



Hints For Homeowners

Top Cold Weather Home Efficiency Tips

(NAPSA)—Homeowners can prepare for cold weather by taking simple energy efficiency measures that will reduce energy consumption and heating bills.

What You Can Do

- Install and set a programmable thermostat. Homeowners can save an estimated 10 percent per year on heating costs by using a programmable thermostat and setting the heat to run only when they're home.

- Use sunlight to your advantage. During winter months, take advantage of sunlight by opening curtains during the day to allow the sun to naturally heat your home.

- Reduce energy for water heating. Water heating accounts for roughly 14 to 18 percent of most home utility bills. Reduce costs by making sure your water heater is set no higher than 120 degrees Fahrenheit and wrapping a water heater jacket around it if it's more than five years old.

- Use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

- Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.



When temperatures plummet outside, homeowners tend to turn up the heat inside.

- When using the oven, resist the temptation to open the door to check on a dish's progress. Every time you do, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, forcing it to work even harder (and use more energy) to get back to the proper cooking temperature.

- Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open; it lets warm air go right up the chimney.

- Have a technician inspect and confirm that your appliances are running as efficiently as possible, so you can conserve fuel and save money.

- Hire a professional to maintain your heating system. Arrange for annual maintenance with a

qualified technician. This includes checking the airflow over the coil, checking that the combustion process and heat exchanger are operating safely, and ensuring proper airflow to each room.

- Clean the air filters once a month and replace them regularly.

- Consider purchasing a propane generator. When other power sources fail, a propane generator can keep your house operating without interruption. Propane is an approved clean alternative fuel under the Clean Air Act. It's a nontoxic, American-made fuel that doesn't contaminate groundwater or soil and a low-carbon alternative fuel that produces significantly fewer greenhouse gas emissions than most other energy sources.

- Call your propane provider to discuss contracts, delivery options and payment plans that fit your budget and needs, advise the experts at the Propane Education & Research Council.

“By planning ahead and taking steps to reduce energy consumption, homeowners can help make sure everyone has a comfortable and safe winter,” says Roy Willis, PERC president and CEO.

Learn More

Further tips and other resources can be found at www.PropaneComfort.com.