

ENERGY SAVING IDEAS

Winter Tips For Home Comfort And Efficiency

(NAPSA)—For most regions of the country, fall means forgetting about heating and air conditioning for a while. Crisp mornings and moderate temperatures during the day create a comfortable existence with lower-than-average energy usage. Right around the corner, however, is the first frost of winter and the promise of higher energy bills. Is there anything you can do now to impact your energy usage?

“Absolutely,” says Paul Trotter, brand manager for American Standard Heating and Air Conditioning. “The transition period between the beginning of fall and the first days of cold weather is the perfect time to evaluate your home’s energy efficiency and weather resiliency, and service your heating system. All of these things, along with following a few other simple recommendations, can impact your energy usage.”

Here are some tips for making your home as energy-efficient as possible:

- Install storm or thermal windows and doors;
- Caulk and weather-strip all windows and doors;
- Ensure your fireplace has a tight-fitting damper;
- Tape and seal leaks in your duct system and coil enclosure. Consider adding insulation to your duct system;
- For extremely cold climates, wrap your water heater with an insulated water heater blanket;
- Seal gaps between heated and unheated spaces. This may be around pipes, ducts, fans or vents;
- Consider installing ceiling fans with reversible motors. In the winter, fans push warm air that collects at ceiling level back down into the room;
- If you don’t have a programmable thermostat, consider purchasing one; thermostats are a great way to control the temperature in your home for maximum energy efficiency;
- Install adequate insulation. Recommended: R-30 in ceilings, R-13 in exterior walls and R-11 in interior walls and floors; and
- If you’re in the market for a new home comfort system, select a high-efficiency, variable-speed heating and air conditioning



Autumn is the time to start preparing for the heavier energy use of winter.

system. The Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency rating, or AFUE, indicates the efficiency of a gas furnace. The higher the AFUE, the more efficient the furnace. If your present furnace is ten years old or older, it’s probably in the 60 to 70 percent AFUE range. That means you’re wasting about 30 to 40 cents out of every dollar you spend for heat. By replacing your old furnace with a new, high-efficiency model with an AFUE of 80 or 90 percent, more of the fuel you pay for is turned into heat.

American Standard also recommends having your heating system serviced, prior to the heating season, by the dealer who installed it or the manufacturer’s local representative.

Finally, here’s what you can do during the heating season to impact your energy usage:

- Close shutters and drapes during winter nights;
 - Set your thermostat at 68 degrees or lower during the day;
 - When using your fireplace, turn your thermostat down;
 - Keep the damper closed when your fireplace is not being used;
 - Dust or vacuum the vents in your home to ensure the free flow of warm air; and
 - Clean or replace the filter in your furnace at least once every 30 days during peak winter usage.
- For additional information on heating your home, contact an American Standard Heating and Air Conditioning dealer, or visit www.americanstandardair.com.