

## WINTER ENERGY CONSERVATION TIPS

Cooler weather and increased holiday energy usage can present a challenge to the Energy Smart Consumer who is looking for ways to use energy wisely and still have the comforts of home. Here are some tips to help use energy safely and efficiently during the winter months.

- ◆ **Turn down your thermostat to 68° F.** For every degree you lower your heat, you'll save up to 5% on heating costs. Wear warm clothing like a sweater and set your thermostat at 68° F during the day and 60° F for the night, these are recommended numbers. (Thermostats in homes with infants, elderly, or ill individuals should be set higher). To avoid waking up to a cold house, let a programmable thermostat turn the heat up an hour before you wake up.
- ◆ **Replace or clean furnace filters once a month.** Dirty filters restrict airflow and increase energy use. Now is also the time for a furnace "tune-up." Keeping your furnace clean, lubricated and properly adjusted will reduce energy use; saving you up to 5% of heating costs.
- ◆ **Reduce hot water temperature.** Set your thermostat on your hot water heater to the "normal" setting or 120° F – 130° F. Some dishwasher models require a setting of 140° F. Check your owner's manual for the correct setting. Insulate the first five feet of pipe coming out of the top of your water heater or the whole length until the pipe goes into the wall if that is less than five feet.
- ◆ **Seal up leaks.** Caulk or weather strip leaks around windows and doors. Look for places where you have pipes, vents or electrical conduits that go through the wall, ceiling or floor. Weather stripping and caulking your home can save up to 6% on your heating costs.
- ◆ **Insulate your home properly.** Up to 20% of your heating can be lost through the ceiling. If your ceiling is uninsulated or scantily insulated, consider increasing your insulation.
- ◆ **Replace bulbs.** Replace ordinary incandescent bulbs with Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs, especially in high use light fixtures. Compact fluorescent lights use 75% less energy than incandescent lights.
- ◆ **Let the sunshine in.** Keep shades and curtains open during the day so the sun can make your home warmer. Close them in the evening to keep the heat in.
- ◆ **Rearrange your rooms.** Move your furniture around so you are sitting near interior walls – exterior walls and older windows are likely to be drafty. Move drapes and furniture around radiators so that heat can move freely.
- ◆ **Install glass doors around fireplaces.** Install glass doors in front of your fireplace to prevent heat escaping up the chimney. Traditional fireplaces are an energy loser – they pull heated air out of the house and up the chimney. When not in use, make absolutely sure the damper is closed.
- ◆ **Eliminate wasted energy.** Turn off lights in unoccupied rooms. Unplug the spare refrigerator in the garage if you truly don't need it – this seemingly convenient way to keep extra drinks cold adds 10-25% to your electric bill. Turn off kitchen and bath ventilating fans after they've done their job. Use ceiling fans to circulate the warmer air found near the ceiling throughout your home. Remove window air conditioner units in the winter. If you can't, enclose the unit with an air conditioner cover to stop drafts.
- ◆ **Shorten showers.** Simply reducing that lingering time by a few minutes can save hundreds of gallons of hot water per month for a family of four. Install low flow showerheads and faucets.
- ◆ **Use appliances efficiently or purchase energy efficient appliances – such as Energy Star.** Do only full loads when using your dishwasher and clothes washer. Use the cold water setting on your clothes washer when possible. Clean your dryer's lint filter before each load. Overloading your dryer makes it work harder.