

# Energy-Saving Technology at Your Fingertips

By Brian Sloboda

What does the home of the future look like to you? Perhaps the home of George and Jane Jetson comes to mind, where dinner and laundry are taken care of with the press of a button.

Today, the average home may not quite be “Jetsons-esque,” but household appliances are smarter and more energy efficient than ever before. A growing number of appliances now connect to the internet and offer new capabilities.

In many cases, buying a new television, refrigerator or other large appliance will result in lower energy use, assuming you properly dispose of the old appliance.

Many of these smart appliances offer features aimed at comfort, convenience and, sometimes, energy savings.

Manufacturers add communication modules inside many appliances, which often use Wi-Fi to communicate simple messages to a home’s wireless network. The messages vary by device, but typically include energy use information, power control and thermostat settings.

Efficiency-savvy consumers can save energy and money using one of these systems. The bulk of the savings comes from remotely controlling your thermostat.

Studies show that consumers generally do not program their programmable thermostat, but smartphone apps associated with internet-enabled thermostats are often easier to use.

These thermostats can learn your daily routine by sensing when you are away from home, and adjust your thermostat to save energy and money.

There are many devices you can have installed in your home’s electric panel to educate you on the energy consumption of various appliances.

These in-home monitoring devices provide more information to consumers about their household energy costs and have been shown to help people reduce their energy use.

One study of 36 energy feedback programs concluded that when presented with information on energy consumption, consumers can reduce their home energy use 4 to 12 percent.

By itself, technology will not save a significant amount of energy. But other activities—such as weather sealing and turning off lights when not in use—will save significant amounts of energy and money.

Technology is important, but the key is finding the right mix of technologies to fit your lifestyle and budget. ■

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### September 2018

**1**—Goldendale Farmers Market, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Ekone Park, Goldendale  
**1-2**—Tumbleweed Music Festival, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Howard Amon Park, Richland  
**3**—Labor Day picnic, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Columbia Park Main Stage, Kennewick  
**3**—75th annual Roy Webster Cross Channel Swim, 5:30 to 8:30 a.m., Hood River  
**7-9**—Huckleberry Festival, Friday, 5 to 11 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Daubenspeck Park, Bingen  
**7-9**—Rose City Comic Con, Friday, 1 to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, Portland  
**7-9**—Oregon Brews & BBQs, Friday, 5 to 11 p.m.; Saturday, noon to 11 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 5 p.m., McMinnville  
**8**—Goldendale Farmers Market, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Ekone Park  
**8**—Aluminum Man Triathlon, 9 a.m., Riverfront Park, The Dalles  
**8**—Riverfest Tri-Cities, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., east end of Columbia Park, Kennewick  
**8**—Best of Summer Fest, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., downtown Kennewick  
**8**—2018 Scout Extravaganza, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Howard Amon Park, Richland

**8**—Alder Creek Pioneer Carousel Museum Car Show & Flea Market, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Main Street, Bickleton  
**8**—Blacktop Bash, 7 to 11 p.m., Stick+Stone on Duportail, Richland  
**8-9**—Hood River Fly-In, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Western Antique Aeroplane & Automobile Museum, Hood River  
**11**—KPUD Commissioners’ meeting, 2 p.m., Goldendale  
**13-16**—Portland Fall RV & Van Show, Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Portland Expo Center  
**15**—Three Rivers Dulcimer Society and Upriver Dulcimers, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Maryhill Museum of Art, Goldendale  
**15**—Goldendale Farmers Market, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Ekone Park  
**15-16**—Pickin’ Tri-Cities Vintage Show and Artisan Market, Saturday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., TRAC Center, Pasco  
**16**—Gorge Kids Triathlon, 8 a.m. to noon, Waterfront Park, Hood River  
**20**—Spaghetti Meatballs & Bingo Extravaganza, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Flagstone Senior Living, The Dalles  
**21**—Brett Eldredge: The Long Way Tour, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., Toyota Center, Kennewick  
**22**—Romanian Cultural Festival, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Maryhill Museum of Art, Goldendale

**22**—Goldendale Farmers Market, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Ekone Park  
**22**—Third annual Ride the Reactor, 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Manhattan Project National Historical Park, Richland  
**22**—Hood River Hops Fest, noon to 8 p.m., downtown  
**22**—Country Chic Vintage Sale, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Skamania County Fairgrounds, Stevenson  
**25**—KPUD Commissioners’ meeting, 2 p.m., Goldendale  
**27-29**—Northwest Quilting Expo, Thursday and Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Portland Expo Center  
**28-29**—Heritage Days, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sacajawea State Park, Pasco  
**28-30**—Richland Kennel Club Dog Show, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., east end of Columbia Park, Kennewick  
**28-30**—Oregon International Air Show, Friday, 5:30 to 10 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Hillsboro Airport  
**29**—Goldendale Farmers Market, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Ekone Park  
**29**—MCMC Health Fair, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Water’s Edge Health and Wellness Center, The Dalles  
**29**—Stone Cool Car Show and Dance Bash, 5 to 9 p.m., Stoneridge Event Center, Pasco  
**29**—Wild Kratts Live 2.0, 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., Keller Auditorium, Portland