

Fall Energy Efficiency Tips

Heating and Furnace

- Dress warmly when indoors. Lower your thermostat by two degrees. You could save as much as four per cent on your heating bill.
- Turn your heat down at night and throw on an extra blanket.
- Turn off heat in unused rooms and shut the doors.
- Heading out for a while? Turn the heat down to save energy.
- Keep the heat in the house by closing the curtains in the evening. Yep, even this can make a difference.
- Throw down a rug on exposed floors. Not only will it insulate, it will cut down on noise as well.
- Install a furnace alarm. This will tell you when to change filters to keep your furnace working efficiently.
- Check doors for proper insulation. Place your hand against a door from the inside. If it feels cooler than the inside walls, it might be time to install a door that's better insulated.
- Adding a humidifier to your heating system lets you turn the thermostat down and be comfortable at lower temperatures. Aquariums and houseplants add humidity, too.
- Did you know that heat recovery ventilators improve indoor air quality by expelling stale indoor air continuously and using its heat to preheat the incoming fresh air? Installing one of these may give you the added savings you're looking for on your next energy bill.



- Change the direction of airflow on your ceiling fan. For those colder months, the blades should operate in a clockwise direction, helping to push the warm air from the ceiling down into the room. In the summer, the blades should operate in a counter clockwise direction as a way of creating a nice, gentle wind.
- Avoid heating areas that are not insulated, such as a garage, crawlspace, attic or storage sheds.
- Cranking up the heat to warm the house quickly doesn't work. The house will warm up at the same rate, regardless of the temperature setting.
- Seal all leaks around doors, windows, and electrical outlets. Heat from your home escapes out of these cracks. By sealing the leaks you can save up to 20 per cent on your heating bill and the cost of materials is under \$20.
- Make sure your heating vents aren't blocked by furniture or drapes and the dampers are open. Vacuum out dust and pet hair from warm air registers and cold air returns so your furnace runs more efficiently.
- If you are thinking of replacing your furnace, consider getting one that's rated 90 per cent or higher in efficiency. Replacing your old furnace with a new, more energy efficient one can save up to 30 per cent of your heating costs. Remember to look for the ENERGY STAR® label!

save
5%

Just changing dirty filters on your furnace could save you up to five per cent on your heating bill.





Is your insulation up to par? For a minimal cost, you can upgrade the insulation in your exterior walls, crawlspaces, basements and attics. Insulation may come in batts or loose fill, which can be blown into place and get those hard to reach places. To find out if you have enough attic insulation, measure its thickness. If there is less than R-22 (7 inches of fiberglass or rock wool, or 6 inches of cellulose), look into adding more and, while you're at it, insulate your attic door or hatch at the same time.

Windows and Insulation

- Install covers on letterboxes and/or keyholes to reduce indoor drafts.
- Open the drapes or blinds on sunny days and bask in the 'free' heat. Keep those south-facing windows squeaky clean to let the light through. Remember to close the drapes or blinds when the sun sets to keep the heat in.
- Consider upgrading the windows in your home. Select high efficiency windows with low-e coatings, argon gas fill and insulated spacers.
- If your home was built after 1940, you probably have cavity walls. Have them filled with insulation, which could help you save money every year on heating and cooling.
- Clear plastic sheeting on your windows can add more insulation and reduce icy drafts with minimal effort and minimal cost.
- Does your home have a sliding glass door? Make sure to keep its track clean. A dirty track can ruin the door's seal and create gaps where heat or cold air can escape.
- Did you know that a reflective roof could reduce the roof surface temperature by up to 60 degrees, depending on your climate? A reflective roof or fitting a radiant barrier prevents the sun's heat from transferring into the home or building.
- It's also time to remove the window air conditioners for the winter. If they must stay in place, be sure to seal them with caulking or tape and cover them with an airtight, insulated jacket.

Lighting

- Use energy-saving light bulbs that can last up to ten times longer than a normal bulb and use up to 75 per cent less energy. A single 20 to 25 watt energy-saving bulb provides as much light as a 100 watt ordinary bulb.
- Install motion sensors or timers on external lights.
- Use only one bulb for light fittings with more than one light bulb or replace additional bulbs with a lower wattage version.
- Did you know that halogen lighting uses up to 40 per cent less energy than traditional bulbs? Halogen lighting is also excellent for gardens and pathways.



Natural Gas

Appliances

- Keep combustibles such as papers, cleaning fluids, paints, curtains and rags away from furnaces, water heaters, ranges and dryers.
- Keep flues and chimneys clear. Have your fluepipe and chimney checked to make sure they're not blocked with debris such as nests, branches or plants.

Water Heater

- Don't block air vents, valves or controls if you add insulation around the water heater.
- Don't cover the top of the heater or the space between the floor and heater.

Heating System/Space Heating

- Clean or replace filters in warm-air furnaces periodically.
- Keep the area around the furnace/space heater clear of dirt, clutter, flammable materials and obstructions.
- A yearly inspection of natural gas heating equipment is recommended by manufacturers. A qualified technician should make this inspection.

Recommendations

- Periodically, you should observe the burner flames of your natural gas appliances. The flame should burn with a clear blue color. If it is blue, chances are your burner is adjusted properly and is doing the job efficiently.
- A yellow flame may indicate that your burner isn't operating efficiently. Have a qualified technician perform any needed adjustments.



If you're thinking about purchasing a new appliance, always look for the ENERGY STAR® label on new appliances. These products are more energy efficient and can help reduce your energy costs.

Hot Water and Taps

- Insulate your water heater and its pipes. Your water will stay hotter longer. Keep the insulation 18" from the top of the water heater.
- Take showers. A bath consumes about five times the hot water. Buy a low-flow showerhead, it will pay for itself in no time.
- Avoid washing dishes in hot running water. Fill the sink halfway, and then scrub away.
- Repair dripping hot water taps immediately.
- If you're building a new home make sure you place the water heater as close as possible to the kitchen, laundry room and bathrooms. Heat is lost as it moves through long pipes so the closer the unit is to these rooms, the more money you could save.
- It's time to take a look at your water heater. If its surface is hot or even warm, some of the energy used to heat the water is being wasted. Wrap the heater in an insulating blanket. Be sure to check your user manual and labels on the tank first and adhere to all safety requirements.
- Did you know that if you never run out of hot water, then you've probably set your hot water thermostat too high? Before the winter comes, set your thermostat between 110 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3C – 48.8C).

Home Appliances

- Microwaves use substantially less energy than ovens. Use one when cooking and reheating items.
- Defrost your fridge regularly. When ice builds up, your freezer uses more electricity. If it frosts up again quickly, check that the door seals are strong and intact.
- Keep your fridge at least three quarters full for maximum efficiency.
- When dust and pet hair build up on your refrigerator's condenser coils, the motor works harder and uses more electricity. As part of your spring-cleaning routine, make sure the coils are cleaned and air can circulate freely.
- Don't forget to check the seals on your refrigerator door to make sure they are clean and tight. Your refrigerator accounts for up to 11 per cent of your household's total energy use, which can have a major impact on your energy bill.
- Wash laundry with full loads. You'll use the machine less, save time and save energy.
- Wash at a lower temperature. Use the spin cycle, and then hang dry your clothes and sheets.
- Use your dryer for consecutive loads. The built-up heat means less energy spent.
- Larger computer monitors use more energy than their small counterparts. For example, switching from a 17 inch monitor to a 14 inch monitor can reduce associated energy costs by 35 per cent.
- Buy appliances and tools bearing the CSA (Canadian Standards Association) seal. (Canada only).
- Make sure to put the lids on pots when boiling water to save energy and cook food quicker.

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