



Top 10 Tips to Cut Winter Energy Costs

Easy and inexpensive solutions for business or home

- Maintain air filters and HVAC equipment**
Well-maintained equipment runs more efficiently, so change your air filter monthly or as needed and tune up your HVAC equipment yearly.
- Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable**
Roll temperatures back by 10 to 15°F before bed and before leaving for work.
- Reduce air leaks (can save up to 10% on energy bills)**
Seal doors and windows with weather stripping or caulk. Tape clear plastic film to the inside of window frames to further reduce leaks, and consider installing insulated curtains or blinds.
- Take advantage of the sun's heat and light**
Keep your south-facing windows clean. Open curtains on south-facing windows during the day and close all curtains at night.
- Add insulation to your attic**
With the right safety practices, this can be a do-it-yourself project.
- Turn down the temperature on water heaters and provide good insulation**
Most water heaters are set to 140°F, but at 115 to 120°F you'll still have plenty of hot water. Insulate hot water pipes and, if your water heater is over 7 years old, consider a "wrap" to insulate the tank. Also consider heat traps on water heater tanks, timers that use off-peak power for electric water heaters, hot water recirculation loops, and drain-water heat recovery systems.
- Fireplace efficiency**
Plug and seal the chimney flue of fireplaces that are never used.
When using fireplaces, keep the damper closed unless a fire is going and make sure the damper is as snug as possible. Caulk around the fireplace hearth. Consider installing tempered glass doors and a heat-exchanger system to blow warm air back into the room. When a fire is lit, open dampers or open nearest window about an inch, close doors leading into the room, and lower your thermostat to between 50° and 55°F.
- Wood and pellet burning heaters**
Clean the flue vent regularly and the inside of the appliance periodically with a wire brush.
- Unplug electronics and appliances when not in use**
Use multiple-outlet strips so you can turn everything off with one flip of a switch.
- Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs)**
Lighting makes up about 10 percent of home energy costs, and CFLs can save up to 75 percent of that energy. They also last longer, saving money on replacements.