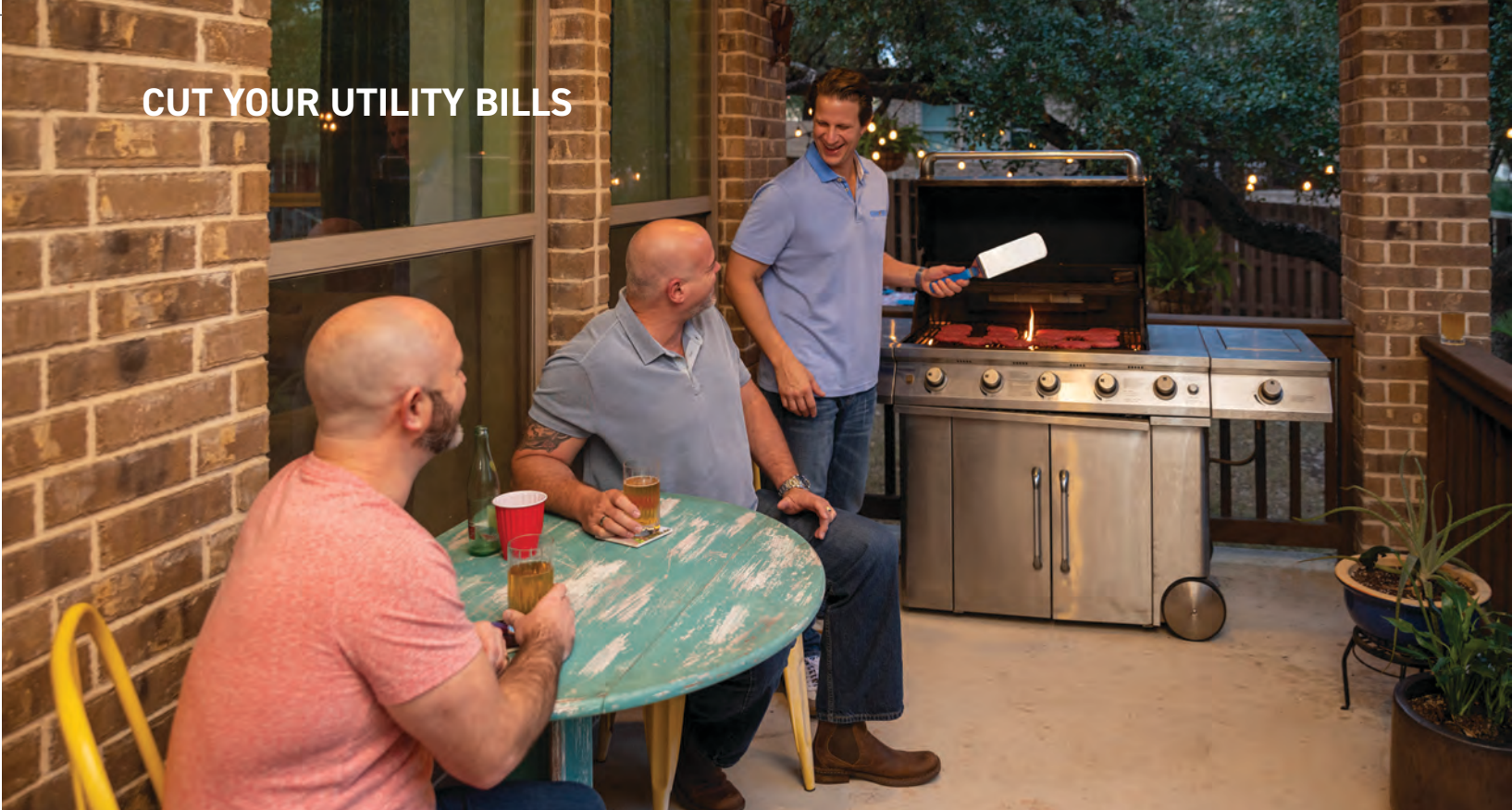


## CUT YOUR UTILITY BILLS



Cooking all courses on the grill eliminates the need to turn on the kitchen stove. PHOTO BY SCOTT VAN OSDOL

# Save Energy Outdoors

The most common way to save energy during summer months is to lower your cooling costs indoors.

If you spend a lot of time outdoors, you can save energy and money by reducing your air-conditioning use inside. Setting the thermostat just a few degrees higher can make quite a difference.

There are many other ways to save energy outdoors.

### Outdoor Lighting

If you have security lighting, there is a good chance you can save a little energy. Some security lights can be 500 to 1,000 watts. That's the equivalent of 40 to 80 indoor LED bulbs!

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more energy tips, go to [collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).

Timers, motion sensors and light sensors can reduce your bulb energy use. Plus, when you use your lights less often, your neighbors may appreciate a little less light pollution.

Switching to LEDs is a great strategy. Solar lights are also a good way to light walkways, a water feature or your deck without having to use power.

### Pumps and Maintenance

Many of us have one or more pumps that service our yard or are on our property. Pumps can supply water for a swimming pool, lawn and garden, or a septic system or well.

It's easy to let maintenance slip, which decreases the

pump's efficiency and shortens its life.

Maintaining pumps involves cleaning the filters or checking oil and belts. If you have multiple pumps and need to hire a professional for assistance, try to do all the maintenance at once to reduce the cost.

You may also want to consider replacing older pumps with energy-efficient Energy Star-rated options.

While you're at it, check for leaks in the water lines, which make your pumps work harder and longer.

### Grilling

Using your oven can raise your kitchen's temperature as much as 10 degrees, increasing the need to run your air conditioner. Grilling outdoors is a great way to save energy.

If you like to barbecue or grill most of your meals,

you may want to consider the fuel you use. If natural gas is available, it's usually less expensive than propane. Natural gas is also convenient because you don't have to refill tanks like you do with propane. On the downside, if you don't already have gas lines running to your patio or deck, the cost of installing them can be prohibitive.

Charcoal briquettes or wood take more preparation and can be fussy to work with. Charcoal grills emit three times as much carbon as gas grills.

Whichever fuel type you choose, you can save energy by barbecuing—keeping the lid closed during cooking—rather than grilling—cooking with the lid off at higher heat.

We hope these ideas help you enjoy your outdoor space this summer and save energy!

