

Save Money During the Coming Winter Months!

OK, this sounds like an impossible task when we factor in the specter of increasing utility costs and for many the pressure to make holiday purchases – all in a tough economy. But by learning to better manage our personal financial resources and take advantage to EAP tools and services, it can be done:

- **Hold the High-End Coffee:** Dean Takamine, the smart shopping blogger behind Mr. Cheap Stuff www.mrcheapstuff.com cites 21 ways to stop wasting money. Topping the list is high-end “take-out coffee.” It’s a tough habit to break, but \$4 for coffee every working day equates to \$1,000 a year.
- **Read Your Mail:** Laura Rowley on Yahoo’s finance site www.finance.yahoo.com lists “7 daily routines that can cost you big.” The first of these is casually tossing out what appears to be “junk” mail. That junk mail could easily be a notice of importance from your credit card company detailing potentially expensive changes to your account.
- **Try Before You Buy:** The consumer advisors at www.ourfamilyplace.com strongly advocate this. Example: You feel that you must have a new Jet-Ski at a cost of \$11,500 before financing and taxes. You go to the lake, rent one and discover that it isn’t as much fun as you thought. The concept is more fun than the reality!! The result – you’ve just saved over \$11,500 – a major portion of perhaps a year of college fees for your kids.
- **Go Ahead, Waste Your Money:** Kiplinger money managers www.kiplinger.com reveal 20 ways to waste money in a tongue-in-cheek manner. Item #12 is *Purchase things you don’t need*. Why would one do this? Typically it occurs when you acquire a terrific coupon for an item or product you

will not use. “A bargain is no bargain if it sits on your shelf until it gets thrown away.”

- **Use Your EAP:** Realize the full value of your Employee Assistance Program by logging on to your Information Resources member site at www.theEAP.com. The *Tools for Tough Times* component contains a wealth of information that you can use to save money. For example, if you are about to make a major appliance purchase, be sure to consult the Energy Star information in the Heating and Home Energy section. This will help you select a product that is efficient and may qualify for state and federal rebates or tax deductions.



- **Save Money on Purchases:** Also under *Tools for Tough Times*, scroll down to Frugal Living and visit the **Deal Catcher** link. Check for daily deals on products from Dell, Panasonic, Macy’s, Bloomingdale’s, Kohl’s, Toys-R-Us, Garmin and Aeropostale among others. If you’re going to make purchases anyway, be sure to consult this site first to see if you can save big dollars on those very same items!
- **Talk it over with your EAP:** No one is immune to financial problems or challenges. The professionals at your Employee Assistance Program are available to help you address your specific situation in total confidentiality and connect you to a wide variety of qualified resources. And remember -- when you contact your EAP, our goal is to have the healing begin *immediately!*