

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Five Hot Tips For Saving On Your Heating Bill

(NAPSA)—Burning incense is one tip that might help you thumb your nose at high heating bills.

That's the advice of experts who say you can use an incense stick to search out small cracks, holes and other openings in your home. If the smoke travels horizontally, you have found a leak that may need caulking, sealing or weather-stripping.

Finding such leaks and then weatherizing can save you as much as 10 percent on your home energy bill.

Here are four more tips:

- Don't lose energy out of the window. Close your curtains and shades at night; open them during the day. Tape clear plastic sheeting to the inside of your window frames if drafts, window condensation and frost are present. Install tight-fitting, insulating window shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.

For long-term savings, install storm windows over single-pane windows or replace them with double-pane windows with low-e coating. Look for the ENERGY STAR.

- Insulate against high bills. Insulate your hot-water heater and hot-water pipes. Check the insulation in your attic, ceilings, exterior or basement walls, floors and crawl spaces to see if it meets the levels recommended for your area. Adding insulation in the attic can actually make your home more comfortable all year round.

- Control your temperature. Installing a programmable thermostat is an excellent way to cut your heating bills. You can lower the temperature when you're sleeping or at work. The energy savings will offset the cost of a basic unit in less than a year.

When you are asleep or out of



Energy-efficient windows could cut heating and cooling costs by more than \$400 annually.

the house, turn your thermostat back 10°-15° for eight hours and save around 10 percent a year on your heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature. Regularly clean or replace furnace air filters, follow the manufacturer's maintenance schedule and don't block the registers.

For long-term savings, install a new, energy-efficient, ENERGY STAR furnace.

- Don't forget the ducts. First, check the ducts for air leaks. Look for sections that have separated, then look for obvious holes. You can lose up to 60 percent of your heated air before it reaches the register if your ducts are leaky and not insulated and they travel through unheated spaces such as the attic or crawl space. To learn about ducts, visit <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/ducts.html>.

When buying appliances or windows, look for the ENERGY STAR.

For more tips and information, visit www.energystar.gov.