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With costs rising for virtually everything today, most of us are looking at every possible option to stretch our dollars in order to make ends meet. One of those options might be sitting in your kitchen. Recycling an old refrigerator or freezer could save you money on your electric bill, put cash in your pocket, and help the environment.

According to the EPA, if your refrigerator or freezer is 15-20 years old, it may be using two to four times the amount of energy each year as a newer, more energy efficient model which could translate into savings upwards of \$50 a year. Don't forget about the secondary unit in your basement or garage. You might consider removing it and possibly even forego replacing it to save even more money and energy.

"All that I have read and experienced lately convinces me that even one small change by an individual can have a far reaching effect on our environment," said County Judge Chad Adams. "That's what it is going to take, ultimately, to really improve our air and keep it that way."

Older model refrigerators (those manufactured before 1995) use chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigerant which destroys the ozone layer and is a greenhouse gas. Models made before 2005 are insulated with foam that contains either CFC's or HCFC's (hydrochlorofluorocarbon). To encourage safe and environmentally responsible disposal of these appliances, many electricity providers offer a bounty program.

One such local program is offered by ONCOR.

"When I learned about the appliance recycling program that Oncor has available, I took advantage of it," said Adams. "And I wanted to let other Ellis County residents know that it is out there."

According to a spokesperson, "ONCOR will come to your home to pick up your old refrigerator or freezer and pay \$50 to those customers who qualify for the program." Anyone interested in the program may contact ONCOR at 1-866-472-9376 or visit www.OncorRecycle.com. Be sure to have a copy of your electric bill or your ESI ID number on hand.