

Seasonal Energy Saving Tips

Winter Tips



1. **Take advantage of heat from the sun.** Open curtains on south-facing windows during the day to capture the heat and close them at night to reduce the chill.
2. **Seal air leaks.** You can save more than 10% on your energy bill by reducing air leaks in your home. Caulk, seal, and weatherstrip all seams, cracks, and openings to the outside. Cover drafty windows and/or install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades.
3. **Adjust the temperature.** For each degree you turn down your thermostat during the winter, you save 3% on your heating bill. When asleep or not home, turn your thermostat back 10-15 degrees and save 10% on your heating bill.
4. **Install a programmable thermostat.** By investing in this device (\$35-115), you can save 10% on your heating bills each year.
5. **Maintain your heating system.** Find out what maintenance is required to keep your heating system operating efficiently. Heat pumps generally require servicing every year or two. Replace your furnace filter once a month or as needed.
6. **Reduce heat loss from the fireplace.** Keep your fireplace damper closed unless in use. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open during the winter. Check the seal on the fireplace flue damper to assure a tight fit. Add caulking around the fireplace hearth if necessary.
7. **Lower your water heating costs.** Water heating accounts for 14-25% of the energy consumed in your home. Turn the temperature of your water heater to 120 degrees.
8. **Install compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).** Replace the five most used incandescent light bulbs in your home with high-efficiency CFLs. CFLs use 75% less energy and last about 10 times longer than standard incandescent bulbs.
9. **Lower your holiday lighting costs.** Use LED holiday lights to reduce the cost of decorating your home for the winter holidays. LEDs use 90% less electricity than conventional mini-lights.
10. **Add insulation.** Checking your home's insulation is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to use a whole-house approach to reduce energy waste and make the most of your energy dollars. Only 20% of homes built before 1980 are well insulated.

Summer Tips

1. **Operate your thermostat efficiently.** Set your thermostat as high as is comfortable. The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be.



2. **Use your windows to gain cool air and keep out heat.** Open windows when it's cool and close them when it begins to heat up to trap the cool inside. Closing window coverings will also prevent heat gain through your windows.

3. **Don't heat your home with appliances.** Avoid using major appliances or use them during cooler evening hours. Your dishwasher, clothes washer, dryer, and oven generate heat and make your air conditioning work harder. When cooking, use the stovetop, microwave, or grill outside.

4. **Use fans and ventilation strategies to cool your home.**

If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort. Turn off ceiling fans when you leave the room. Remember, fans cool people, not rooms.



5. **Don't heat your home with lighting.** Install energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). They operate at much cooler temperatures than incandescent lights. In fact, around 90% of the energy consumed by incandescents is turned into heat and only 10% is used for actual lighting.



6. **Use the air for drying.** Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes. Consider air drying both dishes and clothing.

7. **Keep hot air from leaking into your home.** Sealing cracks and openings in your home not only prevents cold air from escaping in the winter, but prevents warm air from leaking into your home during the summer.



8. **Consider efficiency when purchasing an air conditioner.** Purchase an ENERGY STAR model with a high SEER rating. The SEER, or Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio, is an indication of the efficiency of the air conditioner and the higher the number, the more efficient the unit.



9. **Air conditioner location is important.** Place your air conditioner on the north side of the home or in the shade if possible. A unit operating in the shade uses 10% less electricity than one operating in the sun.

10. **Plan ahead before vacationing.** Unplug all unnecessary appliances. They use electricity constantly, whether or not they are on. Turn off the air conditioning and water heater at the breaker panel. Rather than leaving lights on for security, put a few lights on a timer system.