation, and how to save money on their energy bills.**

**Event Content:** The Senior Savers workshops provide interactive learning about energy use, with immediate money-saving actions that people can adopt. Participants will receive personal advice, a free compact fluorescent light bulb, and printed materials on such topics as programs for low-income energy assistance, weatherization and insulation programs, subsidized home energy audits, rebates and tax-credit programs.

Workshops will also teach a “change model” that involves incrementally incorporating a few changes at a time into a household. Using this model, one senior has reduced energy use by 37% over a three-year period.

Although the program is oriented toward seniors 55 and above, all age groups are welcome to attend and receive the benefit of learning to make lifestyle changes that will help them save money and energy. CoIPL will provide Spanish translation for some workshops and materials.

**Registration:** Organizations may schedule a workshop for an existing group. Individuals may register for public workshops. **The next public workshop is July 22 at 7 pm**, in Arvada at Spirit of Christ Church, 7400 W. 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. Call 303-429-5792 to pre-register. Future workshop details will be posted at <http://www.coloradoipl.org/programs/senior-savers-energy-saving-program>.

**Benefits:** This program will help seniors, many of whom are fixed- and low-income reduce their energy use and costs. Not only will energy reductions reduce utility bills for those on tight budgets, they will reduce emissions that cause climate change, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and reduce the need for offshore oil exploration and drilling.

**Funding:** JVA Consulting provided a grant through the Colorado Compassion Initiative to develop the Senior Savers program. The Governor’s Energy Office (using \$18,750 in Recovery Act funding) and the Regeneration Project (the national Interfaith Power and Light organization) have both provided funding for conducting the workshops.

**Leadership:** Betty Goebel, Executive Director of CoIPL, who is active in educating the community about energy, will lead the Senior Savers program and guide other workshop presenters. The Senior Savers workshops were designed by Erika Sueker, Ph.D. who has 20 years experience as a professional educator, specializing in learning and curriculum, school development, technology use, and program evaluation.

**Additional background:**

**Increasing Need:** Many fixed-income seniors are opting to stay in their own homes longer. Therefore an aggressive energy efficiency education program is vital toward reducing utility cost in older homes. With the bulge in the 55+ age group, the number of seniors living in independent and assisted living residences is also on the rise. Even the costs of energy use in large buildings (such as senior rental living facilities) can be reduced through education, supplying individuals with CFLs, and practical guidance on how they can make a difference. This will reduce the overall energy costs to facilities and forestall rental increases.

**Background on CoIPL:** Colorado Interfaith Power and Light is an interfaith organization providing education on environmental stewardship and climate change to Colorado. CoIPL was founded in 2005 by citizens concerned about climate change, addressing it out of spiritual concerns related to faithful stewardship of Creation. CoIPL is part of a network of Interfaith Power and Light (IPL) affiliates across the country.

CoIPL's previous significant accomplishments include distribution of 10,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs to approximately 100 congregations statewide, with education programs in each congregation (2007), publication of the booklet 'Change a Light, Change the World,' which addresses climate change and energy use for the faith-based population, distribution of 1,585 energy-efficiency kits to low-income and senior Coloradans (2008), and conducting a two-day conference on climate change and faith for 152 Denver area attendees (2009).