

HEAT COST SAVING TIPS

Turn down the thermostat

The rule of thumb is that you can save about 3% on your heating bill for every degree that you set back your thermostat. Turn down the thermostat 10 degrees when you go to work, and again when you go to bed -- a total of 16 hours a day -- and you can save about 14% on your heating bill.

Fuel Oil & Propane Tank Gauge

Keep a close eye on your tank gauge. Don't let your tank run out of heating fuel which may add special delivery charges.

Use kitchen/bathroom fans wisely

In just one hour, a hard-working bathroom or kitchen fan can expel a houseful of warm air, according to the Department of Energy. Turn exhaust fans off within 20 minutes.

Keep the fireplace damper closed when it is not in use to prevent warm air from escaping

Heat rises, and an open damper is like a hole in the roof. Limit use of the fireplace, since fires actually suck heat from a room.

Close off rooms that are not frequently used

Shut vents in rooms that are not used very often.

Keep heating vents clear

Vents blocked by rugs and furniture prevent heated air from circulating efficiently.

Curtains

Open curtains and shades during the day to take advantage of the sun's heat. Close all curtains at night to reduce the chill you feel from cold windows.

Block that leak!

Buy door sweeps to close spaces under exterior doors, and caulk or tacky rope caulk to block those drafty spots around window frames. Apply weather-stripping to movable joints. Outlet gaskets can easily be installed in electrical outlets in a home's outer walls, where cold air often enters.

Winterize windows

If you can't afford storm windows, put plastic film on those windows where a clear view isn't crucial, which will curb drafts and keep windows from rattling.

Dress for cold weather

Dress in layers + a pair of thick socks or slippers on your feet for your "stay warm" ensemble in your home.

Keep your furnace in shape

It's amazing how often a heating unit stops working because a \$3 or \$15 air filter is clogged. Replace the air filter according to manufacturer's directions and your heating system will operate more efficiently. Oil furnaces should be cleaned and tuned annually, and gas systems, every two years. By maintaining your heating unit, you can save between 3% and 10% on heating bills.

Blankets

Snuggle up in a blanket whenever you are sitting down.

Bedding

Use flannel sheets to keep warm when you sleep on those cold winter nights. Pile extra blankets on your bed too.

Oven

Leave your oven door open after you finish baking to make use of the heat. **NOTE: This is best in homes that do NOT have young children who could easily suffer a burn from the hot oven door.**

Bare Floors

Rugs on bare floors will help make it feel warmer in the home.

Ceiling fan

Hot air rises. Run your ceiling fan in reverse to bring hot air back down to floor level.